



Adoration of the Magi
Fra Angelico

Love is ultimately the most meaningful of human experiences. In all its various forms, love leads us to the fulfillment of human existence. Love has the power to unite us with our true self, to unite us with the spiritual essence in others, and it has the power to carry us on wings of selflessness to unite with the Divine.

— Karen Rivers

from *Love and the Evolution of Consciousness:
A Study of the Transformation of the
Human Soul, the Double, and the Spirit*

Book Announcement

*Love and the Evolution of Consciousness:
A Study of the Transformation of the Human Soul,
the Double, and the Spirit*

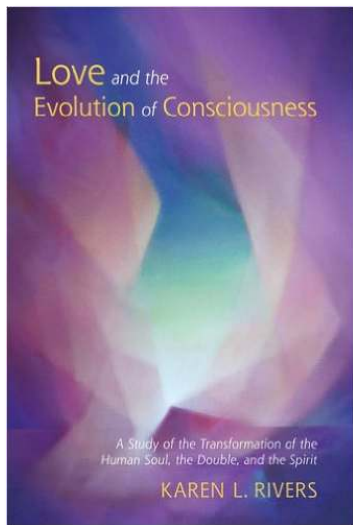
by Karen Rivers

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In this compelling and meticulously crafted book, Karen Rivers expresses the imperative need of individuals to walk a path of inner development that can lead to an ever-growing capacity for selfless love. Inspired by the work of Rudolf Steiner and Valentin Tomberg, the author presents insights and strategies for understanding and transforming impure aspects of one's self to cultivate **heart thinking**.

The author describes the complexities of the human soul and the ninefold double; examines thought patterns, default feeling responses, and subconsciously driven reactions of the double; and discusses the dynamics of karma and the power of forgiveness as they relate to our path toward the embodiment of conscious love. This journey is further illuminated by stories of remarkable individuals who courageously and selflessly devoted their lives to the mission of love.

Love and the Evolution of Consciousness concludes with a meditation course for cultivating will forces and transforming the inner self.

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The Crop Circle of August 27, 2016

Lacquanna Paul & Robert Powell

Kinsau, Germany – September 1, 2016 – regarding the swastika-shaped crop circle that appeared in Beckhampton, near Marlborough, England. Here is a link to video footage of the crop circle: <http://www.tubeofmusic.com/?v=OpxTb36iAC4>. For further links, Google “Crop circle of 2016 August 27.”

Lacquanna

On August 27, 2016, Robert and I had been watching live online the progress of the annular eclipse of the Sun, filmed from the island of Réunion off the east coast of Africa. Afterward, responding to an intuition that this would be an appropriate time to “listen in” on what might be the meaning and significance of the recent swastika-shaped crop circle which had appeared in Beckhampton, England on August 27, 2016, we set ourselves to the task of deep inner listening for spiritual guidance concerning the relevance of this crop circle.



Upon viewing the shape of the crop circle swastika, one can observe that it clearly turns in the same direction as the Nazi emblem. We felt a shiver of concern, experiencing something of the dread of that time when an unimaginable evil had beset the world—a time associated with the memory of WWII, which resulted from that earlier attempt at world governance. Now it seems through the events of our time that things are moving rapidly in Europe and the world, and that

therefore the time has come to bring our contemplative powers to bear upon this recent crop circle mystery, which seems so pregnant with meaning in association with the appearance of a swastika emblazoned upon the Earth.

We began in prayer asking for guidance and understanding, holding to the promise that had been foretold, that there would be signs in the heavens and on the earth that would provide guidance in times of world crisis. An image of light in the shape of a cross appeared. It was quite delicate, with a one third / two thirds proportion. Gradually, a circular darkened area appeared in the background, central to the cross beams of the cross, and then a surrounding aura illuminated the central darkness. When the surrounding aura of light appeared, the aura began to pulse with a powerful radiance, which caused the entire image to turn in a clockwise direction, causing the cross of light to appear as a swastika, turned in the opposite direction to that of the crop circle.

Perhaps the meaning of the crop circle could be understood as a foretelling of today’s (September 1, 2016) annular solar eclipse visible across central-southern Africa all the way to the island of Réunion. The relevance of this moment in time seen against the background and constancy of cosmic rhythms weaving with the integrity of cosmic integration now deepened. Understanding of the swastika crop circle began to dawn in our consciousness.

Through a subtle sense of inflowing gnosis, the understanding came that the crop circle swastika is communicating to us that time is speeding up. There is a quickening taking place upon the Earth, which will soon manifest in great upheavals. This has to do with a time process now underway,

something that is natural to the process of *metamorphosis through involution*. This happens naturally over time, but now it has been quickened *unnaturally* through the constant pummeling of the Earth with bombs (by way of drones, missiles, airplanes, etc.), as well as with (sonic) booms, fracking, deep-water (oil) drilling, nuclear tests, etc.

Imagine an eggshell being pummeled in this way. In nature, when a shell is ready to open (“hatch”), it occurs naturally in one place – on the surface of the egg. By way of analogy, comparing the uppermost layer of Mother Earth with an eggshell, with this present destructive activity, the “eggshell” is being fractured all over the Earth. Moreover, the mirroring of the spilling of human blood and animal blood on the face of the Earth will soon be experienced as the spilling of the *blood of the Earth* coming from its center – out to the surface.

If we look at the image of the annular eclipse of the Sun occurring today (September 1, 2016) visible across central Africa, we become aware of a great darkness over the Earth, with little light remaining visible. Expressed as an image, the swastika is turning (rising) again. Yet despite the darkness, we know the Sun is still there. We need always to remember that the Sun is there. Also, it should not be forgotten that the swastika is an ancient symbol for our local Sun, as well as the galactic swastika of the Central Sun with its four spiral arms.

The process of shattering the Earth, which has begun (particularly through the military and industrial applications of technology), could be stopped here on the Earth tomorrow. This would allow the Earth to rest in peace and to recover her equilibrium. Any place on Earth where peace can be established can be as a sacrament for the entire Earth.

In a condition of darkness the Sun appears to withdraw from the Earth. Nevertheless, the rays of the Sun are capable of penetrating the veil of darkness around the Earth – a veil often created artificially by human beings in order to block out the Sun. In this connection, we can think, for example, of chemtrails being created artificially in this respect.¹

Little pockets of spiritually-minded human beings on the Earth, where peace and order are spiritually maintained, are locations that are more receptive to receive what is raying in from the Sun. The Sun’s rays are potentized with spiritual substance from spiritual realms. They become a sacrament raying out over the Earth. The Earth then receives this sacrament, which penetrates into the depths of the Earth. Think of the Sun’s rays at the time of an annular solar eclipse producing a “ring of fire”, which can be thought of cosmically as a *wedding ring* between the Sun and the Earth. The Sun’s rays penetrate through the darkness at the time of the eclipse.

The image shifted. A dark penetrating ray began to cut into the wedding ring, entering from above and cutting into the central circular stone – a dark cut that split the stone into two halves.

Attending Angel: Behold the sign! The track of today’s annular solar eclipse passes across central-southern Africa, splitting Africa into two halves. Africa is the heart of the Earth. The sign is that of

¹ Dane Wigington, *Chemtrails are the Greatest Threat to Life on Earth*—article and ½ hour video: <http://usawatchdog.com/chemtrails-are-greatest-threat-to-life-on-earth-dane-wigington/>

the heart split into two. We tend to think of the heart of Africa as a dark Mother's heart beating in resonance with the rhythms of Mother Earth.

Africa is a jewel. Long ago, a marriage took place between Africa and the heavens. The Zulu high priest Credo Mutwa speaks of this, with reference to the oral tradition handed down through the generations. In the course of time, Africa has been forsaken, mistreated, and plundered. All of these misdeeds have been written into the Akasha Chronicle and live on in the etheric body of Africa, which is even now moaning with tragedy. Mother Earth has a "karmic bank account" for every human being.

All the animals have helped to bring a process to bear upon the healing of Africa. There at present the animals act out violence. As human beings befriend one another in peace, the animals will one day lay down together in peace. ("And the wolf will dwell with the lamb. And the leopard will lie down with the young goat. And the calf and the young lion and the fattened calf will graze together. And a little child will lead them." – Isaiah 11:6.) This process is true for all the creatures of the earth. The animals are bearing something of the astral forces of the human race and they act this out in violence, which shows us that inhuman violence is at work within human beings. In a sense the animals are helping to process the negativity of the human race. And we, through the negative impact of our technology, are destroying this balancing grace.

The image shifted again. The central stone that had been split into two halves merged into the image of a giant sunflower, with a dark center and golden petals raying out in all directions. The flower was being consumed by fire from below. The meaning was not clear. Was this a warning? In this connection, there came the image of the submergence of a culture, a whole civilization – modern buildings, etc. – being completely submerged.

The closing image was Sophia beaming in from afar as Isis with wings arching up at her sides. Then the central figure of Isis merged into the head of a lion (the annular solar eclipse of today, September 1, 2016, is in the middle of Leo). The Lion's face was encircled with four powerful crystals raying out. We were left with the impression that this eclipse was bearing great influence upon the earth.

Robert

Despite the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty of 1996, signed by 183 nation-states, North Korea has violated this with atomic tests in 2006, 2009, 2013, and with further tests in 2016; in addition, the U.S. and NATO militaries used DU ("depleted uranium") penetrator rounds in the 1991 Gulf War, the Bosnia war (1995), the bombing of Serbia (1999), and the 2003 invasion of Iraq. In the 1991 Gulf War alone, it is estimated that between 315 and 350 tons of DU were used! This release of enormous amounts of radioactive uranium at certain locations upon the Earth constitutes a massive assault on Mother Earth that will bear consequences into the far-distant future. To this sequence, the 2011 Fukushima catastrophe, through which radioactive contaminated water is continuing to leak into the Pacific ocean, has to be added. Dr. Helen Caldicott, an author and anti-nuclear advocate, says:

There is no way to prevent the radioactive water [from] reaching the western shores of the North American continent and then circulating around the rest of the Pacific Ocean. At the moment, it seems like this is going to occur for the rest of time.”²

And it is reckoned that it will take thirty to forty years at a cost of approximately \$100 billion to decontaminate the damaged Fukushima nuclear power plant.

As I have often described, there are different levels of meaning to the swastika, which is a very ancient symbol. In India the swastika is found etched upon many temples in both forms – clockwise and counterclockwise. Before going further in relation to our endeavor to understand the 2016 swastika crop circle, let us try to grasp the meaning of these two different representations of the swastika. The Nazi emblem shows a swastika with the four arms which, when viewed statically, are stretching to the right in a clockwise direction, and thus this swastika is sometimes referred to as “right facing.” However, if one imagines this swastika rotating dynamically, then it is rotating counterclockwise, and the four arms can be seen as trailing behind the overall motion.

In Valentin Tomberg’s *Lord’s Prayer Course*, translated into English and available as study material (in installments) from the Sophia Foundation, it is indicated that the swastika is a symbol for the root chakra, the 4-petal lotus flower, which Valentin Tomberg describes as the lotus flower of the subconscious will. Further, as I have described in *Hermetic Astrology*, volume 1, the three lower chakras – the root chakra with four petals corresponding to the Moon, the sacral chakra with six petals corresponding to Venus, and the solar plexus chakra with ten petals corresponding to Mercury – are the lotus flowers of the subconscious will, feeling and thinking of the human being. The heart chakra with twelve petals, corresponding to the Sun, is the lotus flower of the “I,” which holds thought, feeling, and will in balance. In other words, ideally the three lower chakras should follow the guidance of the heart lotus flower, which is the “inner Sun” in the human being.

If one of these three lower chakras unfolds its activity independently of the guidance of the Sun-filled “I,” this is a sign that the human being has succumbed to one or other of the three temptations which assailed Christ during the forty days in the wilderness. The first temptation, described by Rudolf Steiner in his lectures on *The Fifth Gospel*, is that of the *will to power*, indicated in the words of the tempter, which can be rendered in modern English approximately as: “If you bow down and worship me, I shall give you all the kingdoms of the world.” This is the temptation which presents itself when the root chakra becomes the guiding force in the human being instead of the heart chakra aligned with the higher chakras above the heart. The Nazi swastika – rotating *counterclockwise* when viewed dynamically – can be understood as a symbol of the 4-petal lotus flower that has become (or is in the process of becoming) an organ for the *will to power* arising from subconscious depths. We thus have to distinguish between the static perspective, in which the Nazi swastika is seen as clockwise, and the dynamic perspective, when the swastika is rotating, in which the Nazi swastika is clearly rotating in a counterclockwise direction. What does this signify?

First it must be grasped that the counterclockwise movement *does not necessarily mean* that the root chakra has succumbed to the will to power. The fact of the depiction of both the clockwise spinning swastika and the counterclockwise rotating swastika as sacred symbols on Hindu

² <http://www.truth-out.org/news/item/34565-radioactive-water-from-fukushima-is-leaking-into-the-pacific>

temples communicates to us that in ancient India the Moon forces of the 4-petal lotus flower rightfully predominated at that time, but were, generally speaking, of a very pure nature.³ In other words, in the ancient Indian culture that began after the great flood that destroyed Atlantis – some 7500 years before Christ – people of that culture were by and large pure in heart and soul. This purity ensured that the will to power was tamed naturally.

Since those times in antiquity, however, there has been an increasing cultural degeneration, so that now purity has to be consciously cultivated in order to make up for the loss of the childlike innocence of human beings from those ancient times. In the book *Meditations on the Tarot* it is described how the Sun-filled forces of the true “I,” streaming from the heart chakra, need to be guided to the other chakras, just as the Sun’s rays stream toward the planets of our solar system.⁴ The goal for the human being is that the other chakras become *solarized* with the help of the heart chakra and with the help of Christ, i.e. not only the heart chakra but all the chakras are to become sunlike and radiant, as may be seen in the case of saints.

Let us recall that already in 1872 the swastika, a solar symbol – one of humanity’s most ancient symbols – was put forward as *the* symbol of the Aryan race by the French anti-Semitic orientalist and Sanskrit scholar Émile-Louis Bernouf (1821-1907). Thus the swastika was launched as an Aryan symbol in the European mind. Friedrich Krohn, who was associated with the German nationalist-occult group the Thule Society, encouraged Adolf Hitler to use the swastika as the centerpiece of the flag for the NSDAP (Nazi party). Krohn produced a design for the form in which the Nazis came to use the symbol, although there are conflicting views as to whether Krohn’s swastika was spinning in a clockwise or in a counterclockwise direction. As we shall see in the following, there is some justification for considering that Hitler adopted the inverted swastika symbol, thereby imbuing it with an evil connotation. In its clockwise rotational form, it has good and light-filled meanings associated with the Sun – or, rather, as we shall see below, with the clockwise rotating Central Sun at the heart of our galaxy. These considerations, however, are not derived from the ancient Hindu symbolism of the swastika, featuring both directions of rotation of this symbol, but are to be seen solely within the context under discussion here.

As a solar symbol, the swastika is properly thought of as *spinning*, and the Hindus have always believed the symbol denoted luck, since the Sanskrit word *svastika* means *good fortune* and *well being*. Inspired by Krohn’s design, Hitler came up with a flag for the Nazi party featuring a red background, a white circle in the center, with a black counterclockwise rotating swastika in the white circle. As comes to expression in his book *Mein Kampf*:

The red represents the social idea of the Nazi movement, the white disk represents the nationalist idea, and the black swastika, used in Aryan cultures for millennia, represents the mission of the struggle for the victory of the Aryan man.” (This is not an exact translation of the text in *Mein Kampf*, but gives the essential meaning.)

³ Rudolf Steiner, *Ancient Myths and their Meaning* (Toronto: Steiner Center, 1991), lecture of January 8, 1918, describes that the Moon forces associated with the 4 petal lotus flower—on the whole imbued with purity—predominated among the population of the ancient Indian culture during the Age of Cancer.

⁴ Anonymous, *Meditations on the Tarot* (New York: Penguin/Putnam-Tarcher, 2002), chapter 9.

Mein Kampf reveals that Hitler was completely driven by the will to power. Instead of “Not my will, but thy will be done,” (Mathew 26:39; Luke 22:42), because of the intention underlying it, the Nazi swastika brought to expression, “My will be done.” Here the will asserts itself as the uppermost principle, divorced from the heart, which is the bearer of and the expression of love. In this connection we can understand why in *Meditations on the Tarot* it is emphasized how important it is for the three lower chakras to be subordinate to – guided by – the heart chakra.

Let us now consider the great cosmic archetype of the swastika: the *galactic swastika*. Although not immediately apparent, the galactic swastika is to be found when we contemplate a map of our Milky Way galaxy. See, for example, the various maps belonging to the Wikipedia article on the Milky Way, which depict four spiral arms proceeding from the Galactic Center. These four arms spiral out from the Galactic Center, also known in esotericism as the *Central Sun*. The term Central Sun is highly appropriate, as most of the stars belonging to the Milky Way galaxy – thought to be at least one hundred billion in number, but considered by many astronomers to be perhaps two hundred billion or even more – have been born out of the Central Sun and are essentially miniature copies of the Galactic Center.

When we contemplate the four great spiral arms proceeding from the Central Sun, we can envisage that over a vast period of time most of the Suns of our Milky Way galaxy were born out of the Central Sun in four directions, with the older stars at the ends of their respective arms and the younger stars near the Galactic Center. However, since as seen from the vantage point of the northern hemisphere the Central Sun rotates in a clockwise direction, the four arms, instead of forming a cross in cosmic space, form into spirals through the clockwise rotation of the Galactic Center. Here we find the archetype for the galactic swastika. Against this background, a clockwise rotating swastika can be thought of as a symbolic representation of our Milky Way galaxy with its four spiral arms.

Modern astronomy recognizes other “side arms” in addition to the four main spiral arms proceeding from the Galactic Center. For example, our Sun belongs to one such side arm known as the Orion arm, because when we are gazing at the constellation of Orion, we are looking toward the center of our “local arm,” the Orion arm. However, modern astronomy has not yet been able to answer the question: Which of the four main spiral arms has our local arm separated from long ago?

It thus emerges that the *clockwise* spinning swastika symbolically represents the heavenly realm of the galaxy at the center of which is the Central Sun, while the *counterclockwise* rotating swastika symbolically signifies something juxtaposed to the Heavenly Father, whose heart is represented by the Central Sun. Since the root chakra, symbolized by the swastika, is the portal down to the Earth Mother and her realm (known in Tibetan Buddhism as *Shambhala*, at the heart of the Earth), the counterclockwise spinning swastika can be seen in relationship to the Earth Mother, who is indeed juxtaposed to the Heavenly Father. And on the other hand, the clockwise rotating swastika relates to the Heavenly Father, the Creator, whose heart is represented by the Central Sun from which everything in our galaxy has proceeded.

These considerations regarding the swastika may help us to grasp the significance of the crop circle swastika that appeared on August 27, 2016.

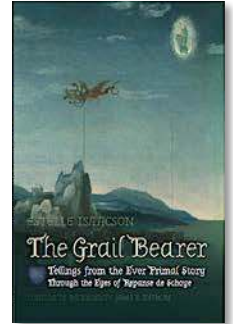
Article excerpted from Estelle Isaacson's new book *The Grail Bearer* (LogoSophia, 2016):

Parsifal's First Visit to the Grail Castle

Estelle Isaacson

Parsifal's First Visit to the Grail Castle

That evening all made ready for the feast, as though a prince were being fêted. Banners and garlands were hung throughout the Great Hall, fireplaces at either end festooned, and great crackling fires laid. Finely-woven rugs were spread over the stone floor, and all the Castle folk, of whatever degree, dressed in their finest. As the grand event unfolded, I was reminded vividly of the Last Supper of Christ. I shall do my best to describe what I beheld:



Procession of the Bleeding Lance

Parsifal was brought in, brilliant in Repanse's cloak, and given the seat of honor beside Anfortas the Fisher King — or as some might call him, the Noble Angler — who reclined upon a couch. Knights and Maidens were seated on splendid couches also, set around the perimeter of the Great Hall. Servants had earlier taken their stations, awaiting their time to serve. All was done with great ceremony. Then, just before the feast was to begin, a Page entered the Great Hall bearing the sky-fallen Lance that had wounded Anfortas. It was dripping blood, which soaked the Page's sleeve as he processed around the room. At sight of the Lance, all present — servants, Knights, and Maidens (save Repanse's Maidservants, waiting in another room) —suffered renewed pangs of sympathy for their wounded King, and untold tears were shed. It was borne in upon me again, with great force, how this was the very Lance that had pierced Christ's side as he hung upon the Cross. Indeed, it had pierced Christ's very heart.

Parsifal beheld all this, and one would think he might have turned to Anfortas, or to others ranged nearby, to search out the meaning of this spectacle, but such he failed to do. For so taken was he by the evident pain of all present — and the great wave of emotion surging through the Hall — that his attention turned even more inward than before, his outer eyes even more downcast. Distracted he was, not knowing how to meet this strange event, nor endure its stifling sorrow.

Repanse's Maidservants

But just then, as the Maidservants of Repanse entered, the great, welling sadness that had washed over the Castle folk suddenly abated, for their purity and beauty seemed to lift the great weight of grief and invite a very different spirit into the Hall.¹ And so now did the feast commence with much ceremony as the Maidservants processed into the Hall bearing bright-lit candelabras. Others carried a high altar table. All were crowned with flowers and wore beautiful gowns in rich colors.

¹ The earlier absence of Repanse's Maidservants (or "Holy Maidservants," as now they seemed) from the Great Hall during the procession of the Bleeding Lance was a kind of inversion of events at the Cross, when most of the Holy Women witnessed the lancing of Christ's side, whereas all the male disciples save John had run to some surrounding caves for fear of their lives. The intimation here was that the Maidservants may have been spared the bloody Lance procession because in another life some at least might have been among the Holy Women present when the Lance first pierced Christ—or at least represented them now in some emblematic way.

Some of the Maidservants set up the altar table before Anfortas and Parsifal. They had carried it in pieces, which they solemnly assembled. The altar top was fashioned from a single slab of translucent stone most beautifully carved. Others of Repanse's Maidservants brought in a long, narrow, embroidered tapestry, which was laid over the altar, and also curious small lanterns, long and slender, which in turn were set upon it. Still others brought silver and linens.

The Maidservants formed two rows to greet and honor Repanse as she walked between them to the altar carrying the Holy Grail, which gleamed in the candlelight. She was attired in some of the articles of clothing she had worn at the time she had taken her Grail vows, though in lieu of the swan-feathered cape and headdress she had then worn, on her head now was a golden diadem resembling a Sun with points coming out from it, and over her white gown a golden, richly embroidered cape (the likes of which was seldom seen at the time), fastened over the right shoulder with a large brooch.

Repanse was filled with a Pleroma of Light such as she had never before experienced. For the first time in many months she felt renewed by the Grail. All thoughts of hopelessness were now banished from her mind. As she looked across the altar to Anfortas reclining on his couch, wincing in pain — yet all the while struggling to be gracious and noble — she realized just how much she loved him! Her soul swelled with her love for him. She felt, nay *knew*, also that this was a Moment of Destiny. She looked around the Great Hall at the assembled Knights seated at table, some with their Lady-Loves. As the feast began it seemed that, at least during this charmed interlude, all grief and sorrow was assuaged.

With the altar thus set, vessels of fragrant water were distributed among the tables, so all could wash their hands and faces before setting about the meal. Servants were positioned at each table to attend to this.² After the washing vessels were removed, some of the Maidservants brought in loaves of fresh bread, after which libations of wine were poured. All shared in the Lord's Supper, with Repanse de Schoye presiding as priestess of this sacred Rite,³ her Twelve Maidservants assisting. Repanse herself served her brother and Parsifal. As she set the bread and wine before Anfortas, there came to her in brief compass an understanding of how she had all along regarded him as her beacon of love — also of Divine Love — so that in consequence of his misdeed she had been blinded to the Divine and left in the dark as to how to restore the connection. But now, passing the bread and wine to her wounded brother, she saw in vision how through her giving — through her caring for her brother and remaining ever by his side — she had come to know the Love bestowed by Christ as he sacrificed himself, not for one only, but for all humankind. She was flooded with Divine Love in recognition of this truth, and able finally to feel true Love not only for Anfortas, but also for herself.

Throughout all her deeds of sacrifice, she had not been able to fully receive this Divine Love until this very moment as she set before Anfortas the bread and wine. For in doing this she was presenting her brother — her suffering brother — as an offering to her Lord. Finally, as she presented to him the Body of Christ, she was able to leave Anfortas in Christ's hands.

² Here came another intimation, that this washing before the meal was in some way related to the Washing of the Feet just prior to the Last Supper.

³ The Grail Rite was not like the Mass of today, but far simpler.

One by one, all present now came forward to accept sustenance from the Grail, each being given exactly and uniquely — that is, in due measure — what they could at that moment best employ. All these doings were of a magical nature. In our time we would not be able to fathom what took place that evening. We would be unable to grasp how an object could somehow conjure just what we most need, whether physical or spiritual. Truly, there was magic in it. Parsifal watched all this in wonder, for neither could he — even in that time — fathom it.⁴

Parsifal Fails to Ask the Question

Parsifal beheld Anfortas's suffering also, but remained in some sort beclouded through the course of the evening. He *wanted* to ask of Anfortas — or of those around him — the cause of his suffering, but then the voice of the esteemed teacher⁵ who had warned him not to ask too many questions would intervene.

Near the end of the feast, Anfortas presented to Parsifal his own sword, which was imbued with magical powers. At that moment Parsifal conceived a great love for Anfortas and a desire to remain by him. But within a short time, through some unknown influence, he came to forget these thoughts and feelings. Indeed, not long after his departure from the Castle the following day, the memory of all that had transpired on that wondrous night faded into some shaded cranny in his mind, and he was unable to find meaning in any part thereof.

By failing to ask the question “What ails thee?” he had let slip the opportunity to bring about the healing of Anfortas, and thus of the Castle and its whole company. Repanse, deeply saddened that the healing of Anfortas had not come to pass, took some comfort at least in her knowledge, lately gained, that his healing was now safely in the hands of Christ and subject to a tempo of his composing, as also to the will of God. She had done all she could and must now abide in patience.

There are of course many further teachings that could be given regarding this event, but they will have to come another time.



⁴ This came as an intimation that Parsifal might be regarded as a harbinger of the future, perhaps especially the present time, for as just pointed out his understanding was not so much of the time in which he was then living, as of our own, when—perhaps providentially through these pages—some parts of his story may be further told, and be of special help to our contemporaries.

⁵ Gurnemanz

The Intelligence of the Heart

Harrie Salman

In traditional cultures the human heart played an essential role as the seat of wisdom, emotion and courage. Before the rise of the intellect in the brain, the heart was the center of intelligence; people thought with their heart. In our time Anthroposophy speaks of the necessity to connect the brain with the heart: we must learn to think with the heart in full consciousness.

The human heart in old cultures

In every language there are sayings about the heart. They show how people looked at the role of the human heart. One such saying in the English language is “What the heart thinks, the mouth speaks.” In many cases there are similar ways of speaking in other languages, but every language also has its own sayings about the heart that are sometimes difficult to translate.

The ancient cultures had no idea of the function of the brain. In Egypt the brains were usually removed in the process of embalming and thrown away. People did not need them in the afterlife. The heart remained in the body. It would be weighed under the supervision of Osiris, the god of the Underworld. If it was heavier than the Feather of Truth, it would be devoured by a monster; if it was lighter, then one could enter the afterlife.

The central role of the heart is also visible in the Bible, where the word “heart” appears over 800 times. For example: “Wisdom rests in the heart of one who has understanding” (Proverbs 14:33) and “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God” (Matthew 5:8).



*The Weighing of the Heart
from The Egyptian Book of the Dead*

Thinking with the head

The development of the intellect gave mankind a new approach to an understanding of reality. Instead of the wisdom of the heart and clairvoyant knowledge we can now use our reason and conceptual thinking to make sense of our world. This began with Greek philosophy, in which well-defined concepts and rules of logic, as developed by Aristotle, led to more abstract thought processes. In the course of time this new thinking with the head gradually replaced the traditional thinking with the heart. In the Middle Ages we find head-thinking appearing in the universities and later spreading through the Western school system. Today it is all-pervasive in the world of the computer. In many non-Western cultures the heart-thinking has mostly disappeared in the course of the 20th century.

Much of this relocation of the seat of thinking happened in the 17th century, evinced by the new scientific thinking that saw the heart just as a pump, responsible for the circulation of the blood. Yet parallel to such developments in science – and in reaction to the mechanical view of the heart – a devotion to the heart of Jesus appeared at the end of the Middle Ages. The Catholic church was reluctant to introduce a new cult, because there also the idea of the heart as a pump had gained

ground. But in 1765 the Catholic church allowed the celebration of the feast of the Holy Heart of Jesus, at first only in Poland and later in the whole world. A manifestation of this cult was the construction of the famous church of the *Sacré Coeur* (the Sacred Heart) in Paris. Also in the 17th century the French philosopher Blaise Pascal formulated the idea that “the heart has its reasons that the intellect does not know,” trying to point people to this heart understanding that was being gradually lost, or overlain by the emphasis on the brain and head as the seta of thinking. In the 20th century, in his *Little Prince*, the French writer Antoine de Saint-Exupéry expressed the idea that “only with the heart we can see well.”

Anthroposophy

In his early work *The Philosophy of Freedom* Rudolf Steiner remarked at the end of the first chapter: “The path to the heart goes through the head.” He established that we need our conscious mind when we connect with our heart. In his lectures Steiner gave a new spiritual vision of the heart: it is the center of our soul, the seat of conscience, the place of our self-consciousness. Here our higher being lives in us.

At the end of his life, Steiner wrote a short text on the thinking heart.¹ In early times, he said, the archangel Michael was the guardian of cosmic intelligence and sent thoughts into the souls of men. Later, human beings began to create their own thoughts that became ever more materialistic – connected to the solid, material state of the earth that was experienced around them. Now the time has come when our thoughts can be inspired again by the spiritual world. To make this possible Michael, in his quality of time-spirit (*Zeitgeist*),² wants to live in the souls of men, in their hearts. He liberates the thoughts from the realm of the head and opens the path to the heart. “The hearts begin to have thoughts,” wrote Steiner.

Rudolf Steiner made clear that the heart is not a pump. It is an organ with exceptional qualities; it is a sense organ able to read from the blood that passes through the heart information from all parts of the body. In his lectures Steiner revealed the spiritual functions of the heart.³ In the course of time, he said, a fifth heart chamber will develop. In our etheric heart (that living spiritual heart that forms, gives life to, the material physical one) a new sense organ is growing with which we can perceive Christ in the etheric sphere.

Modern heart research

In the last four decades scientific research has fundamentally changed the knowledge of the human heart.⁴ The heart is no longer regarded as a pump in the new paradigm of cardiology, although orthodox science has not fully embraced this at all, and many people still adhere to the

This text was edited by Tom Raines and published in *New View*, Summer 2016.

¹ Rudolf Steiner, *Anthroposophical Leading Thoughts*, text before nr. 79.

² Steiner saw periods of human development as guided by angelic hierarchies, as Time Spirits. The present activity of the being known in Christian theology as the archangel Michael began in 1879 and will last for some 350 years. This is the “Age of Michael.”

³ Ehrenfried Pfeiffer, *Heart Lectures*, Spring Valley, 1982.

⁴ Rollin McCraty, *Science of the Heart*, Vol 2. Boulder Creek, 2015 (a publication of the HeartMath Institute that gives an overview of its research), Joseph Chilton Pearce, *The Heart-Mind Matrix – How the Heart Can Teach the Mind New Ways to Think*, Rochester, 2012.

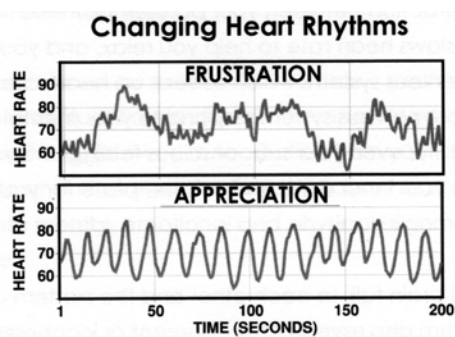
notion of the heart as a pump. It does not push the blood through the arteries and veins, but it actually sucks the blood towards it. The blood does not move in a straight direction, but it moves in spirals, which makes it easier to flow. The heart modulates by its contractions the ever changing rhythm of the blood circulation. We also now know that in the development of the human embryo the heart is created out of an already functioning blood circulation. The brain then appears after the formation of the heart.

About 60% of the cells of the heart are not muscle cells, but nerve cells that are connected with all parts of the body. Through these nerve cells and through sensors inside the heart, the heart receives information. It reacts to this information by releasing hormones into the blood and by sending messages to the brain. This upward stream is even bigger than the downward stream from the brain to the heart. The heart is in fact a complex information-processing center that has its own functional "brain." This could be called the "heart-brain."

The heart creates a pulsating electromagnetic field around us with a diameter of about 2 m. The electric field of the heart is 60 times stronger than the field of the brain. Its magnetic field is even 100 times stronger than the magnetic field of the brain. These fields envelop every cell of our body and communicate with the fields of the people around us. This energetic communication between people can influence their brain rhythms and make them more sensitive to each other.

The heart communicates with the brain in the head – and other parts of the body, not only through its powerful electromagnetic field, but also through the nervous system, the release of hormones and the pressure wave of the heartbeat.

In this new research the heart appears as the director of the rhythmic system of the body. It harmonizes the rhythms of the different parts of the body. This affirms the description given by Steiner, in his threefold picture of the human being, of the task of the rhythmic system (breathing, blood circulation) within the polarity of the nerve-sense system and the metabolic-limb system.



Changing heart rhythms (heart rate variability), calculated on the basis of the time intervals between two heartbeats. The upper figure shows the chaotic variations in the heart rhythm, caused by frustration. The lower figure shows the natural variations in the heart rhythm in a state of giving appreciation. This coherent pattern is due to a balance between the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems.

The coherence of the heart rhythm

In 1991 the HeartMath Institute was founded in California to conduct research on the intelligence of the heart and to help people achieve inner balance. A statement of its mission says that it wants "to help people bring their physical, mental and emotional systems into balanced alignment with their heart's intuitive guidance."

The basic area of research is the effect of stress on the heart rhythm and the ways of coping with this stress. Under stress people act less intelligently, their blood pressure rises, and they may lose their inner balance. Their learning processes, their social functioning and their immune system are also negatively affected. This is visible in the rhythm of the heart. In a normal situation the time interval between two heartbeats is generally about one second. In situations

of stress the time intervals between two heartbeats become completely irregular and this produces a chaotic and incoherent heart rhythm. This can be made visible in a graphic image of the heart rhythm (see above).

The HeartMath Institute developed techniques and offers trainings to make the heart rhythm more coherent in situations of stress, helping people to relieve stress and achieve a higher level of inner balance, health, creativity and intuitive insight. The basic technique is to breathe consciously – slowly and deeply. For example: we can place a hand on our heart and imagine that we breathe in and out through our heart. In a next step we can recall a situation or a place that is connected with a positive feeling. We can also send a feeling of appreciation to another person or to ourselves. In this condition we can ask our heart to give us answers and guidance, a way forward, in the stressful situations.⁵

In general, every positive feeling has a positive effect on the coherence of the heart rhythm. Love, compassion and forgiveness open deeper levels of coherence. Also meditation, praying, listening to and playing harmonious music, singing, enjoying nature, can help us achieve coherence and connect with the intuitions of our heart. This can be done on a daily basis to make us more resilient in the situations of stress.

The intelligence of our heart

The recent research on the heart and the discoveries of the HeartMath Institute create a new perspective on the vision of the “spiritualization of thinking” that Steiner offered. In human evolution three brains (centers of intelligence) have developed, reflecting three ways people have thought in different periods of history – the brain of the guts (our unconscious, instinctive brain in the metabolic system), then the brain of the heart and now our fairly recent intellectual brain (in the head). These three brains have to be brought into balance by the spiritual intelligence of a coherently beating heart that can deal with the stress of modern life.

The dominance of our intellect has caused great problems, on a personal, social and global level. The essential problems cannot be solved by our intellect. The wisdom of the heart is needed: the intellect must be guided by the intelligence of the heart. Our heart can show us things that the head does not always understand. We take our most important decisions by listening to our heart, in a condition of inner balance and harmony. This turn to the intelligence of our heart requires a process of purification, because the heart also has fears pressing into it, and can harbour negativity and its dark spaces. Before an inner sun can shine out of our heart a deep personal transformation is therefore necessary. This work of healing is soul work.

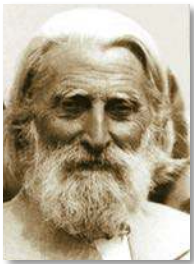
In esoteric Christianity, the purified soul is seen in the image of Sophia (divine wisdom). The opening of the heart to divine wisdom is a preparation for the conscious connection with our higher being and with Christ. This is not the Christ of the formal Christian religions, where he is – from the point of view of esoteric Christianity – only partially understood and often conflated with the human being Jesus. A new and deeper understanding of Christ was developed by Steiner and

⁵ Doc Childre (and others), *Heart Intelligence – Connecting with the Intuitive Guidance of the Heart*, Boulder Creek, 2016.

by the Bulgarian spiritual teacher Peter Deunov, who has said that Christ wants to live in the human heart, that he is waiting for us to open the door of our heart.

The work we do in the development of our heart intelligence will strengthen the physiological and health-supporting functions of the heart, its function as the coordinator of the body rhythms, its role as the source of emotional and social intelligence, and its role as the carrier of our higher being with its moral consciousness, creativity and wisdom. The intelligence of the heart enables us to think in a holistic, moral and spiritual way and to develop higher forms of consciousness. This is a next step in the evolution of humanity in which already many people from all over the world participate.

The Bulgarian Spiritual Teacher Peter Deunov (1864-1944)
On the Human Heart



The following quotations have been collected and translated by Harrie Salman from the books *Peter Deunov – Zdrave, sila I zhivot* (compiled by Svetla Baltova, MD), Plovdiv, Bulgaria, 2010, and *The Master Beinsa Douno – Health and Sickness* (compiled by Vassil Velev, MD), Sofia, Bulgaria, 2002.

The heart is the pulsation of the whole cosmos. Every beat of the heart is cosmic. This shows that the heart is connected with the cosmic energy. With every heartbeat comes new energy, as a result of which the whole organism renews itself.

The blood circulation is due to the electromagnetic streams (of the cosmos). If they did not support the movement of the arterial blood, the heart would not have this possibility itself. But the blood moves in the human organism because of the fact that there is a cosmic pulsation in the world, that continuously regulates the blood circulation of all organisms.

Therefore, if you want your heart to be healthy, you must keep in balance your brain (where the electrical streams of nature flow) and the *plexus solaris* (where the magnetic stream flow). To keep your brain in balance we must keep away from conflicting thoughts. To keep your *plexus solaris* in balance, never allow negative feelings in your heart.

From the heart of every man comes a stream of light which spreads through the whole body. This stream shows the level of development of human feelings.

Everybody loves the person from whose heart wells up generosity. Generosity revives man. The vitality that flows out of man is due to the generosity of their heart.

Apart from the heart in the physical body, man has a heart in his spiritual and in his mental body, that also serves to send energies to these bodies, in order that all parts of the human organism are nourished by spiritual and material substance. Through his three hearts man is connected with the three cosmic energies that serve the whole development of his organism. What is the healthy pulse? A pulse in which there is music and rhythm.

Each blockage in feelings brings in some abnormality in the functions of the heart, as a result of which its pulsation changes. To restore the normal functions of the heart, man should get in alignment with Nature, connect his heart with the universal pulsation of the cosmic heart.

The heart of our solar system is the Sun. The rhythmical movements of the blood in the human heart are determined by the rhythmical waves of the Sun. Therefore, when the heart of man functions improperly, this is a symptom that he has violated his relationship with the Sun.

An affirmation: "I want my heart to beat rhythmically, to merge with the pulsation of the Sun and to send its energy properly through the whole organism, as the Sun sends its energies through the whole world."

Heart and mind

I understand "heart" and "mind" as the two principles that God placed in us as intelligent forces. The heart must be filled with the thoughts of the mind and the mind must be filled with the wishes of the heart.

There must be a connection between the images of the mind and the aspirations of the heart. The mind always strives downwards, the heart always upwards. Consequently it is not the mind that influences the heart, but the heart influences the brain. The brain gives direction to the heart, but the influence of the heart is more powerful. Powerful natures are not those who have a powerful mind, but those who have a powerful heart. And the heart itself has intelligence.

The intelligent forces that formed the human heart are placed higher than the forces that formed the mind. The human heart has been formed by the cherubim and seraphim, who are the highest angels.

Consciousness is not an attribute of the human mind, nor does it have something in common with the mind. Consciousness is only a principle of the heart, it carries light in itself. Consciousness is only connected with the human heart. When we say that man leads a conscious life, we do not mean in the least an intelligent and learned life. Everything that consciousness carries has been experienced. In consciousness there is nothing that is not experienced. Consequently, consciousness is a basis, a foundation on which the human mind can develop and grow.

In the present conditions everybody must develop his consciousness. Be assured that your heart and your mind develop correctly. That your thoughts, your will and your wishes grow correctly. It is said: *I think with my heart*. That applies only to the conscious life. We do not say: *I think with my head*, but: *I thought with my heart*.

The intelligent heart

A majority of people are not well-disposed spiritually; they are nervous, only because they do not evoke in themselves the manifestations of the intelligent heart. When it begins to speak, you say: don't listen to your heart, listen to your mind. No, in the first place, man should listen to his intelligent heart, and then to his mind. ... Your intelligent heart shall stay as the foundation of your life, and from this foundation your mind shall develop in a new direction.

Vladimir Solovyov on Evil and the Sophia

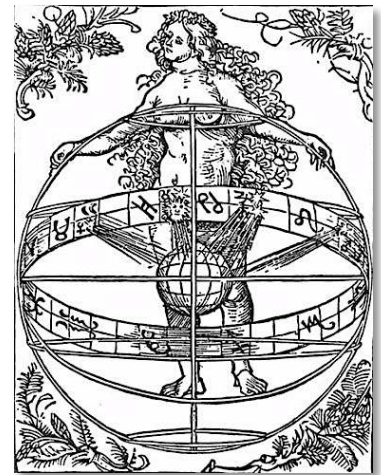
John O'Meara

1

A Summary of His Cosmogony

When speaking of the “Fall” we bear in mind, of course, that there was a cosmic Fall long before Humankind had its Fall. In the Gnostic account, the cosmic Fall is presented as the Fall of the Sophia. This account clearly served Solovyov as an inspirational parallel for his own concept of the cosmic Fall when he was developing, from an early age, his own elaborate cosmogony. However, in his account of that Fall, Solovyov divagates significantly from the Gnostic account as narrated, for example, in the *Pistis Sophia*, in spite of the fact that Solovyov was, from early on, familiar with this work. In the *Pistis Sophia* very clearly it is the Sophia Herself who falls; Solovyov, for his part, throughout his work keeps the Sophia scrupulously free from the Fall. In Solovyov it is rather what he calls the “World Soul” that falls. The term derives from a tradition of thought originating with Plato and continued through Plotinus, according to which the universe unfolds from its spiritual otherworld to material manifestation through the triadic series Spirit, Mind or Logos, and World Soul (Kornblatt 45). This triad undergoes a further extension in Solovyov’s thought where the Sophia comes into the picture, Spirit also appearing as God, and Mind or Logos as Christ — thus, God, Christ, and the Sophia — but always it is the case that the Sophia Herself does not fall; it is the Word Soul that does.

Otherwise, as Solovyov puts it in *Russia and the Universal Church*, “the true cause of creation and the goal of the latter” (Kornblatt 198) is in the Sophia. At one point in this later work Solovyov explicitly says: “the World Soul herself is the opposite or antitype of the essential Divine Wisdom [the Sophia]” (198). Not a little confusion is sown by Solovyov’s scrupulous distinction, especially as World Soul and Divine Sophia are otherwise very much interassociated, at least before and after the Fall.



The World Soul

In Solovyov’s World Soul we have a cosmic entity that specifically fulfils that aspect of the nature of the Divine that *must* unfold through the materialization of the cosmos. That God can only be God by virtue of opening up the prospect of the materialization of the cosmos is one of the truly sublime aspects of Solovyov’s thought, and Solovyov goes so far as to argue that this materializing impulse is that very “delight” of God in which the Sophia originally shares (193-195). To put it bluntly, God must create the material universe. In the early unpublished work *The Sophia*, composed around the time of his third and last vision of the Sophia, Solovyov explains the principle in abstract philosophical terms: “by its very definition the absolute principle [which this work eventually defines as ‘Spirit’] cannot be deprived of anything, cannot lack anything in itself ... it must be the union of itself and of its opposite” (Kornblatt 128). At some point in *The Sophia* this “necessity” is attributed explicitly to “God” (131), and in the later *Lectures on Divine Humanity*, the point is made that “God, to exist in actuality and reality, must manifest Himself ... must act in



Solovyov

the other ..." (180). This "necessity" is in fact God's "will": in the still later *Russia and the Universal Church*, as Solovyov explains: "God ... desires that *all be God* ... that outside of Himself, there be another nature, which would gradually become what He is from all eternity" (196). God's will in this respect goes very far, indeed as far as possible, for "God loves chaos in its nonbeing as well ... for He will be able to return the rebellious existence to unity ... to fill the infinite emptiness with the abundance of His life" (196). In this respect it is a matter of God being God by *right* and not just by the operation of His *power*: "God cannot be satisfied by the fact that He is *effectively* more powerful than the chaos; He must be such *by right*" (194), and so "God gives ... freedom to chaos" (196). God manifests Himself as the Supreme Being, in the end by a remarkable kind of superfluous endowment inasmuch as "His superiority must give to chaos more than the latter deserves, making it a participant in the fullness of the absolute existence, demonstrating to it the superiority of divine fullness over the empty multiplicity of bad infinity" (195).

Thus, in contrast with a Manichean dualism, for Solovyov God originates, and indeed controls, the whole show. This notion follows from the understanding that "we cannot admit outside of God an autonomous being, a real and positive existence," and if that is the case, then "the extradivine can be nothing other than a *transformed or inverted Divine*" (Kornblatt 196). Solovyov defines the extradivine in fact as "a false aspect or illusory representation of divine universality" (198), and such an "illusory existence," he adds, needs a subject." This "subject," he notes, "cannot be God *or* His essential Wisdom [i.e., the Sophia]": "it is necessary to admit a different subject as the principle of creation in the proper sense; and this subject," he concludes, "is the World Soul." It is in this context that Solovyov paints the World Soul as "the opposite or antitype of the essential Divine Wisdom" (the Sophia). At the same time, Solovyov paints the World Soul as "the hidden foundation" of this Wisdom. Thus it is on the basis of the World Soul that the Sophia will eventually build *Her* kingdom so to speak – this, as we shall see, when the World Soul will have finally made a choice of God rather than of chaos. Choice, however, presupposes freedom, and to make such a choice the World Soul must first get to know chaos; it must "assimilate the idea of chaos," on the principle, as Solovyov had put it in *The Sophia*, that "one cannot have the potential of feeling something without having the real feeling of its opposite" (157). And that is how the cosmic Fall transpires, for as Solovyov describes the development, in *Russia and the Universal Church*: as "a pure and indeterminate [i.e., free] potentiality" (198), the World Soul "can still desire to possess the all differently ... can desire to possess it *from itself*, like God ... can assert itself outside God" (189), and so it "ends up at the multiple periphery of creation ... becomes only one among many ... [as] all things lose their common bond ... doomed to discordant, egoistic existence" (190). In this way, Solovyov observes, "all of creation is thus made subject to the vanity and bondage of corruption ... by the will of the World Soul, as the one free principle of natural life" (190).

Solovyov situates the Fall of the World Soul, in fact, in the very remote cosmic past, before the creation actually takes form. Solovyov's account at this point in fact follows closely the one we are given in the *Pistis Sophia*, except for the fact that for Solovyov it is the World Soul and not the Sophia who falls, and except for his additional idea that it was *necessary* that the World Soul should get to

know something of the chaos that was opened up with the Fall. Thus, “having assimilated the idea of chaos ... the soul arrives at the desire to liberate herself ... agitated without goal and without meaning in the abyss of darkness” (198). As with the Sophia in the Gnostic account, Solovyov’s World Soul remains in the dark, without knowing how she might proceed from there: “the World Soul experiences a confused but profound desire for unity,” and “[w]ith this desire she attracts the action of the Word ... Divinity [i.e., God] in His [ideal] manifestation” (199). In the earlier *Lectures on Divine Humanity*, in the magnificent 10th Lecture, Solovyov puts it this way: “the negative action of disintegrated being only provokes Divinity ... to positive counteraction” (Jakim 137), and the result is that a “limit” is set “to the disintegration and discord of the elements.” The created universe as we know it now takes form in the midst of the World Soul and its confusion: thus space, time, chemical affinity, gravitation, matter, and eventually, in a proper order, the astral world of the stars, the solar worlds — “of which for us only one exists, our solar sytem” (145) — “and finally, the tellurian,” i.e., “our Earth,” at the pinnacle of the creation of which human beings at last appear as the fulfilment of this order. But the Fall then repeats itself through human beings, who, on the pattern of the cosmic Fall of the World Soul, “by virtue of their limitlessness ... [likewise] wish to have the divine essence from themselves” (142), with the effect that “the world soul once more loses its inner bond with the absolute being” (143-144), and the world of evil opens up again: “the principle of evil ... emerges now ... as the individual’s conscious free act” (143).

As with the World Soul in its original cosmic Fall, humankind too is spared a total engulfment by chaos. What Solovyov calls the “cosmogonic” process of the ordering of the World Soul — star-formation, the formation of our solar system, the creation of our earth — finds its repetition in the “theogonic” process by which human beings are now taken up at first in “star-worship” (145), then, “solar religion,” then a religion of “earthly organic life” (146). Finally the “historical” process begins. There is at first, in the ancient Indian civilization, a release from the cosmic bind that has kept the universe and humankind, in spite of the threat of disintegration, in relative order



The Cosmogonic Process

by the power of the Divine. We will recall that the Divine, or God, would prove itself in its goodness, not by power alone but by actual right. Hence, humankind now comes more fully into its own freedom: “In India, the human soul was liberated from the domination of cosmic forces for the first time,” but the result was that it “was intoxicated, as it were, by its freedom” (147); it gives itself up merely to “reveries” of itself and of its ideal relation to the cosmos, even while the material world, otherwise thought of as an illusion, seethes forcefully beneath it. By the time we reach the Greco-Roman world (Solovyov passes over the Persian and the Egyptian-Chaldean epochs) the human soul finally does come free of its own self sufficiently to be able to “find its *true* content, a unitary and universal content ... in *objective* creations that actualize beauty and reason” (148). But even so, this is not enough, for this achievement “lies only in the realm of idea,” and the idea alone does not exercise full power over material reality. “[T]wo orders of being” are now highlighted: on the one hand, “material factual existence, that which is wrong or evil, the root of which is evil personal will” which

continues, and on the other “the impersonal world of pure ideas” — and these “do not find reconciliation” between them.



Greek idealism vs. evil

“[T]he ideal sphere” Solovyov goes on to say, “can merely *divert* human beings from their evil and suffering will; it cannot extinguish this will” (149). For its part, the Indian soul might declare the material world a world of “illusion,” but to declare it thus was not to “annul” it or the power of its ongoing influence and effects. Likewise with the “ideal contemplation” of the Greek: “To recognize the nothingness of one’s own factual actuality as an object in contemplation is not to make it nothing in itself. It is not really to remove it” (150). Another way of seeing this involves acknowledging that “the soul cannot eternally remain in a state of contemplation. It lives in factual actuality, and its life ... is not captured by the ideal sphere” (148). This cosmic and human situation could only have one solution: “for the divine principle actually to overcome evil ... it must be revealed to the soul as ... capable of ... taking possession of it” (150), and “it is then that God’s truth [finally] appeared — in the living person of God incarnate in humanity, Jesus Christ” (154). This incarnation could only take place, as Solovyov shows, in the Jewish soul, which unlike in the case of the soul of other peoples, fully bore in itself “the personal, subjective principle” (151), precisely *because* “[t]his character of the assertion of the subjective element in everything can be the bearer of the greatest evil as well as of the greatest good” (152). Here the point of greatest freedom was reached, co-terminous, potentially, with the fullness of the chaos that had now to be re-mastered. The process of an ultimate atonement with God could only be achieved by means of “the conquered force of the self-asserting personal will” (152). And this is what Jesus Christ proceeds to do. Solovyov paints this accomplishment not as the gratuitous act of an already all-powerful God, but as an “exploit” (156) achieved through God’s act of “self-limitation” which leaves man finally free to choose, for “[t]his self-limitation of Divinity in Christ liberates His Humanity, allowing His natural will to renounce itself freely in favor of the Divine principle” (161). In the scenes in the wilderness, Jesus Christ overcomes first the impulse “to make material welfare the goal” (161); He then renounces “the self-assertion of human personality” (161) or “the sin of the mind” (162), and at last the temptation to coerce moral choice in others, “the sin of the spirit” (162). Even so, “Christ’s feat was not exhausted by the inner self-renunciation of His human will” (163); there was still the power over our humanity of “nature,” and “sensuous nature could be delivered from the evil principle ... only ... through suffering and death.” In this way, as Solovyov shows, “nature, purified by the death on the cross, loses its material separateness ... and becomes [itself] a direct expression and instrument of the Divine Spirit”.

Since that time the task of humankind has been clear: what is now established as “the proper relationship between Divinity and nature ... attained by the person of Jesus Christ [as the incarnation of the Word] ... must be assimilated by all humankind as His body” (164). As Solovyov puts it in *Russia and the Universal Church*, since that time the “World Soul”, inasmuch as she expresses herself now through humankind, has been faced with a choice: either “she can take the false point of view of chaotic and anarchic existence” or else “abase herself before God,

attach herself to the Divine Word by her free volition, bring all creation to perfect unity and identify herself with Eternal Wisdom” (Kornblatt 198). In this picture, Eternal or Divine Wisdom, which is to say the Sophia, “represents the essential and actual all-unity of God’s absolute being,” exercising in this respect Her own “power to unify the separated and fragmented being” (201) — but only once the choice to renounce self-will and identify with Her is made. Only then does the Sophia manifest so to speak as the “unity of God and of extradivine existence ... the true cause of creation and the goal of the latter.” Solovyov draws his distinction very clearly here: “She [the Sophia] is not the World Soul; the World Soul is only the bearer, medium, and substrate of her realization.” Only after humankind has made its choice does the Divine Wisdom or Sophia “converg[e] with the World Soul through the action of the Word.” Solovyov paints the picture of the Sophia as “the guardian angel of the world” as distinct from the world’s “soul.” At the same time, Solovyov is quite aware that “the actual all-unity of God’s absolute being,” which the Sophia is said to “represent” or helps to bring about, is still a far distant goal. It is a question of only very gradually approximating to this goal, for it is “nature, as separating itself from God, the material discord, not the ideal all-unity, [that] has actual being, whereas the all-unity appears in nature as a pure tendency, originally [i.e., at the beginning of time] quite indeterminate and empty” (Jakim, 139). It remains the case, then, in spite of our knowledge of the goal, that “[i]n order to have the all-unity as a free idea ... the world soul must pass from its indeterminateness and emptiness [only] more and more [i.e., gradually] to complete determinations of the all-unity.” The whole cosmic process, that is, will have to take time, and moreover, for just the reason that nature has been plunged into chaos, it has not been a smooth process. Hence, as Solovyov puts it in *Russia and the Universal Church* (Kornblatt 205) : “There is not the slightest resemblance here to an absolutely perfect creation ... cosmic history is a slow and excruciating birth ... we see clear signs of internal struggle, violent convulsions and spasms, blind groping searches, unfinished and unsuccessful attempts at creation, monstrous miscarriages,” etc. In his *Lectures on Divine Humanity* (Jakim 138) Solovyov had offered the same picture of “many ugly, monstrous broods that are unable to endure the struggle for life and perish,” etc.



Sophia, Christ, and God

2

Some Additional Implications

Of some significance in Solovyov’s writings on these many matters is the strange sparseness of his description of Christ’s role in human and cosmic history, in spite of the all-decisive significance of His role in that history, as Solovyov himself sees it. This is in comparison, on the one hand, with the amount of space Solovyov devotes to elaborating the philosophical principles on the basis of which the Creation comes into being in relation to the Fall of the World Soul, and on the other, the extent to which he enters into his vision of the ultimate union of the World Soul with the Sophia as “the true cause” and final “goal” of that Creation, as humankind proceeds to its final choice. In the relative proportions of these parts, Solovyov’s work compares almost exactly with the proportions

of Steiner's *Occult Science*, that is if we exclude the chapter in which Steiner enters more fully into "Cognition of the Higher Worlds" and the path by which this is achieved. These are the proportions certainly of Solovyov's *Lectures on Divine Humanity* in which Solovyov, like Steiner in *Occult Science*, only summarily traces the process of the development of the various "historical" epochs that culminate in the appearance of Christ. Similarly, humankind's future prospect, explicitly identified by Solovyov with the Sophia, appears itself largely in outline only. It is as if the first task of both authors was backward-looking: to explain precisely how the Creation comes into being, in Solovyov's case as if God's Creation itself needed justification, which would appear, indeed, to have been a need in his time (when Darwinism was beginning to win the day). To a very significant extent, when one considers the all-decisive role that Christ otherwise exercises in cosmic history, Solovyov makes *the Creation itself* the basis for his declared optimism about human destiny. Out of the chaos that originally had threatened the universe with annihilation — even more than it does later — limit and order had prevailed to the point where humankind finally emerged as the pinnacle of the Divine counter-action. Already at that time, the Creation had been proof positive of God's all-controlling Providence, which could never be undermined.¹ From *this* exploit it followed already that God's Creation would have to have a positive outcome in the most far-reaching view of it, in spite of its continuing to be ravaged by the counter-productive effects of evil and destruction. Solovyov's grasp of the fundamental principle of the Creation, which leads to his central notion of a Divine Humanity as that Creation's ultimate goal, already ensures a positive outcome, in fact, for *all* humanity: "The body of Christ ... is growing and developing little by little. At the end of time, it will encompass all humankind and all nature in one universal divine-human organism" (Jakim 164). That this outcome is at the same time the ultimate triumph of the Sophia is made clear in another passage: "Insofar as it receives the Divine Logos into itself and is determined by the Divine Logos, the World Soul is humanity, the divine humanity of Christ, the body of Christ, Sophia" (Kornblatt 189). This all-accommodating view (traditionally, the view of "universal salvation") is held on the basis of the principle of the ultimate *inseparability* of the spiritual and the material, which dictates that all materiality must in the end be reclaimed by God.² As Solovyov puts it in his early work, *The Sophia*: "the spiritual principle and the material principle can never be separated one from the other" (Kornblatt 133). This basic principle is further reflected in the later *Lectures on Divine Humanity* where Solovyov speaking of "this divine world" and "our natural world" says of them that "there is not and cannot be any impassable gulf between them"



Separation of Light from Darkness
Michelangelo

¹ This view is repeated elsewhere in Solovyov's work. In *The Meaning of Love*, for example, we read of "love, as being from the very beginning the visible restoration of the Divine image in the material world, the beginning of the embodiment of true ideal humanity" (60). Elsewhere in this same work Solovyov makes reference to the "unity of heaven, earth, and humanity created and proclaimed from the beginning" (38).

² In *The Sophia* Solovyov clarifies the import of the new "universal religion" he is propounding for his time: "love in the old form of Christianity ... has its limits — Satan and his reign — while universal love has no boundaries, for it includes Satan himself as a reality of the Soul" (Kornblatt 161).

(178). From this basic principle, and its further application to our hopes, it followed that no matter how discouraging or dark the world-scene might appear to be in the present, our return and reunion with God is, at the end of the whole process, emphatically assured.

The distinctively varied emphasis Solovyov finally puts on Christ, the Creation, and the Sophia, in his vast cosmogonic account, has struck me as explained especially by Solovyov's unique faith in the Creation. Even Christ's appearance in history is presented as an inevitable consequence of the way the Creation was designed from the beginning: "Strictly speaking the incarnation of Divinity is not miraculous, that is, it is not alien to the general order of being. On the contrary it is essentially connected with the whole history of the world and of humankind ... something that is prepared in and logically follows from this history ..." (Jakim, 157). As it is, however, Solovyov's faith in the Creation turns out to be also his chief limitation inasmuch as this faith finally *indisposes* him to a deeper engagement and confrontation with the operation of evil in the world. The finally very great range given to the world of evil in Solovyov's cosmogony only makes that world all the more challenging an opponent, and yet one looks in vain among the writings we are considering for an account of how the assaults of evil are taken on psychologically. Certainly, Solovyov



Ecce Homo
Durer

neglects to consider more fully how we in ourselves, individually, overcome ourselves with respect to our deep-seated share in the world's evil, which Solovyov otherwise points to as the problem of fundamental "egoism" (Jakim 152). There is in place of such a psychological analysis a straightforward, if not at all simple, appeal to the fact that Christ has triumphed: it is He Who has succeeded in harnessing for us "the conquered force of the self-asserting will;" and *we* make the choice of uniting with Him, but as for *how* Christ faced what we ourselves must, at some level, also face along with Him: nowhere does Solovyov enter into a fuller exploration of this matter. Solovyov, as we have seen, speaks of a veritable "exploit" as for what Christ accomplished: "a real struggle with and victory over the evil principle" (Jakim 156). That Christ was bound to take the matter on in this way Solovyov bases on

the fact that "the potency of good contained in the soul ... can be manifested actually only by consuming and converting into itself the already existing energy ... of the self-asserting will, the energy of evil, which must be transformed ..." (Jakim 152). How *we* are to enter into this process of transforming evil ourselves, along with Christ, is otherwise nowhere developed in these writings.

One commentator³ has remarked on Solovyov's "underestimation of evil;" one might, more properly, speak of a certain reticence about evil in Solovyov. There is, in the last analysis, a certain significant shunning of evil in these writings, in spite of the fact that Solovyov calls attention to the world of evil a great deal. Thus in the end the focus on Christ and His struggle and triumph is touched on only summarily: Solovyov does not pursue any further the process of Christ's deeper *psychological* encounter with evil, or our own share in this psychological process, beyond Christ's settling of the *historical* problems, while in comparison the Creation receives by far the greatest part of Solovyov's attention; then there is the likewise only barely adumbrated view, proportionately

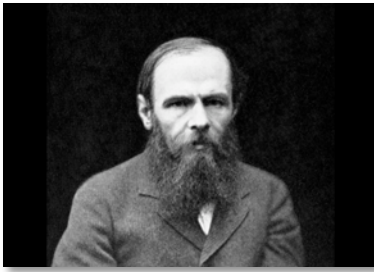
³ Czeslaw Milosz in his Introduction to Solovyov, *War, Progress, and the End of History*, p.10.

speaking, of our future prospect with the Sophia once Humankind will have reunited with Her.⁴ It seems all to the point that, when Solovyov first elaborates on the principles of his cosmogony in his early unpublished work, *The Sophia*, on reaching the part where Christ makes His decisive appearance in history, the matter is given only twelve lines (in a treatise of some forty-five pages), eleven of these lines being devoted to arguing on behalf of the doctrine of the immaculate conception (in a parenthesis Solovyov gives himself the task in the future only of filling in more on the cult of the Virgin). It is in this respect also symbolically significant (if otherwise a strange editorial procedure) that Judith Kornblatt, when presenting the *Lectures on Divine Humanity*⁵, should leave out what Solovyov does have to say about the historical appearance of Christ in that work, contenting herself with two parenthetical allusions to the birth and incarnation, before going on to give us Solovyov on the further progress of Christianity, which is typically given in broad outline. The focus in these writings is on the past fate of the World Soul, and the future co-opting by Humankind, out of its experience in the World Soul, of the Word and the Sophia (an event that is to spread out over epochs). Past, present, and future are otherwise taken care of by Christ's action of Redemption. Not that Solovyov was unaware of how insidious the assaults of evil on this cosmic process were in the past and would also be in the future, in the latter case as evidenced in his famous passages on the coming of the anti-Christ, which he predicted for the twentieth century. Solovyov's account of the anti-Christ is, however, itself a frankly melodramatic caricature of the anticipated events; his presentation is in keeping with the basically *historical* nature of his fundamental approach, which could be described as taking the form of a (very grand) survey based on logical principles.⁶ Otherwise nowhere is the ongoing *psychological* battle with evil in ourselves, which will go on apart from the historical developments, accounted for by Solovyov.

⁴ It is the historical problems that concern Solovyov almost entirely. Thus Christ's triumph over the temptations in the wilderness paves the way (in inverse order) for humankind's potential triumph over the three main historical aberrations in later centuries. "[T]he sin of the spirit" (Jakim 165) Solovyov associates pre-eminently with Jesuitism, "the pride of the mind" (168) with Protestantism and rationalism, and "the dominance of materialism and empiricism" with developments in his own time (169). The correspondence is respectively with the temptation to serve the kingdoms of the earth, the temptation to plunge into the abyss, and the temptation to turn stone into bread. Christ's temptations go from this last towards the first (in inverse relation to the later historical situations). In the case of those temptations, Solovyov was following the account, assumed by us to be the actual order of the temptations, as given in The Gospel of St. Matthew.

⁵ In her edition of Solovyov's "Wisdom Writings" entitled *Divine Sophia*, which serves as one of the two main texts drawn upon in this article, pp. 190-191.

⁶ Hence the global view covering, in one large sweep, much of civilized history, in *War, Progress, and the End of History* where Solovyov's account of the coming anti-Christ appears. My comments are not meant to disparage Solovyov's remarkable prophecy. Solovyov *intended* his account as caricature (it is narrated from inside a tale), perhaps in part because he knew that his specific portrait of the anti-Christ, as one who is "not essentially evil" (193) but who rather re-makes spiritual good to his own material ends, could not be assimilated so easily or directly by Solovyov's contemporaries. *War, Progress, and the End of History* is, in fact, especially marked by its *urbanity*. The work is given in the form of a highly civilized conversation (at a French resort) among a few people who in spite of their very different outlooks, come together to hear each other out as to their respective ideas. One of these ideas, clearly the one that counts for most in Solovyov's presentation, is that of the anti-Christ (given by a Mr. Z). Solovyov's presentation in this work is, typically for him, an historical survey: past epochs of war have given way to a present epoch that pretends to unlimited progress but is in fact destined to reach the end of history, hitting up against the cement wall of apocalyptic choice. The insistent and pervasive urbanity of Solovyov's treatment of these themes in this work makes for a very peculiar effect that leaves us wondering how the leap to a final earnestness with regard to these matters can be made. An example of the distinctively urbane tone of this work: "the progress of culture never sets before itself such an objective as the extinction of death ... And for this reason it cannot be rated very high" (133). The end of history in another sense, which is to say its goal, is to come into the resurrection through a final choice of Christ, which will allow humankind to draw on the influence of His triumph over death.



Dostoyevsky

It may not be out of place here to note that Solovyov became good friends with Dostoyevsky in the early 1870's and that this friendship continued through the whole of that decade when Solovyov first comes into his highly evolved philosophy. It is said that Dostoyevsky based his portrait of the all-redeeming Alyosha in the *Brothers Karamazov*, Dostoyevsky's last work, on Solovyov. It may not be too fanciful to suggest that Solovyov in the development of his own thought was standing on the shoulders of Dostoyevsky's massive investigation into egoism and the problematics of evil in his own work as a whole.⁷ One could say that Dostoyevsky had, in any case, already accomplished the deep psychological analysis of evil and its influence that we will feel gets short notice in Solovyov. Dostoyevsky in tandem with Solovyov, one could say, rounds out Solovyov's presentation on the inherent dynamics of evil and good in his cosmogonic scheme. Solovyov was not a psychologist, at least not in his work. He was not a psychological novelist as Dostoyevsky was; he was a poet, and a philosopher who pursued a kind of actual idealism. He had also, in the very midst of the period that he shared with Dostoyevsky, been visited by the Sophia, the climactic visitation taking place in 1875 (in the desert in Egypt). In a later work, the short story "At the Dawn of Misty Youth," Solovyov gives us an account through his main character that one feels is very close to what his visionary experience must have been like:

It was as though my entire existence — all my thoughts, feelings and desires — had melted and flowed together into a single, endless, sweet, bright, and dispassionate sensation. A single wondrous image was motionlessly reflected in that sensation, as in a pure mirror, and I felt and I knew that in that one was all. I loved with a new, all-absorbing and endless love, and in that love for the first time I sensed the whole fullness and meaning of life. (Kornblatt 243)

It is significant that this experience comes over Solovyov's character at a time when this character has come to the conclusion of the "total worthlessness of all that exists":

I had read much and thought even more, and had already by the age of eighteen [Solovyov was eighteen in 1871] stumbled upon the conviction that all temporal life ... was comprised solely of evil and suffering ... (Kornblatt 235)

This is a merely philosophical view or pretension in the case of the main character of this story, but in one of Solovyov's early Sophianic poems, written not long after his meeting with the Sophia in 1875, allusion is made to his being found by the Sophia in a real condition of soul: "perishing/In solitary combat with the evil powers of darkness" (106). Sophia is described as "arriving" at this time "at her faithless beloved's door," perhaps an allusion to Solovyov's despair of the quest that

⁷ See, e.g., Julian W. Connolly, *Dostoevsky's The Brothers Karamazov* (A&C Black, London, 2013) p.108: "Many of Dostoyevsky's fictional characters in the 1860's and 1870's strive mightily to overcome the demands of their egos." It is worth noting that Tomberg thought Dostoevsky also went too far in his investigations: It is thus that Dostoyevsky released into the world certain profound truths of Christianity and, at the same time, certain secret practical methods of evil. This is above all the case in his novel *The Possessed*." See *Meditations on the Tarot*, ed. Robert Powell (New York: Penguin, 2002), p.402.

had driven him to Egypt when it appeared that all he had gained for his pains was acute physical misery (having, according to his account in a late reminiscence of this time, also come close to being killed in the desert by Bedouins). In one of Solovyov's final *poema* this incident is revisited and placed generally in a context where the emphasis opposes the grandeur of the Sophianic vision Solovyov came into with the recalcitrant facts of our physical existence, which appear to deny any reality to such vision: "to others it all must surely have been stupid" (271). Clearly Solovyov was not unacquainted with the cruel oppression of that "anti-divine" world that he speaks of in his philosophical writings. What's more, there is evidence, already in the early poems, that in his relationship to the Sophia, Solovyov lived through a kind of alchemical transmutation of the baser elements in himself very much along the lines of the process of self-confrontation that I presented in an earlier article on Jung and the alchemists:

That morose despot, the cold ego

 Let it perish, arrogant fugitive!
 In free bondage and in living death,
 I am the sanctuary. I am the sacrifice and priest.
 Tormented by bliss ...⁸

(Kornblatt 108)

It is most unfortunate that Solovyov did not offer more by way of an account of this process of self-confrontation. As it happens, Solovyov presents this process not as something that has to be accomplished but as something that is already accomplished, which appears to have been the case



Serpent and Dove

for him (up to a point). In his "Song of the Ophites," composed not long after his third and last major vision of the Sophia (these visions came to an end in 1875 when he was still only 22), he simply announces that "The pure dove is free / In the fiery coils of the powerful snake" (65). This imagery implies a process of intense suffering that is nevertheless not taken up by Solovyov. In fact, the suffering is coolly dismissed as almost inconsequential: "The hurting heart does not hurt ... / Should it fear Prometheus' fire?" Solovyov's poem itself served as the conclusion to a remarkably beautiful masque also composed at this time, entitled "The White Lily." Here

the accomplishment, being that of the Sophia Herself, is even more complete as She speaks these words to Mortemir (i.e., he who is dead to the world): "This is a sacrament of nature / I was in the bear, now the bear's in me" (259).⁹ By the time of his full maturity, a full two decades after these productions, Solovyov had acquired an especially powerful hold on the event of the Sophia's appearance in his time:

⁸ As I put it in my article, from the *Starlight Journal*, Easter, 2016: "Jung's research in this area is especially impressive, bringing into sharp focus the whole range of suffering that an alchemist had to submit to in order to reach that point of the cleansing of the elements and of himself on which the success of his transmuting art depended." See especially, among other relevant sections from Jung's *Alchemical Studies*, "The Sacrificial Act" (70ff) and "The Motif of Torture" (328ff).

⁹ The bear in this statement also signifies historical Russia from whom the Sophia had at last fully emerged — in the achievement of Solovyov himself.

Know then: the imperishable body
Of the eternal feminine today comes to earth.
Heaven is flooded by the watery abyss
In the new goddess's unfading light.

It is all to the point that here "the watery abyss" does "flood" Heaven but that its potentially disastrous effects are immediately rendered null by the intervening power of the Sophia (the key word here is "In"). It is a measure of the power Solovyov himself reserved as the Sophia's chosen instrument at this time. Something of Solovyov's otherwise acute sense of the insidious power of the anti-divine world's influences, both in the past and in the present, is registered in another poem from this later period, though again for Solovyov all is dispelled, here by the intervention of Christ in history:

That night had receded into the murk of times,
As the earth, fatigued by malice and alarm,
Had gone to sleep in heaven's arms
And in the quietude was born With-us-is-God.
And much today no longer can be done
.....
But what was revealed that night endures
He is *here, now* — among the casual bustle,
In the turbid flood of life's alarm ...

And it was precisely the role of the Sophia in Solovyov's time to mediate all that Christ has accomplished in this respect:

*You rule with an all-joyful mystery:
Evil is impotent; we — eternal; God — with us!*

(Kornblatt 96)

In those last lines we may even fathom another version or re-creation of the famous Rosicrucian *dicta* (Ex Deo Nascimur, In Christo Morimur, Per Spiritum Sanctum Reviviscimus). These *dicta* are given by Solovyov in a sequence that emphasizes the roles respectively of Christ, the Holy Spirit, and God the Father — the whole now placed under the "rule" in "all-joyful mystery" of the Sophia.

Clearly Solovyov's writings taken as a whole offer evidence of a very great accomplishment even if they do not offer much by way of an inside view of the path to that accomplishment. From another point of view, of course, Solovyov's writings are already a path. It has been said of him that he possessed "the rare gift of being able 'to touch and move men by thought'" (Jakim xv¹⁰), and that this thought is in fact a *gnosis* ("for it cannot exactly be called a philosophy"¹¹). Merely to read studiously Solovyov's accounts of the immemorial influences of the Word, of the World Soul, and the Sophia throughout cosmic history, is to find ourselves to some degree transformed along the

¹⁰ Jakim is citing a statement by George Florovsky (not to be confused with Pavel Florensky).

¹¹ See Valentin Tomberg, *Russian Spirituality* (San Rafael CA: LogoSophia 2010), p.123.

lines of the way Solovyov was himself transformed. It becomes progressively clear, from immersion in the context of his life story, that the Sophia Herself is present in the quality of his thinking, it would appear as a life-long consequence of Her early visitations. The structure of *The Sophia*, Solovyov's early work, implies that Solovyov continues to be instructed by the Sophia after Her visitation: all that this work offers of knowledge about the nature of the world is presented as the direct instruction of "Sophie" to the Philosopher (who is Solovyov himself) with whom She has come into a dialogue (a regular situation in classical texts, as e.g., in *The Consolation of Philosophy* by Boethius).¹² The extraordinary thing in this case is that the Sophie's teaching should involve so much about the World Soul rather than specifically about Herself as Sophia. But that procedure would also seem to be inevitable, if we consider that the main lesson Solovyov had to inculcate was the lesson of materiality: that our cosmos is designed especially to make room for the material universe, that it is not a matter of excluding our material existence but rather of allowing for its existence, just because our purpose is to be able to reach out to it, raise it up, and bring it back to God who brought it into existence.¹³ Hence the special place Solovyov allots in the destiny of humankind, among other things, to the power of sexual love in the highly qualified sense in which he describes this power in *The Meaning of Love*, as a medium by which our material life is brought over to the spiritual and ultimately taken up into it.¹⁴



The Consolation of Philosophy
Boethius

Needless to say, there could also be much more to the material universe, which can impinge on us in frightfully threatening terms (threatening, e.g., with spiritual obduracy, violent affectivity, and wilful aggression¹⁵) and moreover with such final power as to bring human beings down often to their (at least temporary) destruction. Solovyov was hardly unaware of the material universe's

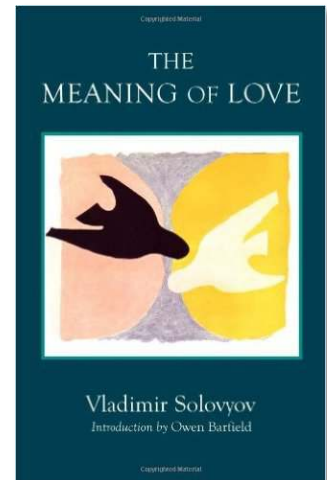
¹² A certain *form* of visitation would appear to have continued beyond the early visions. There is the evidence, for example, of Solovyov's automatic writing where Sophia is purported to have spoken directly: "Eat a little more today. I don't want you to waste away. My dear, we want to prepare you for the grand mission that you must fulfil. Always meditate on the principles. Do not give over to thoughts of despair." (Kornblatt 84).

¹³ This material universe is not of God's nature but is still of His creation or by his allowance; we have already noted Solovyov's position above: that "we cannot admit outside of God an autonomous being, a real and positive existence", and if that is the case, then "the extradivine can be nothing other than a *transformed or inverted Divine*" (Kornblatt 196).

¹⁴ This is to re-cast in the terms of the writings we are considering, in the case of *The Meaning of Love*, an exposition that is pursued on the basis of its own highly sophisticated language. There we read, for example, of "true spiritual love" as "the acceptance of the temporal into the eternal ... the regeneration of the flesh, its salvation, its resurrection from the dead." (83)

¹⁵ All of these my own terms. Claudia Lainson in *The Circle of Twelve and The Legacy of Valentin Tomberg* (Boulder CO: Windrose Academy Press, 2015), p.293, presents her own triad of "soul pathologies": "ideational fixations" (which often accompany spiritual "obduracy"), "apathetic disinterest" (the other side of "violent affectivity"), and "depression" (a typical concomitant of what I single out as "wilful aggression"). My own terms are elaborations on the dark influences from the nine (three times three) sub-natural spheres as presented in such works as *The Interior of the Earth*, featuring the lectures of Rudolf Steiner, ed., Paul O. O'Leary, Forest Row: Rudolf Steiner Press, 2006, and Robert Powell's "Subnature and the Second Coming" from *The Inner Life of the Earth*, ed., Paul O. O'Leary, Great Barrington, MA: Steiner Books, 2008. I offer a synthesis of material from these two books in the last part of my *Anthroposophic Mantric Meditations*, Ottawa: HcP Ottawa, 2016.

power in that respect, but he does not explicitly take the material universe *on* in that respect.¹⁶ In the meantime, he was singularly blessed by the visitation of the Sophia; his whole life's work from then on became a testimony to the way in which one can, at least momentarily, transcend the destructive influences of the material world by co-opting the transforming power of the Sophia. His work, one could say, is primarily about what it means *to have been* raised up and to raise up in turn: "so in the light of the free spirit's passion/To us eternal good appears" (Kornblatt 104). As Solovyov depicts the matter further in *The Meaning of Love* (pp. 91-101), it is, to begin with, "love" — free love between two human beings — that raises up. This love, when given, Solovyov sees as in fact the "breath" of the ideal Divine love between God and the Sophia that, "antecedent to our love," is "already real" (91) *between them*. Hence, "those beams of an unearthly bliss ... by which love ... is accompanied" — *but also* "the profound suffering of love, powerless to hold fast its true object" (93), because of the "evil with which true love comes into collision" (101) — i.e., the evil of, egoism¹⁷. In the case of our role in the redemption of the world, the further question may be asked, then, to what extent is this about a co-opting of the Sophia, through love, and how much a matter of confronting the egoism in oneself? *How exactly do these two seemingly interlocked and indispensable actions relate to each other?* We have stopped to take note of hints of the self-confrontation and suffering Solovyov's encounter with the Sophia involved for him, though he never does explore this aspect of his experience for us directly.¹⁸ This reticence about his own suffering in Solovyov's work is in contrast with the dramatic evidence of self-confrontation and tormented suffering Novalis left behind for us in his Diaries, though admittedly he may not have done so intentionally. When Novalis finally proceeds to co-opt the power of the Sophia, as in the *Hymns to the Night*, it is only after much intense suffering.¹⁹ Another question arises as to why Solovyov was so intent on keeping the Sophia free of the cosmic Fall, thus denying the Gnostic account of the Sophia's fate. Significantly, Solovyov could not imagine his Sophia so badly caught up in the process of material degeneration, for all of his insistence on the primordial necessity of such degeneration towards a greater end than if such degeneration had never been. Solovyov's



¹⁶ He is otherwise very conscious of the oppressive power of the material world as grounded in our egoism, as in *The Meaning of Love*, p. 45: "Egoism is a power not only real but basic, rooted in the deepest center of our being, and from thence permeating and embracing the whole of our reality — a power acting uninterruptedly in all aspects and particulars of our existence..." Only a love "equally concretely specific," he adds, can serve to "oppose" this egoism.

¹⁷ See n.16.

¹⁸ It is in this respect representative that Solovyov's subject in *The Meaning of Love* should be the *meaning* of love and not, immediately, its realization, or at least not so much that. This latter he describes as 1) arising from a position in relation to the material world "more difficult of accomplishment than of comprehension" (99) and 2) even for now (he says *also without irony*) "completely fantastic" (103). As an account of the *meaning* of love, which Solovyov himself defines as his immediate task in this book (117), certainly his formulations may be unequalled. In his unfailing display of a moral, spiritual logic pursued in its most ideal form, Solovyov may have no equal before Rudolf Steiner, whom he anticipates.

¹⁹ See my presentation of this in *The Way of Novalis* (Ottawa: HcP Ottawa, 2014), chapters 3 through 9. It may be of some relevance here that Solovyov never knew intense tragedy on the same scale as Novalis did; it does not seem that he ever fell from his Paradise in order to have to regain it. Solovyov's work as a whole suggests, in fact, that perfect life in the *thought-world* that Novalis himself knew before the violent death of his beloved Sophie compelled him to re-examine how thought further relates to feeling and to the will. See, in this respect, my article on Novalis in the *Starlight Journal*, Easter, 2014, p.54ff. What Solovyov does appear to have known is unreciprocated love in at least two instances, with women both of whom bore the name Sophia! (See Kornblatt 17, 21.)

presentation contrasts very sharply in this respect with the Gnostic view and its alchemical heirs in the 17th century (as presented in a previous article). Instead it is the World Soul who, in Solovyov's cosmogony, bears the Fall. She appears in this respect, as we have seen, as the "anti-type" of the Sophia, created to fit the Sophia in time somewhat as a mould to Her divine image, when the World Soul will have been redeemed. It does look very much as if Solovyov's World Soul, certainly in Her redeemed state, might be the Holy Soul, especially where Humanity enters the picture. If so, can it be that the Holy Soul has such a history behind Her as Solovyov ascribes to the World Soul?²⁰ It is remarkable that so much of Solovyov's writing on the Sophia should be about this other additional mysterious "subject," i.e., the World Soul, who has borne the whole weight of the Fall with us. In this function, Solovyov's World Soul is precisely what the Sophia was to the Gnostic.²¹ Such conundrums raise the still further question as to how variously the Sophia is presented in the literature that has come down to us, challenging a more developed understanding of Her multiple roles and functions in our cosmic history. Certainly it is clear from the revelations of our time, that She is always more than just one thing, and more than in one state, is always at any one time the *Trino-Sophia* (Mother, Daughter, and Holy Soul) even when it appears that only one aspect of Her being or another is held before our view. Thus the Mother is at any one time Herself subject to degeneration (that is the tragedy of Her bearing the material universe as such) and lying eternally untouched beyond it. Thus, which aspect or aspects of the *Trino-Sophia* we are being asked to view in any single presentation must remain a significant challenge to our understanding of what our experience of Her can be about.



Sophia icon

²⁰ It is of some relevance in this connection that in *The Mysteries of Sophia* Course offered by Karen Rivers (see The Sophia Foundation at <http://sophiafoundation.org/meditational-study-material>) the Holy Soul is explicitly associated with the World Soul as described by Solovyov. Besides another excerpt from Solovyov, there is the following, which Karen Rivers explicitly identifies as a description of the Holy Soul:

If the soul of the world were to stop unifying everything through herself, all created beings would lose their common relationship. The union of the cosmos would fall apart into a multiplicity of individual elements, and the organism of the world would transform itself into a mechanical mass of atoms.

Significantly, this excerpt reverses the account Solovyov actually gives us, which is describing the condition of the World Soul in the moment of her Fall (see Kornblatt, p.190):

When the World Soul ceases to unite all with itself, all things lose their common bond and the unity of cosmic creation breaks up into a multitude of separate elements: the universal organism is transformed into a mechanical aggregate of atoms.

Some association of the Holy Soul with a Fall of her own is thereby implied.

²¹ In the Gnostic account, Solovyov's World Soul would have been seen as an essential aspect of the Sophia, as the Achamoth or the lower, *fallen* Sophia who is eventually saved by Christ when, at His death and with His resurrection, He recovers the whole creation for God. It is of special significance that, in contrast with the Gnostic account, Solovyov himself guards the Sophia from any such fallen aspect.

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John O'Meara's most recent book, intended for the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death, is *Remembering Shakespeare*, a study that relates Shakespeare ultimately to Steiner, the Sophia, and Rosicrucian alchemy.



Miranda and Ferdinand
from Shakespeare's *The Tempest*

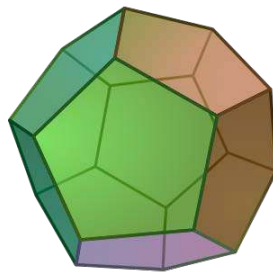
The Foundation Stone as the Golden Triangle The Mystic Hammer and the Lost Word:

Some Results From Working with
the Foundation Stone Meditation

Bill Trusiewicz

The Foundation Stone Meditation given by Rudolf Steiner is a marvelous structure of thought with tremendous significance that has been compared, justifiably, to the Lord's Prayer, the Holy Grail and the Philosopher's Stone. In these few pages I would like to introduce the idea that The Foundation Stone unveiled at the Christmas Conference of 1923-24 was and is a reappearance of the legendary Golden Triangle, the Mystic Hammer, and the Lost Word that was given to Hiram, the Architect/Builder of the Temple of Solomon, and that the Anthroposophical movement has, in the Foundation Stone, the ideal tools for building a modern Temple for Humanity.

The Foundation Stone was given imaginatively and physically: as a dodecahedron fashioned in copper in 1913 to consecrate the building called the first Goetheanum, with twelve, pentagonal (five-sided) facets and called the "dodecahedron of man." It was also given in word, spoken and written: as a four-part meditation for Anthroposophical Society at the which time Rudolf Steiner also dodecahedral Foundation Stone in its familiar with the "Foundation Stone," it presents as something of a riddle meaning. To call it a riddle, to anyone significance of the Foundation Stone, inevitably must sound like an understatement. It is too rich in meaning to be merely a riddle, too deep to suggest it can be "solved" mentally as a riddle can. Although we can read it and understand every word, since it is written in plain language, and it yields its meaning readily, nevertheless, it remains an enigma, practically incomprehensible for many of us in its far-reaching allusions, and a saying whose import we cannot entirely assess, a saying that will, undoubtedly, take hundreds of years of human development to illuminate, while suggesting the possibility of *fully* illuminating it can remain only an ideal.



In order to shine the light of a candle on something inscrutable as we plan to do here, we must ground our efforts in something plain, in the most mundane questions, lest we lose our footing as we reach to illumine the Meditation with our light.

Firstly, we should ask: What is a foundation stone? Also called a "cornerstone," a foundation stone is a stone ceremoniously set in place at the start of the construction of a building. This is done to initiate certain defining principles or ideas in connection with the proposed building with the intention of consecrating it for a specific purpose. It is, if you will, a "mental" building to use modern terminology, to correspond to a physical building proposed. Students of spiritual science

¹ Rudolf Steiner, p. 72, *The Christmas Conference for the Foundation of the General Anthroposophical Society*, Anthroposophical Press, 1990 Anthroposophical Press, 1990

would likely be comfortable with the idea that the “soul and spirit” foundations of the building were being laid alongside the sense perceptible building itself.

What building? In the case of the dodecahedron, it was laid in the ground of the actual foundation of what has become known as The First Goetheanum which was destroyed by fire nine years later, having been completed for only about two years. The idea behind the Goetheanum was to create a modern Temple of Humanity, not employing ideas borrowed from any religious tradition or architectural school, but based on the Goethean understanding of metamorphosis coupled with an intimate knowledge of timeless occult facts of cosmic/human consequence. The cosmic/human ideal which the building represented was spelled out in the plethora of details of its construction and decoration that can be discovered by anyone who cares to study what remains of it.²

The second “building,” for which the Foundation Stone was “lowered into the soil of men’s hearts”³ was the spiritual building of the Anthroposophical Society that occurred at what was called The Christmas Conference ten years after the “dodecahedron stone” was laid, and exactly one year after the tragic burning of the first Goetheanum. This new Temple of Humanity whose ideal structure was defined in the Foundation Stone Meditation, represented the re-founding of the Society, intended to supersede its predecessor Society by creating a spiritual instead of a formal structure, over which Rudolf Steiner would preside.

Now to commence our candle-light tour into the Foundation Stone, comparing it to the Golden Triangle, the Mystic Hammer, and Master’s Word of Hiram Abiff, we will briefly remind the reader of the relevant details of the Temple Legend, which is the source of these Masonic/Rosicrucian symbols.

King Solomon who was renowned for his wisdom (which appears in the Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon, in the Hebrew Bible), was intent on building a permanent temple for the God of his Fathers, the Israelites. Up until King Solomon’s time, the Israelites worshipped in a tabernacle, a complex of tents, that contained the Ark of the Covenant, and which could be carried about by the wandering tribes of Hebrew people who honored Yahweh with sacrifices and offerings, and with varieties of religious ceremony and holy implements. Solomon built the temple in response to the Lord’s plea: “Heaven is my throne, the earth is my footstool, but where is the house that you build for me, and where shall my resting place be?”⁴ Yahweh had revealed to Solomon’s father David the plan of the temple, which was passed on to Solomon as a task, but among his people there was not to be found a person who had the skill and ability to build the temple. The Israelites were a people descended from the line of Abel, schooled in the calm, clear, objective, and detached wisdom that was a legacy of the followers of Yahweh. Their eyes were fixed on the heavenly wisdom, so they did not devote themselves to earthly matters as did those in many of the neighboring kingdoms. One such person was Hiram-Abiff of Tyre, a descendent of the line of Cain and a master architect



² What remains are photographs, drawings, plans, scale models and the sculpture created by Rudolf Steiner and Edith Marion of the Representative of Humanity, that was intended to inhabit the great hall.

³ The words spoken by Rudolf Steiner in the 10 o’clock morning meeting on December 25th 1923.

⁴ Old Testament, Isaiah 66:1

and builder. He was endowed with an earthly wisdom that was passionate and enthusiastic and that made him a master in the tangible arts, sciences, and technology of his day. Solomon discovered Hiram of Tyre and hired him to build the Temple for which he had a detailed plan but no builder from his own nation who could execute the plan.

When the marvelous building was complete, the world could see in it Solomon's great wisdom and wealth and that of the Israelite nation and its God. Solomon invited many guests to a celebration of the completion of the Temple at which Hiram was to unveil his final masterpiece — the Molten Sea. The bronze casting of the Molten Sea was to be witnessed by all in the courtyard of the Temple where the celebration was to take place. Now three of Hiram's apprentices who lacked skill and were not promoted by Hiram to become masters, conspired in revenge to destroy the casting of the Molten Sea. They did not follow Hiram's instructions but added a wrong ingredient to the mixture so that when the molten metal was poured into the great stone laver that was to hold the casting, it exploded into a rain of fire. As Hiram confronted the fire in the courtyard of the temple, he was met by his ancestor Tubal Cain who spoke to him out of the fire, encouraging him to enter the fire and telling him that he would not be harmed. So Hiram followed Tubal Cain into the fire to a place in the center of the earth where he met Cain, the progenitor of his race, who was housed in golden pristine divinity there. Hiram received from Cain the secrets of the mysteries of fire and that of bronze casting. He was given a hammer, a golden triangle, and the Master's Word which had been lost. These tools would have made it possible for him to repair the ruined casting of the molten sea, had he not been murdered before he was able to put everything in order.



The Molten Sea

There are many aspects of this story that have tremendous significance for the future building of the Temple of Humanity, not the least of which is the mystery of the Molten Sea, a secret of the Rosicrucians, which we will come back to later. What will concern us for the present are the Golden Triangle and the Mystic Hammer, which are the chief tools of those who engage in the building of the future temple of humanity. We should note here that these two tools, a triangle and a hammer are carried to this day on the person of the carpenter: a triangle to "square" his work, to make 90 degree angles (or other angles and measurements), and is an essential measuring and calculating device, and a hammer to do the actual building with either nails or a chisel or both, used to join a structure together, or in the work of a blacksmith, to hammer heated metal into shape for joinery, etc.

Rudolf Steiner explains that the Golden Triangle represents the three higher members of the human being: manas, buddhi and atman, also called spirit-self, life-spirit and spirit-man.⁵ The human being in our time, as he or she progresses spiritually from our present fifth cultural epoch towards the sixth and beyond will gradually transform her astral body, and much later her etheric body and physical body, in that order, to become manas, buddhi and atman or spirit-self, life-spirit and spirit-man. The astral body is the ground for thinking, the etheric body is the ground for feeling, and the physical body is the ground for the human will. In the Foundation Stone

⁵ *The Temple Legend: Freemasonry and Related Occult Movements*, 20 Lectures by Rudolf Steiner, Rudolf Steiner Press, London.

Meditation we find the first three sections devoted to the tripartite soul of the human being, each in relation to its cosmic counterparts.

The *human will* lives in the limbs and is related to the first hierarchy: the Spirits of Love, Harmony and Will, also called Seraphim, Cherubim and Thrones.

Human feeling lives in the rhythms of the heart and lungs and is related to the second hierarchy: the Spirits of Wisdom, Movement, and Form, also called the Kyriotetes, Dynameis, and Exusiai.

Human thought lives in the resting head and is related to the third hierarchy: the Time Spirits, the Folk Souls, and the Spirits of Twilight, also called Archai, Archangels and Angels.

In these three soul members we see the function of the three bodies: the physical, etheric and astral bodies. In modern humanity the separation between the functions of the three bodies is unclear. For instance, it is rare to find a person who thinks pure, objective thoughts that are not clouded with and determined by feelings or will impulses. It is also rare to find a person who truly knows his feelings, as usually our feelings are mixed with thought and will impulses so that much of our “own soul’s feeling” is hidden from us. We may also notice that certain types of individuals cannot answer questions about their feelings; instead, they will invariably talk about what they think and not what they feel. At our present stage of development, our will is often in conflict with what we think is right. This lack of definition between the members of the human being is a confusion that results from our as yet immature ego forces. An immature ego is one that has not been clearly separated out from the human soul members we have been discussing, but is still entangled in lower soul impulses serving not its own self-directing purpose, but serving the influences of lower desires. The lower impulses in our constitution must not be ignored but must be transformed to serve our self-directing ego. The process of transforming our thoughts, feelings, and will is a process of directing our soul from personal preferences towards the universal — preferring to work for the good of all. As spirit seekers we want to be serving the highest purpose in conformity with universal or cosmic law without losing our individuality. We want to bring something unique to world-becoming, something that corresponds to *and adds to* cosmic law for the universal good. How do we accomplish this? We do it through working with the Golden Triangle.

Gold signifies the purest and noblest aims of humanity; it signifies godlikeness. And we achieve godlikeness through uniting with the gods in clear waking consciousness. We do this by recognizing that our tripartite being is connected to the Christ impulse in the first, the second, and the third hierarchies, and by which we discover first: the *World-Being of Humanity*; next: *The Soul-Weaving of Humanity*; and finally: *the Spirit-Foundations of Humanity*. These are social impulses, the vehicles of universal, cosmic law, with which our activities must harmonize. They are woven together by the beings of the threefold Godhead as identified in each of the three sections of the Foundation Stone Meditation: the *Father Spirit of the Heights*, the *Christ Will in the encircling round*, and the *World Thoughts of the Spirit* — our principle guides to fulfill the work of the Golden Triangle in community-building. If we submit like slaves to the noble aims of humanity, we may accomplish conformity with cosmic law, but we are not going to develop our individuality, the

individuality that is universal, that lives for the good of all. Free willing cannot be achieved through slavish obedience. For instance, where thought and will conform to cosmic law, but feeling is missing, the aim of the Golden Triangle is not achieved. Only when we lovingly embrace cosmic will is this aim achieved according to the rule of the Golden Triangle; only when the three members of our soul are in harmony do we attain godlikeness.

The first three sections of the Foundation Stone Meditation are like a blueprint, a pictorial image given by way of the Golden Triangle as an essential tool for building the Temple of Humanity. The Triangle is employed as a standard to produce “right angles” in our community-building to guarantee a conscious, weaving, harmonious relationship with our co-workers, the hierarchies, and the Tripartite Godhead working on the vertical and horizontal planes. When using the Triangle in our community-building we ensure that our verticals are plumb and true, that we are connecting what is earthly in us with higher worlds in the right way, and that our horizontals are level as we connect rightly on a level with our brothers, sisters and neighbors with whom we are working. These alignments are reflected in our being *built together* in the vertically downward direction through the *World-Being of Man*; in our being *connected together* on the horizontal in the *Soul-Weaving of Man*; and in our being *grounded with others* in the upward, vertical, direction of the *Spirit-Foundations of Man*. And out of these directions: *The Father Spirit of the Heights Speaks: Out of God we have being*; *The Christ Will in the encircling round speaks: In Christ we die*; and *The World Thoughts of the Spirit speaks: By the Holy Spirit we are raised from death to life*.

What Rudolf Steiner said on Christmas Day, December 25th, 1923, after he gave the Foundation Stone, is worth quoting here in full:

My dear friends, hear it as it resounds in your own hearts! Then will you found here a true community of human beings for Anthroposophia; and then will you carry the spirit that rules in the shining light of thoughts around the dodecahedron Stone of love out into the world wherever it should give of its light and of its warmth for the progress of human souls, for the progress of the universe.

Progressing to the last stanza or the fourth part of the Foundation Stone Meditation, we see that it is set apart from the earlier three stanzas. It does not correspond outwardly in form or in inward character with the preceding sections. The first three stanzas are primarily *teaching*. All of the first parts of the preceding three stanzas tell us about the Human Soul. They tell us, in each case, that the power of the human “I” is the key to uniting in the right way with higher worlds and our everyday world. The second parts of the first three stanzas tell us of the higher beings that hold sway in the various realms that correspond to our three soul members: willing, feeling and thinking.

Recognizing the human “I” and its relation to the three hierarchical realms is the key feature of these three verses in their first and second parts. All of this, including the two sections (the speaking and hearing) that follow in each of the three stanzas, is given to the Human Soul as a modern version of the *teaching* of the old dictum of the mysteries: Man, know thyself. While all of this is essentially teaching, embedded in this teaching is a *directive* to each of the three soul members: *Practice Spirit Recollection*; *Practice Spirit Awareness*; *Practice Spirit Beholding*. We might say that the whole impulse of the three teaching stanzas lies in these three directives that relate to

the past, the present, and the future. We can abstractly know all of the teaching given here but not “truly live,” “truly feel,” or “truly think,” if we do not actively practice *Recollection, Awareness, and Beholding*. Truly the emphasis of the impulse lies with our “I” — to act, to carry out these directives. The only way given to *grasp* the first three stanzas of the Foundation Stone is through these three directives. By practicing *Recollection, Awareness, and Beholding* only, do we begin to lay hold of what all the teaching means relative to the stream of time — past, present, and future. Employing these three directives we can *hold* the past present and future *in hand* through the activity of our “I.” In fact, it is our soul members — our will, feeling and thought — that we hold in hand, that we hold in a unity through the activity of our “I.” We can justifiably say that the whole content of the first three stanzas might be held thus by our awakened higher self.

While the first three stanzas, the “Soul of Man” sections, were repeated by Rudolf Steiner each day of the Christmas Conference, the fourth stanza was actually not unveiled until the seventh day at the morning meeting of December 30th when Rudolf Steiner addressed those present with the words:

Today, my dear friends, let us bring together what can speak in man in three ways: [he writes on the blackboard] *Practice-Spirit Recalling, Practice Spirit-Awareness, Practice Spirit-Beholding*. This will properly be brought together in the heart of man only by that which actually made its appearance at the turning point of time and in whose spirit we now work here and intend to work on in the future.”⁶

Following this he speaks and writes on the blackboard the final “Turning Point” stanza about the “Spirit Light of Worlds.” Here we see how Steiner himself drew attention to the special connection between the three directives and the last stanza, as if they are one — which we are proposing be pictured imaginatively as “the Mystic Hammer” with the three directives as the *handle* and the last stanza as the *head*.

Imaginatively now, we can envision the three directives proceeding one from the other, moving from the past to the future, within the three stanzas as a sort of handle — as the part we can “grasp.” And moving through the stream of time, as it were, which we now grasp with the three directives, we come to a “turning point.” The “Turning Point” stanza, the fourth as mentioned, has a completely different character compared to the previous three stanzas which are structured identically. The fourth stanza has two sections, while the previous three stanzas have four; here in the final stanza we have *a before and an after*. In the first section, the *before section*, we learn what happened at the turning point of time: *The Spirit Light of Worlds Entered the Stream of Earthly Being*. We might say, as Steiner himself suggested, that this stanza contains the “weightiest” words in the whole of the Foundation Stone. He indicated this with these words: “This will properly be brought together in the heart of man only by that which actually made its appearance at the turning point of time...” With a little imagination this last stanza might well be considered “The Foundation Stone” itself — the *Spirit Light of Worlds*: Christ. This may be substantiated by a quotation referring to Christ that appears numerous times in both the Old and the New Testaments — “The Stone that the Builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone”.⁷

⁶ Rudolf Steiner, pp. 193-4, *The Christmas Conference, 1923/24*, Anthroposophic Press, 1990.

⁷ Psalms 118: 22, and Matthew 21:42, Mark 12:10, Luke 20:17, Acts 4:11, Ephesians 2:20, I Peter 2:7.

The second section of the fourth and last stanza, *the after*, is as follows: “O Light Divine,/ O Sun of Christ,/ Warm thou our hearts,/ Enlighten thou our heads,/ That Good may become —/ What from our hearts we found/ And from our heads direct/ With single purpose.” Here we see that all of the previous three stanzas and the first part of the fourth stanza are taken up in this unique prayer. Everything is “brought to a *head*,” so to speak. And this “head,” as mentioned, has two aspects. The first part is: “O Light Divine,/ O Sun of Christ,/ Warm thou our hearts,/ Enlighten Thou our heads.” And the second part is: “That Good may become —/ What from our hearts we found/ And from our heads direct/ With single purpose.” As mentioned before, the head of this “hammer” has a *fore* and an *aft*, not unlike a hammer head, but also a before and after in time — a *before* that wields the weight and an *after* that lets the weight fall. We can literally feel the hammer fall in the cadence of the last four lines: “That Good may become —/ What from our hearts we found/ And from our heads direct/ With single purpose.” The hammer falls —“That Good may become....”

Moving on from the Golden Triangle and the Mystic Hammer to the *Master’s Word*, which had been lost and was given to Hiram, we can consider that the word that was lost can only be re-discovered by someone who is able to go back to the Creation of the World. The Word was active in creation. In the Gospel of St. John we read:

In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God and the word was God; the same was in the beginning with God; all things were made by him and without him was not anything made that was made.

The lost word, or Logos, is the creative activity of speech that was present as we read in Genesis: “God said, Let there be light. And there was light.”

Spiritual science teaches us that the creative power of speech was possessed by Adam before the fall, and it will be restored to humankind beginning in the sixth cultural epoch, the epoch following our present fifth epoch. It will be demonstrated by the Maitreya Buddha who will be the bringer of the Good and will have a power in his speech that is morally creative. Those who hear his words will be changed. Eventually, this capacity of speech will replace sexual procreation when the human larynx evolves into a procreative organ reminiscent of the androgynous Adam who was created male-and-female.⁸

Although humanity is far from evolving this moral/ physical constitution, this development is nevertheless recognizable in our day in certain qualities of speech that correspond to the uniting of the streams of Abel and Cain, the streams of female and male wisdom. This quality is recognized in speech that unites tone and meaning. When a person’s experience of spirituality, the light of their consciousness, penetrates deeply into their feeling and will, the corresponding bodies are organized, we might say “tuned,” to be the foundation for *extraordinary speech*, speech that resonates with harmonious undertones and overtones that are not discernible to normal hearing, producing a rich and unusually lively quality. More typically, in our abstract thinking culture, the tone of the academic, for instance, tends to be objective, lifeless, mechanical, and superficial.

⁸ Genesis 1: 27, Genesis 5: 1-2

Evidence of the recovery of the Lost Word is also the power to speak the unspeakable, to render alive, active, and visible *the invisible*. This is done by creating a language of spirit to communicate the powers that ordinarily lie mute across the threshold, that are ordinarily inaccessible — to make the inaccessible accessible. This is to enliven the word, to render it a tool of spiritual powers that must be active in the world to build the temple of humanity. This is a capacity that Rudolf Steiner demonstrated to a high degree throughout his life in giving the spirit a voice through his making available a spiritual, scientific terminology, giving clothing — a tangible vesture, to the spirit of the times.

Another capacity for enlivening the word to a creative peak that we can identify is found in uniting meaning and tone in poetic or mantric verse, both of which enliven language by creating an aura of silence around the words that works in conjunction with their cadence. By doing this, language is given an Orphic, musical quality that it ordinarily doesn't possess. The aura of silence allows the "beingness" of the words to rise up, to flower, in the expansive stillness that is created in the human soul, a condition of soul which has been called "aesthetic arrest."⁹ Using the word "flower" we mean to suggest that the whole process of life-growth including the regenerative process of "seeding" is present in such language, which makes what is being communicated particularly fertile. With a feeling for such things as this we can discern degrees of development towards acquiring the "Master's Word" or finding the Lost Word. This particular capacity for speech was strongly active in Rudolf Steiner, and is evident in the many poetic and mantric creations that he produced in his lifetime, which reached a summit in his Foundation Stone Meditation.

In conclusion, as we review the laying of the Foundation Stone for the building of the Temple of Humanity, we can see in Rudolf Steiner the work of a Master Architect and Builder who is in possession of the Golden Triangle, the Mystic Hammer, and the Master's Word, and who like Hiram of Tyre, was skilled and able to lead and direct a team of workers in the building of the first Goetheanum and the founding of the General Anthroposophical Society. And lest we make the mistake of elevating these outstanding qualities to the inaccessible in light of Rudolf Steiner's stupendous achievements, we should add that the capacities bestowed by the Golden Triangle, the Mystic Hammer, and the Master's Word are discernible in every act of truth, beauty and goodness that works towards shaping and fashioning the future Temple of Humanity, the peculiar, radiant, spiritual Temple that it is, lit by the "Spirit Light of Worlds"— the Temple that will become a city: the New Jerusalem, the City of Peace.

And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city [the New Jerusalem] had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

St. John, Revelation 21: 22-23

⁹ James Joyce uses this term in a passage from *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, in which Stephen Daedalus is expounding his philosophical reflections on beauty, borrowing from Aristotle and Aquinas, but adding his own light on the subject. For some of the author's further reflections on this subject read: *How to Achieve Intuitive Knowledge in Meditative Reading, Part II*. Text available by Google search or at: <https://independent.academia.edu/BillTrusiewicz>

As an afterword I would like to invite my readers to examine with me the burning of the first Goetheanum and the laying of the Foundation Stone into the soil of human hearts at the Christmas Conference compared to the events surrounding the casting of the Molten Sea by Hiram.

To begin we will address the significance of the Molten Sea. While the building of Solomon's Temple was a great accomplishment, especially for the Hebrews, who had not developed their outward culture compared to other nations at the time, it was not a controversial event even though historically it was very significant in that it was the first permanent material temple built for Yahweh. It stands as first of many temples built as a house of God leading up to the ideal temple of the far distant future — the New Jerusalem envisioned by St. John. What was more significant and controversial was the Molten Sea. Hiram knew the secret of mixing fire and water. This is the significance of the Molten Sea; it was to be a demonstration of his mystery knowledge. The spiritual interpretation of the mystery of mixing fire and water has to do with the uniting of the streams of Cain and Abel. The fact that Hiram worked with Solomon was quite significant in itself since Hiram and Solomon were lofty representatives of these two streams who did not, as a rule, work together. The Molten Sea can be seen as a sort of seal on the collaborative efforts of the streams of Cain and Abel heralding a new era of cooperation meant to be symbolized in the "bronze" durability of uniting the cool *water* of detached wisdom and the *fire* of passion for the good. As we know, Hiram's efforts were thwarted, and not without the collusion of Solomon himself, which I didn't mention in the foregoing account, for having been informed of the plot to destroy Hiram's work and Hiram himself, Solomon failed to act to prevent it, on account of his jealousy .

In any event, we can see some similarities in the story of the Molten Sea and that of the burning of the Goetheanum. It was on the occasion of the celebration of the completion of the Temple when Hiram "entered the fire" of the Molten Sea; there he was granted a further initiation, a higher wisdom than he previously possessed. He came back with new faculties, new abilities; he came back with a Golden Triangle, a Mystic Hammer, and the Master's Word. We know that Rudolf Steiner confronted the fire that burned the Goetheanum — he confronted the loss of nearly a decade of labor and planning in which Steiner himself and countless others built this marvelous, controversial Temple that was a monument to many new impulses for humanity. Rudolf Steiner spiritually entered the fire; we can observe this from knowing the type of man he was as well as by deciphering some clues from various accounts of his activities on the day of the fire and later. The outcome was obvious. The fire taught him many lessons; it guided him and produced in him new faculties. He reassessed. He reached deeper into his spiritual "bag of tricks" (if you will excuse a trite expression). He tossed aside a whole era of difficulties, of setbacks and disappointments, which might be seen in his words: "And in spirit we see that in fact these flames [of the burning Goetheanum] glow over much of what we have been building up during the last twenty years."¹⁰ From the fire he came back with "a Golden Triangle, a Mystic Hammer, and a Master's Word" with which he was able to fashion The Foundation Stone Meditation and the spiritual architecture of the Christmas Conference along with the re-founding of the Anthroposophical Society. It is as if he was returning to the ruined casting of the Molten Sea to set everything in order as it was meant to be.

¹⁰ Rudolf Steiner, p. 44, *The Christmas Conference*, Anthroposophical Press, 1990

But in this case, when he came back from the fire, what he “cast” or “built” was to be set on “higher ground,” we might say; it was to be a more perfect Temple. This he did on the first anniversary of the tragic burning of the first Goetheanum.

We know from Steiner’s own spiritual research that Hiram was a previous incarnation of the individuality that became Christian Rosenkreutz, and was a leading inspirer of the Foundation Stone Meditation and was also spiritually present at the Christmas Conference. It is true of great souls that they can become a conscious (or unconscious) vehicle of archetypal forces and beings carrying important impulses from the future and the past into the present in the service of world evolution. There can be little doubt that Rudolf Steiner was one of those great souls.

The Fifth Beatitude and the Rational Soul

Philip Mees, August 2016

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. (Matthew 5:7)

In his lecture on Jesus' Sermon on the Mount,¹ Rudolf Steiner relates the nine beatitudes spoken by Jesus at the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew chapters 5-7) to the nine elements that make up the human being. This article is focused on the fifth beatitude, the one in the center of the nine, which Rudolf Steiner relates to the intellectual or rational soul. The passage on this beatitude in the lecture is as follows:

In the sentient soul the ego is in a dull slumber; it only awakens in the rational soul. Because the ego sleeps in the sentient soul, we cannot find in another man the ego that truly makes him a human being. Before an individual has developed the ego within himself, he must allow his sentient soul to grow into higher worlds to be able to perceive something there. But when he has developed himself in his rational soul, he can perceive the person next to him. [...] It is only the rational soul that can fill itself with what flows from man to man.

In the fifth beatitude the sentence structure will have to take on a special form. The subject and the predicate must be alike, since it concerns what the ego develops within itself. The fifth beatitude says: "He who develops compassion and mercy shall find compassion in others."

The rational soul is the element that enabled humanity to develop its own thinking. It is the element that was particularly developed during the fourth post-Atlantean era, Greco-Roman-Medieval times, and through which humanity learned to think logically, objectively, impersonally. There seems to be a certain contradiction between this beatitude and the quality of logical thinking. What is the place of mercy in logical thinking? Does not logical, impersonal thinking tend to become

¹ Munich, March 15, 1910, included in GA 118.

merciless? It certainly seems so today, when we look around us at business, science, justice, even religion. And how can we be impersonal with "what flows from man to man"?

The question thus becomes: what has mercy to do with the kind of thinking we develop through the rational soul? This is the question Valentin Tomberg addresses in Chapter 5 of his meditations on the New Testament.² He says:

If it is the sentient soul that makes it possible for the soul to participate in life, harmoniously or not; it is the rational soul that assesses the value of this life and one's participation in it. Human experience in the world is owed to the sentient soul; one's response to experience, from within, is the work of the rational soul, which is the speaking soul of the human being. It has something of its own to say to our experiences, to our acquired knowledge. Thus it rises above mere experiences to assess them. Hence the formation of judgments is the essential activity through which the rational soul expresses itself. The activity of the rational soul is not mechanical, but remains in its proper human, moral sphere; at the base of every decision is a verdict. Whether we are conscious of it or not, our rational soul is constantly active in judging. To use the rational soul means to judge, whether we apply that judgment to ourselves, to others, to nature or to the universe. It is impossible to judge without either ascribing value to what is judged or withholding it.

If a judgment is based on a healthy sentient soul, harmonized to some degree, one's judgment will be just. If the Christ impulse lives in the sentient soul, the rational soul in a person of good will, tends to judge justly, or righteously. And if the rational soul itself has absorbed the Christ impulse, then something enters the act of judgment that allows the "I" to manifest much more, because the rational soul is more related to revealing "I" activity than the sentient soul. Thus something enters judgment that transcends righteousness. Merely just judgment is formed on the basis of past and present; it is based on what has become of the one under judgment. But kindness, or mercy, soars above righteousness in the sense that it is not only just to the past and present of the one being judged, but also to that individual's future. It does not merely judge on the basis of the past but also relies on positive future possibilities; out of kindness these are also taken into consideration in judgment. In this sense, kindness, or mercy, is more righteous than simple righteousness, because it also considers the future.

When the rational soul judges with kindness, it judges according to the "new law" proclaimed in the Sermon on the Mount. It transcends the Platonic idea of righteousness, and grows gradually into a new type of judgment, one in harmony with the spirit of the New Testament. The result of such judgment is that the karmic judgment on the one who is judging becomes kind as well. Those who judge others not only for what they have become, but also for what they are becoming, create a reason why they should be judged in like manner by others. This does not actually occur as a

² Valentin Tomberg, *Christ and Sophia, Anthroposophic Meditations on the Old Testament, New Testament and Apocalypse*, SteinerBooks 2006.

direct effect, but by the circuitous path of karma; nonetheless it absolutely does take place. The restoration of health—the harmonization of human social relationships—is the result of absorbing the Christ impulse into the rational soul, just as harmonizing the inner soul is the result of its absorption into the sentient soul. The fifth verse of the Beatitudes expresses these fundamental truths concerning the inner conversion of the rational soul, under the influence of the Christ impulse, and its results: "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy."

Although the Christ-filled rational (intellectual) soul becomes a soul of mercy, it is nevertheless difficult for today's consciousness to comprehend the idea of a merciful intellect. Experience teaches that the very idea of a shrewd intellect carries an unsympathetic lack of consideration, even intrinsic cruelty, in the formation of judgments. Even if we rid ourselves of the thought of hardness and coldness in the intellect, however, it is difficult today to imagine anything positive in a "soft," "warm" intellect. In any case it is certainly not easy to think of such an intellect as "sharp." The results of "softening" the intellect always seem to be vagueness and subjectivity in forming judgments. Nonetheless, it is possible to judge with perfectly distinct concepts that are as clear and warm as sunlight. To show this as a potential social fact to the world is the task that Rudolf Steiner and the spiritual world entrusted to the anthroposophic movement and its members' judgment of one another and the world.

Four thoughts stand out in this quotation:

- Forming judgments is the essential activity of the rational soul.
- Mercy in judgment considers not only a person's past and present, but also his future potential.
- A merciful judge will be judged mercifully in the course of karma.
- It is possible for a sharp intellect to judge clearly and also mercifully.



Iphigenia and Orestes
Johann H. W. Tischbein

The quotation from Tomberg may serve as a reminder of the story of Orestes. Orestes was the youngest son of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra. When Agamemnon came back from the Trojan War, he was murdered by Clytemnestra and her lover Aigisthos. Orestes was whisked away and grew up with relatives elsewhere. When he grew into manhood he took revenge on his mother and killed her (and Aigisthos) by order of the oracle of Delphi. He was pursued by the goddesses of revenge and, to make a long story short, ended up being tried in the court of the Areopagus, the highest court in Athens. The court, which functioned as both jury and judge, was split equally on the question of guilt. The goddess Pallas Athena, the patron goddess of Athens, then joined the court. She looked at Orestes and,

although she knew quite well that Orestes had committed the worst crime imaginable in those days, she broke the tie by voting not guilty. However, she also gave Orestes a very difficult task. He had to go to a far away barbarian country and bring to Athens a statue of the goddess Artemis which was of great importance to the future spiritual development of Athens. Orestes accomplished this and also brought back his elder sister Iphigeneia who was priestess of Artemis.

What was the role of Pallas Athena here? She entered the proceedings and examined the case. She particularly examined the accused, however not as a case, but as a person. She must have looked into his eyes for the purpose of discovering who he really was, who was actually living in that body, in order to discover whether this person was capable of making positive contributions to society. She was willing to pass over a heinous deed committed in the past and give Orestes a chance to perform an important deed for Athens. She saw not only the past; she perceived the future in him.

This is only possible if the judge really looks at the person being judged. The traditional way to portray Justice in our culture is as a blindfolded woman. She is not to see whom she is judging; she only considers the deeds committed. She therefore only has access to the past and knows nothing about the person in question. By contrast, the figure shown in the eighth major arcanum of the Tarot, Justice, is a woman who looks directly into the eyes of the observer of the card. She holds a sword in her right hand and scales in her left. By her intent look she seemingly tries to discover the real individual in the person in front of her, and what the future might hold for him or her.



It requires a merciful attitude toward a person who has obviously committed a wrong to see beyond the wrong into what the person might be capable of doing right in the future. This is the basis of all efforts at rehabilitation and finds its source in a mature consciousness soul. For it is only out of the higher capacities and qualities of the consciousness soul that we can ever hope to develop the rational soul beyond its "natural" merciless thinking and judging. At one time, the fourth post-Atlantean epoch of Greece, Rome and the Middle Ages, straight, logical, impersonal thinking was a great advance over the consciousness that preceded it. Today, however, persisting in this limited manner of thinking leads to excesses, the consequences of which become unacceptable in society. Think for instance of our current record-high prison population, the result of judgments in which the future of the people judged played no role. Thus we can see an example of something that was good at one time and became evil when it went beyond its time.

The most outstanding quality of the consciousness soul is the recognition of the spiritual essence in every human being. We come to realize that all human beings are indeed created equal, and that our behavior and situation in life greatly depend on factors we cannot control. When a person is in a position where he or she needs help, whatever their station in life, an awake consciousness soul will enable us to recognize this and create possibilities to give such help. This is the basis of social legislation. Social Security, unemployment compensation, welfare, orphanages, to mention only a few, were all instituted by governments out of a realization that people need help who, through no fault of their own, lost the ability to take care of themselves. None of these existed in the Middle Ages as social institutions; all help for less fortunate people then came only from the Church and from individually beneficent persons who would only care for their relatives and perhaps the people who worked for them. As social institutions founded and run by cities and communities they began to develop only in the 17th century, when the consciousness soul began to grow some strength, and an awareness dawned that we all have a responsibility to each other as human beings.

Fundamentally, all of this proceeds from the insight that the differences between human beings, difficult though they so often are, yet are merely superficial; they do not reach down (or up) into the spiritual nature, our true humanness, that we all share alike. And out of this spiritual nature we all look for opportunities to fulfill the tasks we came to accomplish on earth, and we all need help when we are diverted from those tasks, something that happens to all of us in different ways. In a sense, we are all in this way "our brothers' keepers." We all need mercy in the way others judge us, so that we can find our way into our future.

The rational soul, therefore, the actual agent of judgment, needs to be developed further so it can incorporate mercy in this its essential function. This cannot be achieved if we approach it with the capacities we have developed in the rational soul alone, for intellectually the idea of mercy is incompatible with objective, impersonal judgment. It requires spiritual insight, a higher state of development, from which we can recognize whether or not we are doing what Pallas Athena did for Orestes and, through him, for the community. We need the higher perspective that the consciousness soul makes possible for us to develop and grow the lower state of consciousness of the rational soul. It is therefore an urgent current task of humanity, now that the consciousness soul is beginning to gain more maturity, to learn to pull the future into our judgments, through mercy.

The following is a recent article from the Los Angeles Times that is included because it serves to illustrate what I have said in my article.

A Different Kind of Justice in Los Angeles

by Diana Wagman

Los Angeles Times, August 21, 2016

A recently hired exotic dancer stands in a store's makeup aisle. Everything is expensive, but she has to have it for her new job. She's also a part-time student, mother of a 2-year-old, and lives with her sister because she can't afford rent. She puts a couple things in her basket, and slips the rest into her purse, \$113 worth of merchandise – misdemeanor shoplifting. A store detective makes the arrest.

A young man goes clubbing with a fake ID. His friends are older, he wants to impress a date, and he doesn't intend to drink. But he gets caught and cited. A conviction, even when it's a low-level crime, could prevent him from joining the military, being awarded a college scholarship or getting hired.

A man is unemployed. He gets drunk, argues with his neighbor, and puts a hole in the neighbor's fence. His crime is simple vandalism, but why he did it is complicated.

When these crimes are handled in traditional courtrooms, overburdened, understaffed judges usually assess hefty fines and pro forma community service, a rap sheet gets a permanent entry, and it's on to the next case – assembly line punishment in service to abstract law and order.

I know a different kind of justice, designed for a deeper fix.

In late 2014, Los Angeles City Attorney Mike Feuer and his staff put into motion the Neighborhood Justice Program. Built on a restorative justice model, the program is a way for first-time offenders who commit a nonviolent, non-weapons-related and non-drug-related misdemeanor to take responsibility for their actions and work with the victim and the community to repair the harm.

A panel of community members meets with the offender who has agreed to abide by what they prescribe. The panel listens to his or her story and devises appropriate “obligations.” If the obligations are met satisfactorily, there is no permanent record of the offense. The court has one less case to process, and the offender avoids a criminal record. The hope is that the offender learns that his actions have consequences, that he and the community forge a connection and that out of that connection, we build a better city.

I’ve been a volunteer panelist in the Neighborhood Justice Program in Hollywood for more than a year. I applied through the city attorney’s website, did a day of training, observed other panels. Now I sign up for the program’s weekly sessions when I’m available.

Three panelists meet with each “participant” – we don’t call them offenders. The meetings include a trained volunteer facilitator and a liaison from the city attorney’s office. The owner of the store where petty theft occurred or the homeowner whose fence was vandalized is invited to participate but usually declines. The panel, then, represents the victim and the wider community, which is also harmed by these offenses. What’s “restored” in this form of justice is the offender’s standing as a member of that community.

The true beauty of the process is that it’s personal. Participants must acknowledge and accept responsibility for what they did. Then we discuss the effects of the offense. It may seem that talking won’t accomplish much, but this is when I see the light bulb go on in these sessions.

The participants are forced to confront the ramifications of their actions. Will the bar that failed to card the clubber lose its license? Will the store, out hundreds of dollars in shoplifted merchandise, have to raise its prices? Will the neighbor’s fence require repairs he can’t afford?

The panelists learn why participants did what they did. We discuss their families, their work, their hopes for the future. Finally, panelists and participants together come up with a way to make reparations.

In our training we panelists are told to devise obligations that will help the participant think about what happened as well as make amends. It might be a letter of apology to the victim or an essay examining the act and its effects to be read by a larger group of community members. It always includes community service – as much as 24 hours spent applying a participant’s talents toward the neighborhood’s needs.

Sometimes more is required than the opportunity to make amends. In pursuit of rehabilitation for participants, my panel has recommended employment help, GED courses or social services such as therapy or parenting classes.

Once the obligations are set, the participants are monitored by the city attorney’s liaison. Over two months, the liaison decides if the obligations have been satisfied. If not, the case is sent back into the court system.

I know what you're thinking. This is too easy a way out for these offenders. But here's what I've discovered: Confronting a neighborhood panel, admitting wrongdoing and accepting the consequences the program devises are not nothing. Appearing before a Neighborhood Justice Program panel can be life-changing – I've seen it happen.

The results confirm that it works. Since October 2014 the Neighborhood Justice Program has dealt with 828 participants at panels in nine city neighborhoods. As of June 1, 766 participants have successfully completed their obligations. The average one-year recidivism rate is very low – 3%.

I don't know about you, but I am overwhelmed by the perilous state of the world, about how impossible it seems to help. Neighborhood justice is something I can do. My panel and I can ask that exotic dancer to write a letter of apology to the store and another one to her 2-year-old daughter, to be read when the child is older. I can assign her 12 hours of community service helping women in a homeless shelter dress for job interviews. I can hope that she will continue to volunteer because it's meaningful to her. If she wants job counseling or child care options I can offer that to her as well.

It won't save the world, but it's change for the better, one person at a time.

– Diana Wagman is the author, most recently, of the novel "Life #6."

Contemplations on the Christian Hermetic Tarot
The Hanged Man between Force and Death

Claudia McLaren Lainson

The Zero Point

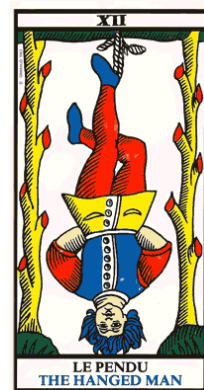
At conception we are drawn from the zero point into the place in the continuum of eternity that is ours to take up. In embryology it is called the "null point": a point whence the embryo creates what is called the *primitive streak*. From the zero point the streak patterns a cross, of which the absolute center forms what will later become our heart. Thus does the finger of God touch into time with each birth.

The zero point is thus the null point from which our individual cross is raised. Four directions are formed through its vertical and horizontal beams, sculpting the four directions of space: above/below, left/right. Without the null point, there is no door through which the incarnating soul may find entrance into the world; without the cross, there is no space into which the soul can experience time. The cross is a sacred symbol; if one folds it, a cube is formed. The cube is the symbol for Earth evolution, and it is also the image found on Rudolf Steiner's image of the seventh seal of the Apocalypse. It is the destiny of each human being to become the *salt of the Earth*:

This moral ether, which comes into being when the Christ impulse permeates human volition and activities, is the "salt of the Earth"— it allows the moral element to access nature in a way that has value for nature. The purpose of moral ether is to become an

organ for the constructive influence of goodness in nature, just as salt may serve in the human organism as an organ of constructive “I”-activity, which normally functions through the blood. ... The activity of the moral ether as nature’s conscience is the secret of future white mechanical occultism.¹

In *Meditations on the Tarot*, Valentin Tomberg calls us to this zero point as the place of the righteous human being, the Hanged Man, who is suspended between two worlds: the divine and the terrestrial.² The righteous human being does not belong to either the world above or the world below. Instead, the soul experiences the solitude of the desert. Thus does the soul accomplish the ability to rise into communion with the world above, as well as to act in the world below. Celestial gravitation calls us upwards, whereas terrestrial gravitation draws us downwards; yet the one who hangs upside down, as does the Hanged Man, acts only in accordance with the will of God.



Humanity’s communion with the Angel Jesus will awaken a force through which we are to call the beings of nature into free activity *with us*, whereupon they will again be able to place their confidence *in us*. The liberation of nature is the essence of sacred magic. Through union with the conscience of the Angel Jesus, all who become the “salt of the Earth” will manifest the moral will to penetrate nature with goodness.

When Abraham was told by his God that he was to leave his home and travel to the Promised Land, he knew not why he was given this task. He obediently followed the impulse of will, and only later did he understand the meaning underlying his obedience. He was called by the future, which works into the will. His heart was chaste — not separate from God, the Creator who is present in all things — and his thinking was hallowed, wherein all thoughts streaming from his personal consciousness were silenced. He was a priest-man walking towards an unknown future in chaste poverty.

Job also was suspended between the two worlds. His righteousness gave him the strength to endure his trials. Never did he enfold himself in the garment of his personality; rather did his radiant faith allow his open heart to continually face and overcome Satan. Ever keeping his attention on the protecting powers that soared above, he did not shy away from the tempter. Celestial gravitation was heaven’s response to his faithfulness, and this alone kept him from plunging into the churning waters of the lower world.

How is this zero point formed? Imagine the twelve constellations streaming towards one point in the space/time continuum. The place where all twelve come together is the zero point. The twelve thereby form a dodecahedron, a foundation stone, which marks the beginning of every life. Behind the twelve constellations is the Godhead of the world, whose first hierarchy of beings creates the human form.

¹ Valentin Tomberg, *Christ and Sophia*, p. 225.

² *Meditations on the Tarot*, chapter 12 (“The Hanged Man”).

The nuance of the cross, implying four directions (up, down, left, right), can be multiplied by three; for our birth suspends us upon a cross that is perceptible in three realms of experience: physical, psychic, and spiritual. When in our thinking we are entrusted with God-consciousness, we behold the Trinity; when in our feeling we are aware of Christ's Passion, we awaken to spiritual presence; and when in our willing we are united in the will of God, we remember the Star Beings through whom we were created. We are twelve-fold beings who experience in a seven-fold manner the Trinity in its three-fold nature. The interweaving of cosmic and terrestrial worlds places the human being into the suspension between worlds as a single monad who manifests twenty-two possibilities (12+7+3). Twenty-two principles serve one monad, the Hanged Man, who represents harmony in body, soul, and spirit. He is the solitary man with the gift of certainty, for he has extracted himself from the entanglement of discord and has wrested the primordial will of God from the bones of creation.

When the spirit projects into the soul, the soul experiences the imperceptible light as a spiritual experience. When the soul projects a spiritual image into the world, it creates a space into which spiritual beings can enter — and thereupon indwell. This is how Christ appeared to two of his disciples on the road to Emmaus. They experienced the spiritual imprint, felt their hearts burning with love, and directed the imagination of love outwards. A being who was indeed their beloved teacher could then appear to them in his resurrection body.

Fear causes us to enfold ourselves — to cringe away from what would otherwise be our extension upon the two beams of the cross. The tension of solitude is thus fractured, and we then turn from the One who is the absolute center of all things: Christ. This endangers the soul, for the electrical-gravitational pull of the terrestrial realms can then ensnare us, causing us to further enfold ourselves in fear. Radiation is the polar opposite of enfoldment. When we are suspended between two worlds, we are radiant. When we plunge into the earthly world, however, we are engulfed in the agitated seas of electrical gravitation, for in the earthly realm, since the Fall, the forces of the serpent exert their influence in addition to the primal forces of creation that proceeded from the Creator.

The forces of the serpent have caused human beings to fall into illusion regarding themselves and their surroundings. But what are illusions? Are they to be completely disregarded? We may again imagine the imprint of spiritual worlds sealing an experience into the soul. This vertical movement of the above into the below is trans-subjective, i.e., it is something that comes *into us*, not *from us*. It infuses us with certainty as to the reality of higher worlds. It awakens the faculty of imagination, allowing it to gain perception of what the spirit is projecting into us. The soul then sees, hears, and is touched through the enlivened upper three chakras: the 8-, 2-, and 16-petalled lotus flowers become organs of cognition.

“Horizontal clairvoyance” can also manifest. In this case it is an extra-subjective imagination that moves from the inside to the outside. This is the reverse of normal mental activity, which receives from the world that which is imagined in the inner world. This bestows certainty of experience at first hand, through the awakening powers of the 10-, 6-, and 4-petalled lotus flowers: the lower

chakras. The imagination projected horizontally into the world becomes thereby a dwelling place for supra-sensory experience.

Tomberg depicts the union between two different aspects of clairvoyance, the vertical and horizontal, wherein *synthetic vision* is accomplished. As spirit indwells the space our imaginations have created in the soul, the imperceptible visions of the spiritual world become perceptible in the realm of the horizontal. This is wrought through the awakening of the 12-petalled lotus flower of the heart. The disciples walking on the road to Emmaus were gifted with synthetic vision, for the vertical was imprinted, their hearts burned with love, and they projected the image into the world. Then did someone join them, walk with them; it was the Risen One, who later broke bread with them as they arrived at their destination in Emmaus.

Aside from spiritual vision and soul vision, as exemplified above, there is the vision of the bodily senses. Tomberg calls the origin of such visions two-fold: either due to the over-refinement of the senses, or due to hallucinations — and he condemns neither one of these. Over-refinement of the senses impresses deeply from the outside into the soul; hallucination is the manifestation of a strong inner expression directed outwards. The worth of such physical experience is relative to the moral strengthening and enlightened understanding that results. If such occurrences increase one's knowledge and moral will, they work for the good powers. Discernment alone determines the fount from which they spring — whether it be fear, or revelation.

The Hanged Man is the 12th Arcanum of the Tarot; it rests between two Arcana: the Arcanum of Force (“The Virgin”) and that of Death. It is the *force* of the fifth ether, which the Virgin bestows; and this is what ensheathes the Hanged Man. It is also *death*, which follows the choice of enfoldment. The skeleton is the image of the enfolded human being, whereas a radiance shines like the Sun from those who are willing to take up their cross.

The Hanged Man is the Arcanum of the Piscean Age. We are all to find our directives from the twelve-fold beings of the Zodiac who have created our cross, our dodecahedron, and our space in the continuum of time. Obedience to the will of the future shall lead us towards evolution's culmination. The head will deny that which the will innately knows, for the head is ever reluctant to become powerless. We are to become sons and daughters of light, yearning to return home — but first we must practice the solitude of the desert, knowing both worlds while belonging to neither one.

When “the wine of divine love” radiates within us, we are aflame with spirit. When the transformative nature of “the honey that is the sweetness of the soul” expands within us, we experience the breath of spirit and we think with the gods — the angelic beings of the spiritual hierarchies. When “the strengthening power of milk” bestows the mobility to sojourn in etheric worlds, we may come to know the Christ now active in the etheric realm, the realm of life forces. And when “the bread of eternal life” grounds us in reason, we find stability before the magnificence of daily miracles. The sacred essence of these four substances stirs the fire of spirit, baptizing us in the waters of eternal life. In order to find the future stream of revelation as our stalwart guide, we must *hang upside down*.

Moses took his people out of Egypt and brought with him the mysteries of the Sun, to which the Egyptians aspired. In Israel he communed with God through the burning bush. And in Palestine the God of Egypt and Israel took on flesh and dwelt among us. The Hanged Man took the sacred staff from Moses as he carried truth through many generations, until the time came when he could prostrate himself in devotion at the feet of the Messiah. Thus did Moses bear the tides of Cabalistic truth to Israel, where they became Commandments measuring ten. And onward still was truth carried in an unbroken lineage, until the Incarnation in the Holy Land fulfilled the ancient prophecy. Now, in our time, it is a matter of the fulfillment of Christ's prophecy of his return, giving rise to the birth of the new prophecy: the Second Coming of Christ.

Tomberg calls the Mother of Christian Hermeticism *the Cabala*, and its Father *the Hermeticism of ancient Egypt*. Long have we wandered homeless, only to find ourselves again in the desert. Yet this time — unlike the ancient Israelites — humanity is not ingesting the heavenly nourishment. Instead most of humankind has turned away from the manna of revelation. Moses has become “entombed,” so to speak, and, moreover, we have cast Abraham into the dustbin of historical irrelevance, and we ignore the star that is beginning to shine from the scepter Jacob is raising, calling the twelve tribes to unite in oneness. Through stealth and deception, the world-beast endeavors to obliterate from human consciousness the sacred presence of Christ in the etheric realm.

The following six articles give accounts of the Sophia Foundation pilgrimage to Israel in the spring of 2016.

Pilgrimage to the Holy Land April 15-May 2, 2016

Marlene Joyce

“Israel the Heart Chakra of the Earth” was the name of our Sophia Foundation Pilgrimage. I knew generally that Israel was special to several different religious denominations for many reasons, but I hoped to deepen into what this actually meant.

Friday, April 15: My first taste of what the pilgrimage had in store was just getting on the airplane to Tel Aviv. Many of my fellow travelers on our overnight flight were devout Jewish men who rocked back and forth as they said morning prayers wearing shawls and tefillin.

Arriving by shuttle in Abu Ghosh (aka Emmaus), a unique town where Jews and Arabs live together harmoniously, we were dropped off on the main road, met by our B&B hosts, Messianic Jews, who drove us up a steep stone road to our lodging perched on the side of a hill with a view of Jerusalem. Here we met travelers from all around the world, with whom we would share this experience.

On each of our first four days we boarded our big bus to areas in the West Bank, south and west of Jerusalem. Susan Brewer and I roomed together. Here we are on the bus.



Saturday, April 16: We hiked down the Judean Desert cliffs to a dry river bed, and up the other side to the cliff-hanging *Monastery of St. George*, administered by Greek Orthodox monks. They were closed to tourists, conducting a prayer service, so we left without entering, but we marveled at this majestic place carved into the sheer rock face.

In Jericho we stood under the *sycamore/fig tree* that Zacchaeus, the tax collector, climbed to get a better view of Jesus. We read the story from the Bible and Anne Catherine Emmerich's (ACE) vision of it and did eurythmy around the tree.



Sunday, April 17: In Bethlehem we visited a cave in *Shepherd's Field Park* similar to that where the Nathan Jesus was born. Then we waited in a tourist line at the *Church of the Nativity*. Amid reconstruction scaffolding, we finally inched our way to the grotto of the nativity, marked by an altar under which was a silver star, the actual birthplace of the Nathan Jesus! Sitting along the wall in the dimly lit cave, breathing incense, we sang in honor of the blessed event. In the church courtyard garden we did eurythmy.

Monday, April 18: We drove to *Qumran* where the Essenes established a community near the Dead Sea founded by Jeshua ben Pandira around 160 BC. They were very devout and prayed twenty-four hours a day in preparation for the coming Messiah. We walked among foundation stones for purification pools, for housing scribes copying sacred texts, and for pottery making. These sacred texts were placed in the pottery jars and hidden in eleven nearby caves to preserve them until they were found by Bedouin shepherds in 1946.



Our next stop was a nature preserve, Ein Gedi. We waded in a stream from a waterfall in this desert oasis, followed by a reading in a shaded glade from Anne Catherine Emmerich. Returning to the bus, we learned that the park closes early, allowing the animals to feed in peace.

Then we went to the Dead Sea Spa for our swim in the lowest land elevation on earth (1291 feet below sea level) and experienced amazing buoyancy. Salt and minerals collect here, and the sea bottom is crusty, hard and uneven. Breaking through it, we picked up rich, brown mud and plastered each other for a health-giving skin treatment! The showers are right in the water, too. What fun!!



Tuesday, April 19: We packed our bags and drove north to Galilee. Our first stop was the *Memorial to the Beatitudes*. Near this hillside overlooking the Sea of Galilee, Jesus took the disciples aside from the crowd to teach them. As with other areas, a modern church has been built over the spot, commemorating the nine Beatitudes. Our guide told us that the actual Byzantine ruin where the Sermon on the Mount was delivered was down the hill closer to the water. For lunch we had our first taste of St. Peter Fish. It is tilapia served whole, and we had to remove head, tail, fins and bones to savor the delicious meat. Next, we checked in to our Nof Ginosaur Kibbutz Resort where we spent the next nine nights.

April 20-27: Our days began with a group meditation on the pebble beach, or a swim, or both, marveling at the sunrise over the Sea of Galilee. After a delicious breakfast buffet, we climbed aboard our bus to explore sites where Christ taught and healed.

I thought it was interesting that Emperor Constantine the Great directed his mother, Saint Helena, to travel in Israel (ca. 327 AD) to found churches commemorating important events in Christ's life. As she directed the underground grottos to be enclosed in church structures, the excavations turned up Christian relics considered sacred (nails, rope, a piece of the cross). So that is why every significant site where Christ was is buried beneath a church!



Wednesday, April 20: In Nazareth we walked up a cobblestone hill to the *Church of the Annunciation*. It has been rebuilt several times due to earthquakes or wars, most recently in 1969, and has two levels. The lower level includes a grotto which is said to be the home of the Nathan Mary. In front of this is an open

space with a large altar in the center. The upper church has a beautiful large mural glorifying Mary as the Mother of God. Many icons around the walls and in the colonnaded yard were all dedicated to Mary and presented by countries

around the world. Ruins from a 4th century Byzantine church and then a Crusader church were visible there also.



Not far from Mary's Annunciation Church is *St. Joseph's Church* (aka the *Church of the Nutrition*). Some believe that Jesus grew up and learned his father's trade in the grotto.

We ended our travels in a field looking for broken pottery from earlier times. Actually this is very near the place where the youth of Nain was raised from the dead. We read in ACE that Jesus happened to be walking there as the funeral procession passed by.





Thursday, April 21: The church where the *Wedding of Cana* took place was our destination. I thought the church looked a little like a wedding cake inside and outside. The stone in the glass case is claimed to be one of the water “jugs” that held the wine...not what we were expecting! We also visited a *Carmelite Monastery* on Mount Carmel believed to be where the sacrifice offered by Elijah took place (I Kings 18: 20-46). As the story goes, Queen Jezebel ordered the extermination



of the Prophets of Yahweh in favor of worshipping Baal. Elijah persuaded King Ahab, her husband, to give a challenge to each group. They would both prepare a sacrifice to their respective deity. Each group would invoke the name of their god, and the one who sent down fire would be proclaimed the true God. When Elijah invoked Yahweh, fire came down and consumed the offering. Yahweh was proclaimed the true God!



Friday, April 22: This day began with a boat ride on the Sea of Galilee. It was a glorious day to be on the water and we had the boat all to ourselves. The views, the fresh smell, the way the sunlight reflected off the water, all had a mesmerizing effect. We could imagine the many sermons and healing that took place around the shore. Peter had a fishery here, and this is where Jesus walked on the water and calmed the storm. We did eurythmy to celebrate this joy!

We disembarked from the boat, got on our bus and drove to the fishing town of Capernaum, where Jesus began his public ministry. We walked the ruins of the synagogue and saw the foundations of villages of different eras (Jews, Muslims, Christians, Crusaders). In 1990 the Franciscans built a hexagonally-shaped modern black stone memorial on pillars over the ruins of St. Peter’s house (*Church of St. Peter’s House*). It is believed that Jesus raised Peter’s mother-in-law from the dead here. During the time of Christ, the poor population of Capernaum built homes from the local black basalt stone, hence the black present structure.

Saturday, April 23: We got an early start to Mount Tabor, the place where the *Transfiguration of Christ* took place. Because the road is steep, narrow and winding, we were dropped off at a shuttle area and then transported to this church. En route we could see the fertile, green patchwork of the Plain of



Jezreel, known as the breadbasket of Israel. At the top of the mount we walked the promenade to the entrance of the church which had small chapels on either side with murals of Elijah and Moses. At the back of the altar was a painting of Peter, James and John beholding Christ, who was surrounded by

Elijah and Moses. Over the altar was a semi-circular ceiling of blue mosaic tile with imprinted angels and symbols of the birth, transfiguration, death and resurrection of Christ. Like many other churches this was built on the remains of Byzantine and Crusader churches and has a tumultuous and rich history. The present structure was designed by Antonio Barluzzi in the late 19th century. We sat around the altar and sang to honor and revere the significant event that occurred here. Choosing to walk down the hill, a friend and I missed the turn to the shuttle area, but fortunately we were rescued by a taxi carrying others who had the same problem.

Our next stop was the Valley of the Doves, a valley between rocky cliffs dotted with caves. Jesus walked this route from Nazareth to Magdala and Capernaum. He made this long trip on rough terrain many times, healing and teaching along the route. He also taught from a boat on the Sea.

We surveyed the valley below from Mount Arbel. The more adventurous of our group opted to take the path down a steep cliff face. I took the bus to an area where we walked uphill looking for a cave that Mary of Magdalene inhabited. We did not locate it.

The nearby town of Magdala, an ancient fishing community, was named for Mary Magdalene as she was purported to have inherited a castle near there from her father at his death. We stopped at a present construction site where a priest is building housing for pilgrims. During the excavation the foundation stones of a first century synagogue were discovered. Because a seven-branched menorah carved in stone was one of them, called the *Magdala Stone*, it is speculated that Mary Magdalene may have built this for Jesus, who twice exorcised her demons. We also visited a shrine there with a Women's Atrium, and four chapels dedicated to miracles Christ performed called the *Encounter Chapel*.

Sunday, April 24: Today we went north to ancient Caesarea Phillipi (aka Banais) and Dan, at the foot of Mt. Hermon, one source of the Jordan River which provides a beautiful lush green flora. We strolled along the river, "with a seemingly unlimited quantity of water flowing near it, which made pagans marvel" (written on a nearby sign), to the *Cave of Pan*. Gathering in the shallow cave, we sang and read a vision of ACE. Then we walked through Canaanite, Greek and Roman ruins. In this rather remote place Christ revealed to his disciples that he was the Messiah and Peter would be the rock upon which he would build his church.



We drove down the road to the home of the Tribe of Dan. After a walk through a scenic nature reserve with hundreds of other visitors, we sat among excavated ruins of an Israelite Temple and listened to the story of the healing of the Syrophoenician woman's daughter (ACE). It was the Jewish holiday of Passover so many people were leaving their city life to enjoy the sea and sights of the Galilee.

Monday, April 25: Today our guide led us through *Katzrin Park*, an archaeological find in the Golan Heights with a reconstructed temple and village homes mentioned in the Talmud which illustrated life there in the 4th through the 7th centuries. I tried pushing the heavy, stone olive press. The park included a modern amphitheater and, in celebration of Passover, we enjoyed a live band concert attended by many families.



Another area in the Golan we visited was Gamla, a Jewish hillside town that was totally wiped out when Roman legions surrounded it and brutally killed everyone. Hiking to this historic hill we passed a viewing place for Old World Griffon vultures. Birds of prey, they nest on mountain crags, hatch naked, and adults have a wingspan up to 206 inches! They are protected from extinction. Israel certainly has variety!

We returned to the *Mount of Beatitudes* for lunch at a Convent there, then sat beneath the trees gazing at the beautiful gardens with the Sea of Galilee beyond and listened to words about Sophia, the Rose of the World. A feast for the soul and spirit! Back at our kibbutz resort, I cooled off in the Sea of Galilee and we ended our day with an outdoor barbecue buffet with all the Passover families. A truly memorable day!!



Tuesday, April 26: Our first stop was near our kibbutz, visiting the *Church of the Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes* in Tabgha. We saw a rock under the altar which is said to mark the spot where Jesus fed the multitude with five loaves and two fishes. Then we walked down a path toward the Sea of Galilee to the *Church of the Primacy of St. Peter*. This is the place of the *Mensa Christi*—the table of

Christ—where Christ asked Peter three times, “Do you love me?” and said “Feed my sheep.” Here also is where seven *springs bubbled* up from a rock and flowed into the sea. Each spring represented a planet and had a different mineral content and flavor.



Back on the bus we rode to Tiberius to see a tile mosaic at Hamat Teverya National Park. The traffic was like any beach resort town during a holiday—very congested! However, this zodiac mosaic of the ancient *Synagogue of Hamat* is one of the most magnificent ever found in Israel! This ancient site, just being redeveloped, has been known for healing hot springs as early as the 13th century BCE.



Susan and I returned to the Kibbutz Museum to see how a 2000 year old wooden boat, buried and protected in the Galilee Sea sediment was successfully raised and preserved. The Israeli Antiquities Authority helped in the 11 day rescue effort, and have firmly dated it to the first centuries BCE-CE.



Wednesday, April 27: Jerusalem here we come! We took the scenic route south along the Jordan River. Our first experience in Jerusalem was to follow the dry path of *Hezekiah's Tunnel* deeper and deeper down stone steps to tunnels dug underneath the City of David in the late 8th century BCE. According to the Bible, Hezekiah was securing a water supply for the impending siege by the Assyrians. This tunnel leads from the *Gihon Spring* farther downstream, our next stop. The lower pool with high stone sides and open to the sky is mentioned in the Gospel of John as the place where Jesus sent a man blind from birth to complete his healing.



Our final pool of the day was the *Pool of Bethesda* where sheep were washed for sacrifices. Here Jesus healed the paralytic man who had waited for 38 years to be first in the pool. This excavation is on the grounds of the *Church of St. Anne*. Resting in the walled courtyard, we listened to John's Gospel story and ACE. Then we entered the church dedicated to the Virgin Mary's mother and sang. On our return to Jerusalem, Susan and I lodged at the *Convent of the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Apparition* in Abu Ghosh.

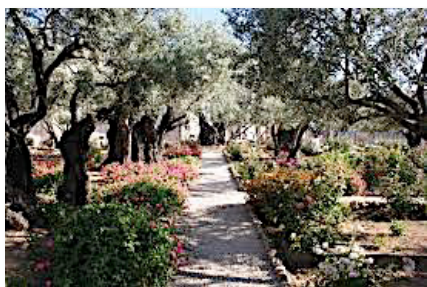


Thursday, April 28: We began at the *Church of Bethphage* on the Mount of Olives. A Crusader era Franciscan Church built on the foundation of a 4th century Byzantine shrine commemorating the meeting between Lazarus's sister, Martha and Jesus after Lazarus had died. Two thousand years ago



this was a separate village between Bethany and Jerusalem. It contains a stone discovered during excavation in 1867, traditionally identified as the one used by Jesus to mount the donkey as he began his procession into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. We sang and did eurythmy.

We went to an overlook and saw directly below us an ancient cemetery with stone coffins above ground, then we walked down a steep hill to an *ossuary* where old bones are placed in smaller boxes. Next to this was a small, sweet sanctuary, *Dominos Flevit*, shaped like a teardrop. Here Jesus lamented over the destruction of Jerusalem described in Luke.



After lunch, we walked back down the Mount of Olives hill to the *Garden of Gethsemane* and *Basilica of Agony* (aka *Church of All Nations*). Gazing at very old olive trees in the tranquil garden, we listened to a vision of ACE. Then we entered the church to see a huge flat



rock in front of the altar. This enshrines a section of bedrock where Jesus is believed to have prayed before his arrest. These are places where Christ's presence is felt deeply!

Next, our bus driver maneuvered us around detours to arrive in Bethany, where we located Lazarus' tomb, a stone-walled 12 foot square space below the street with an entrance in the wall of a market area. It was small, so we went down in groups, prayed, did eurythmy and sang. Nearby we also saw the remains of the home of Simon the Leper, where Jesus stayed.



Friday, April 29: This day was Good Friday for Orthodox Christians and thousands of Coptic Christians were arriving on their annual pilgrimage from Egypt. They were visiting many of the same places we were this weekend. Our destination this morning was the *Cenacle* (aka *Upper Room*), the traditional place of the Last Supper. We listened to the vision of ACE, sang and did eurythmy. It is outside the gate of the Old City, so we walked through the Mount Zion gate and briefly toured all four quarters: Armenian, Jewish, Muslim and



Christian. We came to the street called the *Via Dolorosa*, the Way of Sorrows, which indicates places in the events of Christ's life from Good Friday to Easter.

The current '*Stations of the Cross*' begin at the ancient site of the Roman barracks, (aka Antonio Fortress). Although disputed today, Station One is *Lithostratos*, pavement described as the location of Pilate's judgement. Station Two is there also—two chapels: *Church of the Flagellation* where Christ was flogged by Roman soldiers, and a few steps away is the *Church of the Condemnation and Imposition of the Cross*, where Jesus took up his cross after being sentenced to be crucified. Joining the 7000 pilgrims arriving from Egypt, our guide suggested we visit the last five stations of the cross today. All are in the *Church of the Holy Sepulcher*. Inside the entrance to the right, stairs lead up to the open chapel where Jesus' garments were stripped off, and Jesus was nailed to the cross—Stations Ten and Eleven. The poignant painting shows Mary, Christ's mother, standing nearby. The Twelfth Station is where the cross was placed upright. There is a hole where you can place your hand under the ornate *Altar of the Crucifixion*, and on either side are boulders that have been split open by the violent earthquake that followed Christ's death.

Inside the front entrance to the church is a rectangular flat rock, Station Thirteen, the *Stone of Atonement*, where Christ's body was anointed with oils and wrapped in cloths. Then the final traditional station is a distance to the left of the entrance, a rather small building within the larger dome of the church which houses a rock tomb and a stone. We could not enter it.



Going down the stairs beneath the Rock of Calvary, we were in the *Chapel of Adam*. According to tradition, Jesus was crucified over the place where Adam's skull is buried.

Saturday, April 30: We were up early to go to the *Garden Tomb*. Some believe that this is the sepulcher of *Joseph of Arimathea* and therefore possible site of the resurrection of Jesus. It is a lovely garden and we could enter the tomb on which there was a sign "He is not here for He is Risen". There was a small chapel in the garden for a Grail service to Sophia. We returned to Abu Ghosh in the afternoon and visited a Crusader Church for prayer in the crypt.



Sunday, May 1: Finally the day arrived for us to visit the Temple Mount! A holy site for Jews, Muslims and Christians. In the center is the beautiful golden-domed Muslim shrine that can be seen from all over Jerusalem on ancient Mount Moriah. Many revere the *Dome of the Rock* inside, believing it is where Abraham bound his son Isaac, where the Angel Gabriel took Mohammed up to heaven, and where the temple of Solomon was built in 832 BCE, containing the Arc of the Covenant.



Temple Mount...As we waited to go through security at the one gate for non-Muslims, we could see the *Western Wall*, with Jewish men and women in separate areas swaying and praying.

We entered the spacious grounds and saw the al-Aqsa Mosque and stone arches of earlier times and the ornate shrine, open only to Muslims. As our guide was explaining the long and interesting history, he was interrupted by Muslim men contradicting him and telling us that nothing was there before it was controlled by Muslims... nothing! We left to sing and do eurythmy for peace outside the gate.



We walked to the Via Dolorosa to visit the Stations of the Cross we had missed earlier. These are designated in several ways on the street: the 3rd is where *Christ fell* for the first time; the 4th is where *Mary, his mother stood by the roadside to see him*; the 5th is where *Simon of Cyrene, from North Africa, was forced to carry the cross*; the 6th is where

Veronica came with a cloth to wipe the face of Jesus; the 7th is where Jesus fell for the second time; the 8th is where Jesus consoled the women of Jerusalem, marked by a *Latin Cross* on the wall of a Greek Monastery; at the 9th Jesus fell for the third time. This was a deeply moving experience!



I was glad for some free moments to contemplate this walk and refresh with a mint lemonade. Gathering again, we traveled a second time to the *Cenacle* on Mount Zion to honor Pentecost with singing and eurythmy. In the evening we packed for our return home.

Monday, May 2: We loaded our suitcases on the bus and met in the Convent Church to sing for guests. Then we gathered in the garden to share our thoughts about this amazing experience.



After lunch in Abu Ghosh we drove to the Mount of Olives, a Muslim neighborhood today. Many believe that in the area of this Crusader building, now a mosque, Christ ascended to heaven. We sang!

Then our bus headed for Tel Aviv, dinner and a plane ride home. Our journey was complete! I have much to ponder... but I know one thing: Christ's life came alive within me by walking in the very places that He walked!



I think our pilgrimage did take us to the Heart Chakra of the Earth! The people of Israel embody every human characteristic from ancient times to the present.

I saw these different ethnic people of today, living in close proximity, and working next to each other in relative harmony, like a vibrant, pulsing heart, alive with the promise of a future of peace.

Holy Land Highlights

Susan Brewer

I can not refrain from quoting Mark Twain in his book *The Innocents Abroad* (chapter 48). Oh my, how profound is this statement!

In the starlight, Galilee has no boundaries but the broad compass of the heavens, and is a theatre meet for great events; meet for the birth of a religion able to save a world, and meet for the stately Figure appointed to stand upon its stage and proclaim its high decrees.

Forty-eight pilgrims traversed the Holy Land for eighteen days this past spring. We met initially in Abu Ghosh at the Convent of the Sisters of Joseph of the Apparition (or Shrine of Our Lady Ark of the Covenant) on top of the Holy Mountain. Ten countries were represented by the pilgrims, most of whom had not met before. At the first evening meal at the convent, it was curious to watch as we tentatively hugged each other and offered our names and origins. At the end of our journey, none of us were strangers. We hugged with enthusiasm and sadness in our goodbyes with high hopes of meeting again. Many emailed weeks later that during "night school," we were still singing together in churches, so we were still in each other's company. Our group sang in most of the churches that we visited and sometimes did eurythmy; the acoustics in some were awesome, our voices resounding for several seconds.





Three of the pilgrims celebrated birthdays during the pilgrimage—two in Galilee and one in Abu Ghosh. Happily we sang “Happy Birthday” in English, a few in German. Several proclaimed the Lord’s Prayer in their native tongue, a lovely and loving experience. We shared in the quietude of the convent, in the joy of sites we had read about as children, in the awesome presence of the Sea of Galilee (while floating in the pilgrim boat), and in the unfamiliar culture that is of Israel and of Jerusalem. We laughed while bobbing in the Dead Sea, and in the

lateness of the evening, so tired from another day’s adventure, we could not contain our euphoria and giggled ourselves to sleep. Then next morning at 4:15, we awoke to Call to Prayer blaring out over Abu Ghosh. Nain found us searching in a freshly plowed field for bits of ancient pottery, so excited at our tiny finds.



We shared our meals together every day. The fare was typical of the Mediterranean, fresh and not too spicy. For lunch, the offering was usually pita with stuffings, the best hummus, falafel and fish or chicken and fresh dates and Turkish coffee for dessert. In Old Jerusalem, we partook of a superb mint lemonade. Almost everywhere we had the choice of many fresh fruit juices made there on the spot by the vendor, such as pomegranate, sweet and red. Our servers did not always understand us but we managed to communicate well enough.

In an intimate gathering our last day at the convent, each of us spoke of a unique “take away.” Some expressed a unique feeling that to come to Jerusalem was to come home. Some spoke of community, and I felt “yes.” The convent community treated the pilgrims with such kindness. The sweetest women originally from the Philippines served us with grace and love. Meals were offered with a genuine smile in the dining room; our last evening meal was a feast of roasted turkey with all the fixings, served by candlelight. The gift shop offered so many wonderful souvenirs; piles of scarves were rummaged through till just the perfect one was found as a gift to take home. Our group gave a concert at the convent church our final morning, and the convent community and the Singerman family honored us with their heartfelt presence. Because our group was rather large, some of us stayed at Jerusalem Hills Inn in Abu Ghosh while the rest lodged at the convent.



The Singerman family owns and operates the bed and breakfast. Chaim, Ruti, and their six children invited us as family to enjoy their home while we stayed there. The family joined us at the convent for our very first evening meal in Israel. Because it was Friday night, they celebrated Shabbat Shalom with us. Chaim read from and explained readings from the bible with blessings and prayers. The family sang for us, and we attempted to join in as they sang the Israeli national anthem. Chaim explained to us that the family is together every Friday night to celebrate and stay up late playing games. This was my first exposure to Messianic Jews; I deeply respect them.

Many Jewish families lodged at a kibbutz hotel by the Sea of Galilee during their week of celebration; we pilgrims were also staying there. We visited Ancient Qasrin in the Golan Heights. The ancient synagogue there was inundated with families dancing, singing and clapping to the music of Shlomo Carlebach who was known as “The Singing Rabbi.” A few pilgrims joined right in. Such a festive and pleasantly unplanned few minutes!



The eighteen days in the Holy Land included sharing Israel with Jews celebrating the week of Passover, and Eastern Orthodox Christians observing Easter. The passionate observance of the holy holidays by the mass of humanity impressed upon me how we can share our love of God while living in peace and joy. While visiting the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in

Jerusalem, we thronged elbow to elbow with Christians from the East and the West as well as Coptic Christians from Egypt. Such experiences to process.



In my journal I wrote of the many, many gratitudes to each of the pilgrims, for their shared stories and for touching me daily in some very special way. A huge thank you to Robert, Karen and Estelle for leadership, guidance and teachings, to Sarnia for coordinating this “trip of a lifetime,” and to Neil and Zachariah for daily transporting and educating the pilgrims in history and culture with maps and readings and discussions as we traveled.

It seems curious enough to us to be standing on ground that was once actually pressed by the feet of the Saviour. The situation is suggestive of a reality and a tangibility that seem at variance with the vagueness and mystery and ghostliness that one naturally attaches to the character of a god. I can not comprehend yet that I am sitting where a god has stood, and looking upon the brook and the mountains which that god looked upon, and am surrounded by dusky men and women whose ancestors saw him, and even talked with him, face to face, and carelessly, just as they would have done with any other stranger. I can comprehend this, the gods of my understanding have been always hidden in clouds and very far away.



The Innocents Abroad (chapter 45)

I also can comprehend how vague the spiritual world seemed to me, too—grand words written on a page by a prophet or an apostle or a contemporary minister. Yes, Mr. Twain, very curious.

Sophia Foundation Pilgrimage to the Holy Land

April 14-May 2, 2016

Angelika Jenal
Switzerland

Dear Friends,

How could it ever be possible to put our experiences of the pilgrimage to the Holy Land into words ?? I said that I would try to do so, and as you can see, it has taken me a month, not only because of the illness that many of us have had to work through since returning home from the Holy Land, but also because I wanted to come to *the essence of our pilgrimage*, something which has remained veiled until having recovered from the illness. But still, our deep experiences are living, of course, in our hearts and minds — ever growing with the passage of time, while we are gratefully and eagerly awaiting Michael's pictures that were taken so carefully, included with photos taken also by others — that is, if we did not lose the iPhone, as I did! — to be uploaded for us then to be able to access; or while we are patiently awaiting a recording of Jo Anne's and Linda's sweet voices singing the *Per Crucem* canon; or when we have a look at our little bottle with Holy Water from the River Jordan; or having set up in our bedroom three camels of purest olive wood that we purchased in order to commemorate the scene of the Christmas nativity; or when we recapitulate the description of the pilgrimage from the itinerary in the brochure; or when we contemplate the many different brochures from the various sacred sites that we visited; or when we try to remember the smell of the flowers in the garden of Our Lady of the Arc of the Covenant and in the garden of the Crusaders' church in Abu Gosh; or when we feel again how it was to enter the crypt — with one's first gaze falling upon the Madonna there; or when we recollect the very touching and moving evening of the celebration of the Jewish Sabbath with Chaim and his family; or when we remember swimming in the River Jordan at the tourists' baptismal site, or the "swimming" in the Dead Sea; or when one allows one's memory and heart to dwell again in grateful remembrance of our boat cruise upon the Sea of Galilee; or when one remembers the amazing, breathtaking, and heart-expanding eurythmy with Tracy each morning, beholding the sight of the rising sun at dawn each day, and also the eurythmy in the Church of the Beatitudes, the Church of the Annunciation, on Mt. Carmel and on Mt. Tabor, at the Coenaculum, at the Pool of Bethesda and at the Pool of Siloam, at the Tomb of Lazarus and at the site of Golgotha in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, and also our prayers and singing together, especially when we did the *Our Mother* prayer in eurythmy with half the group singing this profound prayer and the other half moving eurythmically to the singing. And then there were also the final prayers and corresponding Eurythmy gestures on the Mount of Olives, at the site of Christ's Ascension. *Oh yes, we will remember all of this, and much more, for ever.*

The almost unspeakable "much more" has to do with the presence of *our dear teacher Robert and his wife Lacquanna (Lucky)*, and with the presence of *our beloved and appreciated Estelle Isaacson, as well as Karen conducting our singing*. How could it ever be possible to thank them for their presence, their work, their cheerfulness, and also for their sacrifices? Certainly we all are aware that especially the *sacrifices* are the ground, on which such experiences can grow.

And some of us will also remember the beautiful *shawls* bought in the Holy Land for our friends back home; and we shall remember also the shawls being put around our shoulders, while we were still there in the Holy Land; and we'll remember the beautiful *olive wood hearts* being placed in our hands when making these purchases for our friends and family at home.

Concluding now my thoughts of appreciation and heartfelt good wishes, my dear, dear Friends — and I mean *all* of you fellow pilgrims — I would like to express the following:

We *are* a true spiritual family — perhaps the first spiritual family to have been formed in this unique way — connected with one another in the experiences of our time together in the Holy Land, retracing the life and ministry of Christ Jesus from 2000 years ago, and at the same time bridging these recollections from that time to his Second Coming and his Descent to Shambhala now at the present time. This is my deep belief and conviction, having realized — with this pilgrimage to the *heart chakra of the world* — that *it is possible today, to recognize one another on a deeper level*, as Rudolf Steiner toward the end of his life suggested would be possible. And I am convinced as well that many of you, dear Friends, feel the same way.

A concluding thought resulting from the above considerations might be:

Let us stay in warm and mutually supportive contact with one another, always holding one another inwardly in deep appreciation, holding one another in a place within our hearts, with an ever-growing sense of *being permeated with Christ and with Sophia, his Bride, and with the Archangel Michael, guiding and inspiring our deeds.*

With lots of love to all of you, to each one of you at your individual locations and with your respective personal circumstances in *your lives.*

Angelika, with warm greetings from Switzerland.



The Sophia Foundation Pilgrimage to the Holy Land — Some Reflections

Dana Davis

Our pilgrimage to the Holy Land was filled with many amazing experiences. I was enriched by the talks by our tour guide, Neil, by the singing we did in so many churches, by the eurythmy, by the evening lectures by Robert, and by the sharing of visions from Estelle Isaacson. Here are just a few of the highlights of the trip from my perspective.

Qumram near the Dead Sea was hot, dry and barren, yet there was an amazing quality of silence. After we had a tour of the site where the Essenes lived, we did some singing and eurythmy. Then some of us went up in the hills and did the Foundation Stone meditation in eurythmy. I spent some time meditating higher up near a small cave, and the silence was “loud” – very deep, with a sort of buzzing vibration – and I could have stayed there for hours.

Many times on this trip I was reminded of the future culture of the “Rose of the World.” One time was when we visited the Pool of Bethesda, where the healing of the paralyzed man took place. As we were praying and doing eurythmy, the Muslim call to prayer began. I felt that the various religions – Christianity, Islam and Judaism – were simultaneously present in that moment, and I felt hope for a future where people of all religions can be at peace with each other. A similar moment was after we were told to leave the Dome of the Rock (the Muslim people in charge didn’t like our Jewish tour guide’s talk about the Temple of Solomon). After leaving, we did some eurythmy and sang outside the gate. The song contains words for peace in various languages (*shanti, dona nobis pacem, shalom*) and was again a reminder of what would be possible if all of us lived in peace with each other.

On Good Friday (for the Orthodox Church), we were in the Old City of Jerusalem, and hundreds of people were processing through the narrow streets carrying huge crosses above them, singing and chanting. There were groups from various countries, and heavily-armed Israeli police were herding everyone, trying to keep order. It was incredible to be in the place of the Passion on Good Friday! We walked part of the Via Dolorosa (Way of the Cross), and walk it again on Orthodox Easter Sunday. We also visited the Church of the Holy Sepulcher on Good Friday, which was a world unto itself – a world that felt centuries old. It was huge inside, and very crowded. We waited in line to enter single-file to touch the place of the Crucifixion. People pushed and shoved, but in the midst of all the intensity, I again had the sense of the Rose of the World. Here we were, so many people from different countries, speaking different languages, all pressed up against each other waiting to have contact with a holy site. We all wanted the same thing. I had the feeling that we were all connected to each other on some level, though not consciously.

On Easter Sunday when I was again in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, I heard the loud ringing of bells, and I looked downstairs to see a huge procession of priests in black garb with tall furry hats. There was incense burning, people kissing the hands of the priests, loud cries from some, and all went into a chapel to sing and pray. I had a view into the chapel from upstairs and I felt as though I was in another time, or outside of time. It was truly an amazing experience. I felt honored to be a part of the event in my own way, and very moved by the devotion of so many people.

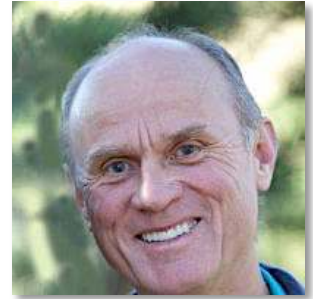
I’m still integrating the effects of this journey, and I’m sure they will resonate in my soul for years to come.

Finding Jerusalem – Part 2

David Tresemer, Ph.D.

Introduction by Robert Powell, PhD

On our 2016 Sophia Foundation pilgrimage to the Holy Land, our group went of course to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, built over the sacred site of what remains of the Mount of Golgotha in Jerusalem. This was on Friday, April 29, which that year was Good Friday for the Orthodox Church. Moreover, the Sun on that day was aligned with its zodiacal position on the historical day of the Crucifixion (April 3, AD 33). It was a matter of what I call “walking in cosmic time” — this was on purpose — and thus it was a most remarkable time to visit the site of Golgotha, the “place of the skull,” where the Crucifixion took place. The Church of the Holy Sepulcher was extremely full with Orthodox and other Christians from all over the world, who had come because it was the day commemorating Good Friday in the Orthodox Church calendar. Being in the midst of such a vast throng of people was in itself a very powerful experience. In fact, for some in our group, it was too much. At least one person hastily left — or rather was carried out — because she was in a condition of weakness, having been impacted by something in the very atmosphere of the church, something difficult to describe. The following article by David Tresemer, published originally in the 2014 Journal for Star Wisdom, presents a cogent description of the confluence of disparate spiritual influences in the church that can be experienced in connection with visiting the Golgotha site and/or the “place of the skull” of Adam, located according to ancient tradition directly beneath the location of the Cross of Christ. The article is most helpful to understand the disparate spiritual influences that can be experienced in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, which is why it is republished here in this issue of Starlight Journal.



David Tresemer

What is at the Center?

Every body has an inside and an outside, separated by a surface. Though the containers of animate objects have different layers of influence or energy that separate what's on the inside from the outside, one of these layers, as in the skin of our bodies, appears more confident than others that what's inside has one quality, and outside another.

Every thing has a center, more pronounced for animate bodies. The periphery can be thought of as the furthest reach of what lives inside. If infinite in extent, the proxy for periphery becomes the skin. At the center lives an “essence” at the “core,” from “coeur” in French and “cor” in Latin, both meaning heart, the heart at the center.

We have the idea that if we can get to the heart of the matter, we will know the truth underlying the superficial chatter at the surface. We strive for this center. We feel a surge of heart when falling in love, and heart-ache when falling out of love. The heart area hosts the fourth chakra, the central chakra of seven. The body's center of gravity lies just inside the navel, not half of one's height and not at the heart. There are different kinds of centers revealing different kinds of essence.

You can't put your hand right into the center of something to feel it, or bring it out to view it. One seeks an epi-center, a place on the surface that reveals the center or at least a pathway to the center. In the human being, one might say that the umbilicus – the navel or belly button – is one such place historically. Interestingly, averaged over many human beings, the navel lies at the golden proportion: phi minus 1 times the total height (.618 x ht.).

Does the earth have an epi-center? Many places have claimed to be the navel of the earth. The ceremonial opening of a sipapu in the earthen floor of a kiva is experienced as such a route to the heart of the earth. Is there then a *primary* epi-center to the heart of the earth? The Abrahamic religions propose that this place is Jerusalem.

Jerusalem

In "Finding Jerusalem – Part 1," I examined the location of Jerusalem on the planet. On a sphere without orientation, no one point has a more special meaning than any other point. Our (nearly) spherical Earth is oriented by its rotation on its axis, giving us north and south poles, and an equator. I found that the location of Jerusalem is at a latitude that relates strongly to the golden proportion, phi (1.618), a proportion evident in many processes of growing (and decaying). Note that its bid as "navel" of the earth relates to the same phi-proportion that locates the navel of the human body in relation to its height.

Following the phi-spiral inward to the mathematical center of the earth, I found that the center of generation of that spiral lay at a point – or best to think of it as a zone – approximately a quarter of the way out from the mathematical center. This could be seen as the generative zone for powers of generation. I cautioned that the journey through Jerusalem as gateway to that heart of generative power must be done with great care. I will explain why.

The Best and the Worst

I have visited the Old City of Jerusalem a dozen times. Each time I visited the site of Golgotha, the scene of the apparent death of Christ Jesus, an event sorely misunderstood when seen merely as an act of cruelty and violence against a spiritual teacher whose teaching threatened the political system of the time. I was alerted through Rudolf Steiner's teachings to the possibility that the highly charged blood of this man, having touched the earth there, led to a fructification – a nourishment and empowerment – of the being of the earth, as well as all who live upon it. Over a short period of time, He had lived through what we all live through over much longer periods of time, that is, maturation of the physical body into a spiritual reality, through our sufferings of many mistakes and their healing, as well as through the aggression of others perpetrating mistakes upon us.

When you pass through the grand doors at the entry of the Holy Sepulcher, then ascend the steep stone stairs immediately to the right, you come to a low roofed and dimly lit place focused on the rock upon which the cross supposedly stood. Atop that spot has been affixed various structures with a large silver donut-shaped device just over the rock, through which you can put your hand to touch the actual rock. Around it loom statues, ornaments, decorations, and fixtures of gold and silver, flickering in the candlelight. The Greek Orthodox Church hosts that section of the Holy

Sepulcher and they patrol it with incense – the walls are black with smoke. They set devotees into an orderly line, and sometimes tell people to quiet down. There is a throng of people at all hours, large groups of people from Eastern Europe, South America, and Africa, and individuals from around the world. The groups sing hymns in many languages and line up for the opportunity to put their hand through the hole.

I did that on my first visit, put my hand through the hole, touching the rock. Then I recoiled. At that time I did not know why. Why would I recoil when the energy of the place was so electric? Above and through the din and the smoke, through the press of people exhausted by long travel yet lifted on the wings of expectation, with their mistuned yet sincere hymns and their strong smells, there was a very high tone that got my attention. Accompanying a group of others, I felt an upwelling of strength and attentiveness. I felt that I was a Templar, protecting others in their pilgrimage to this holy place, and thereby remembering my previous pilgrimages there, to this epicenter of the heart of the earth. The supposed burial site inside that vast rambling building did not interest me (and since then, I have preferred the Garden Tomb as the true site – another story). I left several times to look at other parts of the building, and soon returned to ascend the stairs to that place by the rock where this most astonishing event of spiritualized blood transmitted to the rock of the earth had taken place. At one of my returns, three others from our group were there, and we spontaneously and without speaking stood in a formation – two of them who were marrying in the light of this extraordinary place, and two – another man and myself – as Templar knights flanking the man and woman before the altar of light, witnessing their spiritual marriage and protecting their vulnerability. We had to be pulled away by the necessity of the tour schedule.

At my second and subsequent visits, without the same limits of time, I sat on a bench looking directly at the point of the rock (with its back to the railing toward the entrance ten feet below). As I had sunglasses, I put those on. I have found them helpful when you don't wish people to stare at you when your eyes are closed; people simply don't notice and go about their business.

At my second visit, I sat two hours bathing in the increasing bliss of the light that emanated from that spot. The spiritual power was immense, sometimes with light that warmly embraced, sometimes with what felt like a nuclear bomb blast of love. It pulsed and erupted like a gushing spring of water, like a volcanic cauldron. I felt that this was perhaps the most powerful place on earth. Many groups of devotees came and went, replaced by new groups.

I was absorbed in my meditation, participating in the love that was freely offered by this event from two thousand years ago, that seemed to be happening in the present. I then began to notice a disturbance in my meditation, as if some drunk at a bar a block away was shouting incoherently. Over the period of ten minutes I began to hear more clearly an unceasing cacophony of angry screaming and derisive laughter around the edges. As I listened, it became clearer and louder. With soft gaze I could see that a darkness of aggressive energy was attacking the light. The light pushed back easily, yet about twelve to twenty feet away were angry prods and malicious jabs of a hugely destructive force.

I asked, "What is this!?" and heard a voice within, "Watch very closely." I began to see the process. People had come from all over the world. They were devoted and prayerful. They had struggled to buy tickets to travel here. Their reward would be that Jesus would take their mistakes and errors and pains and tragedies, in other words, all their sins. That was the promise. He would clear the slate and transform their lives into something holy and wonderful. They lined up to take turns to dump all their sins through that hole in the silver donut onto the rock and onto Jesus. I could feel the hopes of families and friends left behind at homes all over the world weighing on each one of these devotees, the hopes that each of these people would come back clear and overflowing with blessings. The devotees at the place of crucifixion desperately wanted to dump all their negativity.

The accumulation over centuries of this shedding of sin had created this hall as being the most demonic place that I had ever visited. I watched people dump their stuff. Opened by their prayers and hymns, sticky bits of someone else's karma would affix to them. I saw people leave with more than they had come with.

This is perhaps one of the grandest illusions of Christianity – that Jesus will take our sins away. This is only partly true. Rudolf Steiner made the helpful distinction that Jesus will take away the "world karma" of our deeds – the part that ripples out to all of humanity, to the entire earth, and into the future. But he will not take away the "personal karma," for in truth, that's our task. That's what helps us to grow and explore. That's what develops character and purpose. Leaving it behind somewhere actually makes life more difficult, as at some point we all have to retrieve our personal karma and actively work with it.

This fundamental misunderstanding about the nature of Christ-Jesus and his role has made the epi-center of the heart of the world – the gateway through Jerusalem – into the best and the worst place both at once. Extreme caution is advised at this first gate of seven into those inner realms. You have to focus on the light, which you will find in sheaths, the outermost being the coarsest as it protects against the thick black aggression. Stay with the innermost and most refined light.

Of course, you must substantiate my opinions with your own experiences; my purpose here is to caution you. I will speak to the other gates in a subsequent *Journal*.

Pilgrimage Memories

Donna Martin

The Church of the Nativity

Sunday, April 17, 2016

Today we visited Bethlehem. We walked in the Shepherd's Field, imagining what it had been like two thousand years ago, and we remembered the Gospel of Luke. We sang the Our Mother Prayer inside a large and ancient stone cairn. Our guide related that this cairn was not built to keep the shepherds protected so much as it was for the safety of their sheep.

Nearby was the Church of the Nativity, recalling to mind the birth of the Nathan Jesus. This beautiful cathedral was under considerable re-construction, so we were unable to walk around inside at will. Upon entering through a small door with a low frame and on bended knee we were shortly joined by several other groups, filling the available space. The tight shuffling crowd of people awaited their moment to behold the Virgin's place of commemoration and the dear Saviour's birth. As often happens in life, this stifling situation in which we were waiting with loving patience for a revelation or truth to be revealed or a creative moment to surface provided us with an opportunity for useful spiritual practice.

After quite some time we arrived at the place of descent where beautiful old wide stone steps led down to the place of the manger. As I began to descend, a sudden "holiness" overcame my body and I remembered nothing further until I found myself kneeling before Mary with the infant Jesus on Her lap. Immediately Saint Bride flew in like an angel, from the Scottish Isle of Iona (true to legend), and Mary gave Saint Bride Her shining precious Child to hold. Mary was exquisitely beautiful, and Her joy in this birth was infinitely and profoundly holy. There was a quiet jubilation about Her, and the stars of Heaven shone through her eyes. She truly magnified the Lord in gesture and expression. This all happened in a fleeting moment, and as I became conscious of where I was, I moved away to allow the next pilgrim to have his experience. To this day I cannot remember the physical appearance of the site at which I knelt.

Robert had frequently reminded us throughout this pilgrimage that as we visited these sacred sites where the Master had been, that we were "walking in cosmic time," here within this heart chakra of the world. Although moments in time may have seemed fleeting in this instance and in others, this holy image has remained with me and has found a home within my heart. Now, two months later, I have wakened from a nap with the reality of this holy vision refilling my mind and heart and consciousness, only now I can see further than before. My gaze is drawn behind Mary and the manger up into the night sky where shines the Shepherd's Star. This Star is a great being and in the company of angels it shines so brightly. I follow the light as it rays down, illuminating the shepherds who have drawn near from the hills, and whose faces are rapt in their beholding!

I appreciated this reminder of cosmic time and its connection to the continuity of time. Over the years I know we all have experienced this continual unfolding of the sacred mysteries within us and how gradually they became more deeply founded in our heartbeat and in the living light we are able to share with each other, the world, Christ and Sophia. As Lucky mentioned in her article

in Starlight following the choreocosmos gathering in France last autumn, “The fruits of pilgrimage tend to ripen over time.” Indeed!

Visit to Qumran

Monday, April 18, 2016

Day three of our pilgrimage found us driving east of Jerusalem and south of Jericho, past the limestone cliffs with their myriad cave openings on the west and the lakebed plains of the Dead Sea (1394 feet below sea level) on the east. We were so anticipating visiting the land where not only the Dead Sea Scrolls had been found, but especially where the Essenes had lived and prepared for so many years for their blessed Messiah to come.

On arrival we were led over the plateau to the excavated remains; we were shown a large aqueduct that had supplied all the water for the Essenes, also their ritual bath areas, an old court yard, a large hall, and other settlement areas, living quarters, tables, pottery still intact, cookware, workshops, storerooms, even stables; thus opening our awareness into the ancient lives of this Essene community.

An opportunity arose to stay outside among the expansive sands of this Judean desert. Two of us sat alone. It was so quiet – a hot day, but a fresh breeze lessened the effect of the heat. For miles and miles around, the soft earth sounded a past, a present and a future. My throat chakra began to open in roundness and breath in a gesture I have long associated with the presence of Jeshua ben Pandira. We seemed to hear an eternal sounding of *word* and *wisdom* all around us, and the quiet *surety* of this sounding clothed me in its eternal quality. The earth, the elements, the air, the mountains seemed to share this knowingness; the ethers sounded that which was, that which is, that which is to come, and my spirit beheld a blessed, peaceful remembrance, as a foundational experience for us on our pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

The Sea of Galilee and to Capernaum

Friday April 22, 2016

Today, a full moon day, we were up as the sun rose and off to the west side of the Sea of Galilee where our scheduled old fashioned open boat was waiting to take us across to the other side. It was a sunny morning, beautiful on the water, and a light breeze was in the air. All was quiet, enabling us to really pray and listen; later, some of us sang. Looking across to the beautiful hills in the east, we almost expected Christ to come walking across the water to be with us. Instead, about 15 minutes into our journey, Christ’s presence enveloped me from behind. Suddenly, forgiveness began to pour forth from my solar plexus chakra in waves, and flooded forth into and upon the waters of Galilee to the other shore where they became part of a symphonic chorus. When later I shared this experience with Estelle, she smiled and remarked, “Yes, forgiveness *is* the most beautiful symphony.” (I guess one can’t help but wonder a little and marvel at the timing, place and circumstances of one’s evolving healing, deepening journey.)

Our bus and faithful driver were waiting for us on the other side to take us to Capernaum, the home of Jesus and Mary, Peter and his fishery. Robert had shared that many sermons, healings and miracles had taken place there, as it was the centre of Jesus’ life as a teacher and healer. The

healing of the centurion's son took place there, and also from that shore the "walking on the water." A powerful and larger-than-life statue of Peter – keys in his right hand and a fish at his feet – overlooked the waters on the way to the amazing excavated remains of the home: a few rooms, what seemed like a gathering place, a large courtyard, and what had possibly been a temple of sorts. We walked and pondered and listened to our guide. Suddenly I was bidden to stop "right there" in the courtyard. Energy poured through my body and down into the ground upon which I stood, and I heard:

Remember Me.
Remember Me.
Remember Me.
I am with you always.

Remembrance stirred and His love clothed me.

We all continued to walk amongst the grounds, contemplating. We found a garden area where a beautiful arbor with overhanging vines kept us cool, out of the direct sun. We found seating on old stone-carved seats while Robert spoke and read to us. We also sang the Our Mother prayer and did eurythmy, while our hearts were also with Estelle, lying quietly in our midst being cradled by a friend, as this was her Friday "passion" day.

Journey to Mount Tabor

Saturday, April 23, 2016

Passover had begun, and great crowds were expected at sacred sites this day, so we were all up at dawn, and before 7:30 we set off to Mt. Tabor for an awakening experience of the Transfiguration of Christ.

As we began our ascent on the bus, remembrance stirred in me of an experience of this event five years ago in Vancouver, BC, which I shared in the Advent issue of Starlight 2011. I recognized the lay of the land, and the road winding up and around the hillside. We stopped three quarters of the way up and then we were taken in smaller shuttle buses to the pinnacle of the mountain. There, the physical setting was expansively beautiful with a view over the whole countryside. Outside in the cathedral square, our choreocosmos family moved naturally into the Our Mother Prayer and the Lord's Prayer as chakra prayer. Then the Cathedral itself beckoned. Its interior was truly magnificent, almost too exquisite for words, and the architecture had been famously designed. There were beautiful paintings, murals and frescoes covering the walls and the ceiling, and statues stood at their stations. In fact everything was so beautiful it was hard to know where to look first. The whole atmosphere seemed bathed in light blue, cobalt blue, and gold and white, and it glowed in the glory of what it represented.

As pilgrims each of us walked, prayed, listened and moved where we were willed. The silence was golden. Some of us sat in meditation behind the altar. While I gazed upon the beautiful domed ceiling, I gradually felt my arms being stretched out upon the horizontal bar of the cross. They stretched and stretched through time back to the beginning, encompassing the whole earth and its history. Then in the next moment my arms were not on the cross, but held within the great arms of

Christ, and I was being carried through time from the beginning, and His heart was beating in my heart. This endearing and comforting experience culminated in me being set down upon our planet within His golden chalice; higher worlds united with earth worlds. And there I rested for a time. Just before we left, a few of us along with Robert found an opportunity for further prayer eurythmy in quiet praise, love and gratitude within a deeper part of the church.

When the time came to depart, some of us opted to be driven the short way back down the mountain while others wished to wend their way on foot down to our appointed meeting place. While waiting for them, and not really ready to leave this precious sacred mountain, I stepped out onto the side laneway to look back up to the top with its glorious cathedral and spire pointing skyward. As I stood there breathing in this beauteous sight, I was imbued with what I can only describe as an “extraordinary meekness.”

The Tomb of Lazarus

Thursday April 28, 2016

Today we had a very full day visiting the Dome of the Rock, the Mount of Olives and the Garden of Gethsemane. We followed Robert and our guide on a long uphill walk along the now familiar, old and beautiful cobblestoned lanes towards the tomb of Lazarus. Nearby was the house of Simon the leper where Magdalene had anointed Jesus, and on the way we came to Bethpage, whence came the donkey on which Christ made his triumphant entry into Jerusalem. Visiting the tomb was another long-awaited significant event for all of us, and it truly seemed momentous that we were actually here. Because the size of the tomb was relatively small, we were to enter in small groups.

As we descended down the large, steep, ancient stone steps – mostly in the dark – an inner preparation began to take place. A Dove entering into incarnation appeared in front of me, and I found myself drawn into its being-ness, and within this design I was somehow held.

Down in the tomb itself we gathered closely together in the small space to sing and praise. My body began to tremble in awe of where we were standing and from where a golden future had been called forth. Then inextricably the door of my heart flew open onto a world where the sun shone brightly on an endless spring and summer day, and fresh air blew in to refresh me. It reminded me of a childhood’s summer day, and through the open door I felt I could run out to play! I was filled with joy and a sense of freedom.

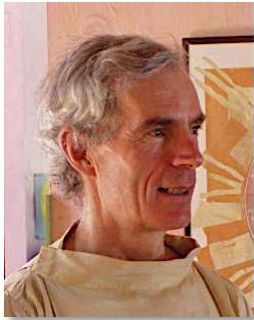
Since returning home, new awareness has arisen in me, and now two months later my heart still sees and feels this summer day sun, and it often leads the way. The movement, pulse and rhythm of my heart seems to know a new timing and richness in life itself. It also seems to carry a levity and breath which uplifts me when I least expect it.

As is often the case, perhaps more will be revealed as time unfolds its mysteries within me, and in the deepening of the ongoing journey, surely I will be vigilant in remembering this gift of sun in the heart and let it live in and enliven the work, in service to Christ and Sophia.

**Advent/Holy Nights 2016/2017 Letter
from Robert Powell**

To all Sophia and Choreocosmos Friends:

At Easter 2016 the letter “Choreocosmos Considerations” was sent out and was also published in the twice-yearly *Starlight* journal of the Sophia Foundation. See *Starlight* vol. 16, no. 1 (Easter/Pentecost 2016) available as a PDF download from the website of the Sophia Foundation. In this letter/article I wrote:



It is now, from the age of seventy onward, evident to me that the focus of my life is increasingly being called, through inspiration, to be focused upon Christ in the etheric realm — the Etheric Christ — and the path he is opening for humanity to Shambhala, the golden realm of the Earth Mother at the heart of our planet Earth. This call, in connection with the inspiration flowing in, is leading to the further development of *Choreocosmos-Eurythmy* in service of this opening through Christ of a path for humanity to connect with Shambhala, the realm (“kingdom”) of the Earth Mother known to the Greeks as Demeter. This development of new *Choreocosmos-Eurythmy* exercises and practices can be thought of, within the context of *Choreocosmos-Eurythmy*, as the *Shambhala path*....As well as the further development of the *Shambhala path*, I am now guided to create the space and time to focus upon completing my life research: the task of karma research indicated to me by Rudolf Steiner when I had a spiritual encounter with him in 1972.

Since having written the Easter letter “Choreocosmos Considerations,” posted under “Articles” on the Sophia Foundation website: <http://www.sophiafoundation.org/articles>, through guidance I have been led to a location ideally suited to the work of developing the Shambhala path and to deepening into the task of karma research. This is a very promising development. It is a development, however, which means that I shall no longer be giving Choreocosmos workshops, except for the yearly workshops in Italy and the occasional workshop elsewhere in Europe (see schedule CHOREOCOSMOS 2017); for example, in Assisi and Titignano, and in Roncegno, where we have had our yearly international Choreocosmos graduation gathering since 2002. Thereby, at the magnificent anthroposophical spa hotel *Casa di Salute Raphael* in Roncegno, Northern Italy, we shall be able to continue having our yearly Choreocosmos graduations in Europe and in connection therewith, we shall continue with the yearly meetings of Choreocosmos graduates, which have been very helpful in supporting graduates in their ongoing Choreocosmos teaching activity.

In this context, however, a significant question arises concerning the future of the Choreocosmos School, for there have been graduations not only at Roncegno but also at various locations in North America. How may this continue in the future? Before focusing upon this question, let us consider a related question.

As most people connected with the Choreocosmos School know, an important question that lives in the hearts of many is: How does Choreocosmos relate to Eurythmy and the main manifestations of Eurythmy in the world — primarily artistic/performing Eurythmy, pedagogical Eurythmy, and therapeutic Eurythmy? Something of an answer to this question is offered in the article “Choreocosmos and Eurythmy,” which follows my letter in this edition of *Starlight*. This short article by Lacquanna Paul touches upon the theme of the relationship between Choreocosmos and Eurythmy, addressing it through the lens of my life existence as a eurythmist as well as being the founder of the Choreocosmos School.

I should add that for me personally, it has been, and continues to be, an important life concern as to how Choreocosmos may be viewed positively in the Eurythmy world. And now, with my withdrawal from the intense, worldwide Choreocosmos activity that has unfolded in my life through giving Choreocosmos workshops in many different countries over the past twenty or more years, I am acutely aware that the further unfolding of Choreocosmos in positive relationship to the Eurythmy world will depend upon eurythmists who take up Choreocosmos.

I regard it as a grace of destiny that various eurythmists have taken up Choreocosmos and become Choreocosmos graduates as something central to their destiny tasks in life. This has meant the cultivation of a positive relationship of Choreocosmos to the world of Eurythmy through the life experience of these eurythmists, whose lives have been deeply touched and enriched through Choreocosmos, one example being eurythmist Audrey Wiebe from Boulder, Colorado. Many Sophia friends and Choreocosmos graduates and students have met Audrey and will have recognized in her someone who has the potential to further cultivate a positive relationship between Choreocosmos and Eurythmy. In discussion with Audrey, I asked her if she would be willing to take up this task and, with my absence from North America for the foreseeable future, to take on the task of overseeing Choreocosmos graduations in North America.

It is a great joy and relief for me that Audrey has agreed to take on this task. From 2017 on, in collaboration with myself as overseer of future Choreocosmos graduations in Europe, at Roncegno, Audrey will oversee future Choreocosmos graduations in North America, at Boulder, Colorado, and if possible, perhaps elsewhere as well. Audrey and I will stay in close communication, so that an organic transition will be possible with regard to this shift in the structure of the Choreocosmos School. In turn, as far as possible Audrey will collaborate with Choreocosmos graduates active in teaching Choreocosmos in North America, so that the Choreocosmos School in North America will be able to continue to unfold in an organic way. In saying “as far as possible,” it is acknowledged that there may be some Choreocosmos graduates who are not necessarily seeking collaboration, and thus it is a matter of respecting individual freedom of approach to Choreocosmos.

It would lead too far at this juncture to start naming all those graduates who are dedicated to furthering the work of Choreocosmos, appreciation for whom is extended here in a deep and heartfelt way. Above all, though, I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to Linda Delman, who, together with her husband Russell, has created Sophia’s Sanctuary in Sebastopol, California, as a center for Choreocosmos and Sophia activity in North America. Sophia’s Sanctuary

is a beautiful and sacred space dedicated to Choreocosmos Cosmic and Sacred Dance and Sophia Grail Circle celebrations, as well as to other profound spiritual activities. (See [http://www.sophiassanctuary.org/Calendar/.](http://www.sophiassanctuary.org/Calendar/))

The future of Choreocosmos, which is significant for the future destiny of America, depends upon each and every graduate. And coming back to the idea of collaboration with one another, something very powerful can potentially arise through collaboration, when undertaken in the spirit of Christ and Sophia.

There are many other considerations regarding the future of Choreocosmos, which I hope to outline in the not-too-distant future. For now my concern is to introduce Audrey as our North American collaborator in overseeing the Choreocosmos graduations there, while I shall be continuing to oversee graduations in Europe and in Australia, at the Michael Centre in Warranwood, a 30-minute drive east of Melbourne.

May the Choreocosmos work continue to blossom worldwide! This is the sincere hope of all who are committed to the future unfolding of Choreocosmos in the world.

In deep gratitude to all of you, and with heartfelt appreciation,

Robert

Choreocosmos and Eurythmy

Lacquanna Paul

Choreocosmos is a development arising from eurythmy, a development that focuses on the cosmic and sacred aspects of eurythmy. Eurythmy, a word taken from the Greek, whose deeper significance could be interpreted as meaning *beautiful harmonious movement*, came into being through the inspiration of Rudolf Steiner between 1912 and his death in 1925, and was originally intended as a new form of performing art capable of returning movement to the realm of the sacred and as a path toward furthering the development of the human being. Following upon this original intention, eurythmy is the basis for all the forms and gestures practiced in the Choreocosmos School of Cosmic and Sacred Dance. For example, the planetary forms that are used in choreocosmos are standard forms given by Rudolf Steiner for eurythmy.

Choreocosmos, which means *cosmic dance*, encompasses both cosmic and sacred dance. Through the beauty and grace of eurythmic gestures and forms, sacred dance enables participants to begin to “embody” the great prayers and sacred texts of humanity. Cosmic dance is focused on bringing an experience through movement of the four elements (Fire, Air, Water, Earth), the seven planets (Saturn, Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus), the twelve signs of the zodiac, and the seven planets in the twelve signs of the zodiac (a cycle of 84 cosmic dances).

In his introduction to the eurythmy performance in 1915 of the *Twelve Moods*, Rudolf Steiner spoke of it as “the dance of the world”— in other words, the 84 lines of the *Twelve Moods* (1st line: *Sun in Aries*; 2nd line: *Venus in Aries*, etc.) comprise cosmic dance (“the dance of the cosmos” or “the dance of the world”), where “world” may be understood in the greater sense as “cosmos.” The cycle of 84 cosmic dances (*Sun in Aries*, *Venus in Aries*, etc.) is an elaboration upon Rudolf Steiner’s *Twelve Moods* — see “Choreocosmos CD announcement” below.

Trained eurythmists number among graduates of the Choreocosmos School as well as lay people who have mastered the gestures and choreographies (“eurythmy forms”) and wish to bring the cosmic and sacred dance of eurythmy, as developed in the Choreocosmos School, as a community-building activity for their own communities. It is always a great blessing to have trained eurythmists among the choreocosmos participants, as this helps toward carrying the eurythmic quality of the gestures and forms. Quite often eurythmists express an appreciation for the outreach potential of this work, which has at its heart not so much the perfection of an artistic endeavor performed for the public, but rather a communal dance oriented toward the spiritual world.

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

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

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

Robert Powell, the founder and inspiring source for the curriculum of the Choreocosmos School, is not only a eurythmist but also a curative eurythmist (eurythmy therapist). As a deeply committed anthroposophist, Robert has been a member of the First Class of the Anthroposophical Society since 1974. He is affiliated with three sections of the School of Spiritual Science founded in 1924 by Rudolf Steiner: the mathematical-astronomical section (Robert has a Masters degree in mathematics and a PhD in the history of astronomy); the medical section (as a curative/therapeutic eurythmist); and the performing arts section (as a graduate of one of the four-year trainings in artistic eurythmy in Dornach, Switzerland).

The founding of the Choreocosmos School of Cosmic and Sacred Dance in the year 2000 came about in response to what Robert has described as a “destiny calling.” Initially, it was a matter of responding to requests coming from some participants — those who had been working together with Robert for many years — to do such a training. Although Robert has always recommended that it would be best if participants were first to do a full eurythmy training before doing the training offered by the Choreocosmos School, it became more and more evident that for many people this was not a viable option, due to varying life circumstances, family commitments, etc. Moreover, Robert has always emphasized that the choreocosmos training is not to be compared with a eurythmy training.

The Choreocosmos School is not about eurythmy as a modern performing art; rather, it focuses upon the cosmic and sacred dimension of eurythmy, as indicated by Rudolf Steiner in his exchange with the Russian eurythmist Tatiana Kisseleff. Steiner said to the Kisseleff: “*You will give [eurythmy] its cosmic-sacral background...*”¹ This statement gives choreocosmos and the Choreocosmos School of Cosmic and Sacred Dance an historical background as something that was intended by Rudolf Steiner to unfold in the future. Robert’s experience is that in choreocosmos we are indeed cultivating the cosmic and sacral aspects of eurythmy which, given

¹ Tatjana Kisseleff: *Ein Leben für die Eurythmie – Autobiographisches ergänzt von Brigitte Schreckenbach* (Borchen, Germany: Verlag Ch. Möllmann, 2007), p. 114.

the whole context of his statement to Tatiana Kisseleff, Rudolf Steiner evidently regarded as being of special significance for the impulse of eurythmy with regard to its future development.²

It has often happened that choreocosmos practitioners participating in cosmic and sacred dance have been so profoundly moved and inspired by the eurythmy gestures and forms that they have chosen to take up a full eurythmy training. The Choreocosmos School has as a founding principle the impulse to promote eurythmy in the world, as is evident from the fact that a number of participants have gone on to do full eurythmy trainings as a result of their encounter with choreocosmos.

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

In forming the eurythmy gesture for the Moon, the arms open out and circle around in a gathering gesture, then come together with wrists crossed and hands lightly clenched in a downward gesture, bringing expression to the human being's connection to the Earth. Then follows a momentary still point. The holding of the Moon gesture (giving expression to the "interval of the still point") can be experienced both in relation to the root ("Moon") chakra and as a "taking hold" of the creative lunar forces streaming down from the root chakra through the legs and feet, bringing the human being into connection with the Earth. The Moon gesture mirrors the Moon's gift of reflection, describing a "stilling" of the waters (necessary for true reflection) and a "reining in" of the emotional waters of the astral life. This is a coming to rest in the depths of one's being, feeling deeply connected to one's soul purpose toward the Earth.³

As can be experienced in a very profound way, eurythmy is a gift through Rudolf Steiner to the world — a gift leading one into a living connection with the etheric realm. If the eurythmy gestures are performed with purity of intention to express love and gratitude toward the Earth and the spiritual world, there can arise a co-creative sense of connection to the etheric world that then moves in response to the "heavenly call of love." This is the goal in choreocosmos of the cosmic and sacred dances of eurythmy, i.e., to gradually develop the faculty of serving the great guiding beings of existence active in the heavens and to create a conduit for their impulses down into the etheric realm.

Another important aspect relating to choreocosmos is the carefully chosen accompanying music, drawn from the tradition of classical music. The music of the great composers has come into existence by way of inspiration through the *harmony of the spheres*, and this is reflected in the musical compositions of these composers. By moving in cosmic and sacred dance to such music inspired by the cosmic harmonies, the soul breathes in resonance with cosmic realms, and is lifted toward an experience of the *music of the spheres*.⁴ The music works to lift the soul

² Ibid. It is important to note that the Choreocosmos School of Cosmic and Sacred Dance, founded in the year 2000, was founded seven years prior to the publication in 2007 of Rudolf Steiner's words to Tatiana Kisseleff concerning the "cosmic-sacral background" to eurythmy.

³ Lacquanna Paul & Robert Powell, *Cosmic Dances of the Planets* (San Rafael, CA: Sophia Foundation Press, 2007), p. 46.

⁴ See Robert Powell, "Choreocosmos: An Introductory Overview," introducing the booklet *Dances of the Starry Spheres: An Introduction to Choreocosmos*, which gives some background to working with the 84 cosmic dances that are

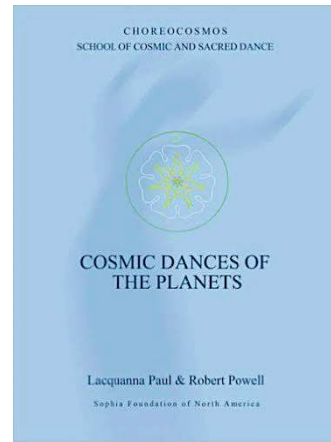
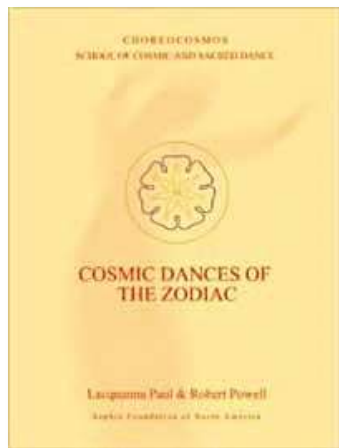
toward the macrocosmic matrix of creation, elevating the soul life and invigorating the life of will. Through deeply experiencing the music while moving to it, the human being becomes permeated by that which is streaming in from the cosmos: Divine Light, Love, and Life. This streaming in of the Divine works deeply into the human organism, transforming it even into the depths of the physical body.

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

Lacquanna (also known as “Lucky”) is co-author with Robert of *Cosmic Dances of the Zodiac* and *Cosmic Dances of the Planets* as well as other works, which you will find on the following page of the Sophia Foundation website: <http://sophiafoundation.org/meditational-study-material>

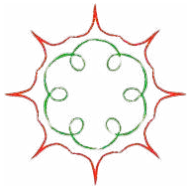
For further information visit: <http://sophiafoundation.org/courses-and-events>

Sophia Foundation Email: sophia@sophiafoundation.org



central to Choreocosmos — dances expressing the seven planets in the twelve signs. The booklet accompanies the Choreocosmos 4-CD set recorded by pianist and composer Marcia Burchard — see *Choreocosmos CD Announcement* below.

CD Announcement



The 84 Choreocosmos Dances of the Planets in the Signs of the Zodiac, recorded by pianist and composer Marcia Burchard.

Beginning in the keys of C major/a minor for Aries, and ending in the keys of F major/d minor for Pisces, this 4-CD set of over four hours of classical music to accompany the 84 choreocosmos cosmic dances of the *seven planets in the twelve signs of the zodiac* contains the music of the great composers — including Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Chopin, Liszt, and Scriabin — that has been carefully selected by Robert Powell in order to fit the planetary mood of each piece of music together with its key in relation to the twelvefold circle of the musical keys corresponding to the twelve signs of the zodiac.

In his article *Music Around the Globe* (*Starlight*, vol. 13 no. 1, Pentecost 2013) Robert describes the purpose and importance of cosmic dance:

We come together in community on earth to connect through the dances and through the music with the harmonies of the spheres — as our small contribution towards the great work of keeping heaven and earth aligned.

While the CD set is not meant to substitute for a live musician — obviously the ideal — it is hoped that it will provide a practice tool for choreocosmos teachers and students to familiarize themselves with the music and tempos before leading or participating in the dances. This set of four CDs is wonderful — simply to listen to — or it could also be used to dance the horoscope of the day, the horoscope of one's birthday, or the birthdays of friends and family, or those of the great individualities and teachers of humanity.

The booklet accompanying the CD set includes samples of the opening passages of each piece of music, with suggested metronome markings and indications for the coordination of the two dances: the zodiac dance in the outer circle (moving clockwise), and the planet dance in the inner circle (moving counterclockwise) — indicating the number of steps, ratios between the two circles, etc., important for the harmonizing of the two circles, the inner planetary circle and the outer zodiacal circle.

Marcia's recording of her playing of the piano music for the series of 84 cosmic dances central to *Choreocosmos* bears the title *Harmonies of the Starry Spheres: Music for the Seven Planets in the Twelve Signs of the Zodiac — To Accompany the 84 Choreocosmos Dances Created by Dr. Robert Powell*. As indicated by this title, the series of 84 cosmic dances expresses the seven planets in the twelve signs of the zodiac — corresponding to the 84 lines of Rudolf Steiner's cosmic poem *Twelve Moods*. This recording is available in a four CD-set through the Sophia Foundation:

<http://sophiafoundation.org/choreocosmos/cd-set-harmonies-of-the-starry-spheres>

CHOREOCOSMOS
School of Cosmic and Sacred Dance

2017 Schedule of Sophia Foundation Events in North America

(Please see the Sophia Foundation Website:
<http://www.sophiafoundation.org/courses-and-events>
for flyers and a regularly updated list.)

February 24-26, 2017: “Seven Stages of Initiation: In Christ’s Seven Words from the Cross.” A Choreocosmos weekend workshop with Karen Rivers, with Sophia Grail Circle Saturday Evening. 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.waldorfpeninsula.org. Information and registration: Cecille Greenleaf: Tel: 650-533-0074, Email: caogreenleaf@gmail.com.

March 3-5 2017: “Love is the Foundation for the Future” (with Foundation Stone Meditation). A weekend workshop with Karen Rivers; a Cosmic Meditation in Sacred Dance (with Sophia Grail Circle). At Sophia’s Sanctuary, 2836 Bloomfield Road, Sebastopol, California 95472, www.sophiassanctuary.org. Musical accompaniment with pianist and composer Marcia Burchard. Contact: Linda Delman, Tel: 707-827-3334. Email: lindaevansdelman@comcast.net

May 18-21, 2017: “Sophia Grail Circle Training for Facilitators.” A 3½-day training at Sophia’s Sanctuary, Sebastopol, California, www.sophiassanctuary.org. Starting at 7 pm, Thursday evening, May 18; ending at 10:00 pm, Sunday, May 21. Musical accompaniment with pianist and composer Marcia Burchard. Registration: contact the Sophia Foundation: Tel: 303-242-5388, Email: sophia@sophiafoundation.org. Information: Karen Rivers: Tel: 919-942-2465. Email: karen@karenrivers.info.

May 22, 2017: “Grail Knights Training.” A 1-day training at Sophia’s Sanctuary, Sebastopol, California, www.sophiassanctuary.org. Starting Monday, May 22, at 9:30 am; ending at 9:30 pm on Monday evening. Registration: contact the Sophia Foundation. Tel: 303-242-5388, Email: sophia@sophiafoundation.org. Information: Karen Rivers: Tel: 919-942-2465. Email: karen@karenrivers.info.

June 12-16, 2017: Boulder Choreocosmos Event. A 5-day workshop with Choreocosmos and Star Mysteries —“As above, so below.” Location: Kelly’s Barn, Boulder, Colorado. Musical accompaniment with pianist and composer Marcia Burchard. Contact: Kimmie Winston. Tel: 303-527-9940, Email: starz1922@hotmail.com. A flyer with full details will be available soon on the Sophia Foundation website.

July 24-28, 2017: Chapel Hill, NC Choreocosmos Event: “Mary Sophia: The Seven Seeds of Grace and the Mysteries of Star Wisdom.” A 5-day workshop with Cosmic and Sacred Dance. Grail Circles offered Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Location: Eno River Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 4908 Garrett Road, Durham, NC 27707. Musical accompaniment with pianist and composer Marcia Burchard. Registration: contact the Sophia Foundation. Tel: 303-242-5388, Email: sophia@sophiafoundation.org. Information: Karen Rivers: Tel: 919-942-2465, Email: Karen@KarenRivers.info.

August 18-21, 2017: Annual Sophia Meditation Retreat – 23rd Annual Gathering of the Sophia Foundation. “A Heavenly Chalice In Our Time – The 2017 Solar Eclipse and the Cross of Light.” Scheduled in conjunction with the 2017 solar eclipse on August 21, with total visibility in the U.S. Location: The Living Waters Ranch Retreat Center in Challis, ID. This is a prime locations for the eclipse and for a retreat in a beautiful setting. Registration: contact the Sophia Foundation: Tel: 303-242-5388, Email: sophia@sophiafoundation.org. Information: Karen Rivers: Tel: 919-942-2465, Email: karen@karenrivers.info.

2017 Schedule of International Workshops with Robert Powell

Note: The workshop in Kinsau, Bavaria, Germany, **January 18-22, 2017**, in German and Italian, on the occasion of Robert Powell's seventieth birthday, is already fully booked. This workshop and those below are Dr. Powell's only workshops in the Northern hemisphere this year.

July 2-7, 2017: “Attuning to the Stars: Star Gazing as a Spiritual Path.” A 4½-day workshop with Choreocosmos and Star Mysteries — “As above, so below.” This year the workshop will be focused on Sirius — “The Star Mysteries of Sirius” (English/German with Italian translation). Musical accompaniment by Italian violinist Sabina Morelli. The workshop will be at Titignano, east of Orvieto, southwest of Assisi; accommodation and full board at Castle Titignano retreat center. Arrival on July 2nd for dinner at 7:00 pm; departure on July 7th after breakfast. Information: Uberta Sebregondi, Tel: +39-06-86904627 / Mobile: +39-335-6749935. Email: usebregondi@gmail.com.

July 7-14, 2017: “The Hebrew Alphabet & the Tree of Life — The 10 Sephiroth and the 22 Paths of Wisdom corresponding to the 22 Major Arcana of the Tarot — the School of Sophia.” One-week workshop with the Foundation Stone Meditation (Sacred Dance) and Overview of Stars & Planets in 2017. Musical accompaniment by Italian concert pianist Fabio Berellini. The workshop will be in the church of Sant'Antonio (Saint Anthony); accommodation at the Casa Santa Elisabetta d'Ungheria in Assisi, Italy. Arrival on July 7th for dinner at 7:00 pm; departure on July 14th after breakfast. English/German with Italian translation. Information: Uberta Sebregondi, Tel: +39-06-86904627 / Mobile: +39-335-6749935. Email: usebregondi@gmail.com.

July 22-28, 2017: "Choreocosmos: International Week" in the spa hotel "Casa di Salute—Raphael" in Roncegno near Trient/Trento, Italy. "The Seven Last Words of Christ from the Cross in Preparation for the Descent to Shambhala." With Russian concert pianist Alla Fastovskaja. This will be the sixteenth graduation of the Choreocosmos School for Cosmic & Sacred Dance. Arrival on July 22nd for dinner at 7:00 PM; departure on July 28th after breakfast. English/German with Italian translation. Information: Sally Ellis-Jones, Tel: +39-0461-724893 / +39-3482-106251
Email: sally.ellis.jones@gmail.com.

July 28-30, 2017: "Choreocosmos Graduates Meeting" in the anthroposophical spa hotel "Casa di Salute—Raphael" in Roncegno near Trient/Trento, Italy: "Foundations of Choreocosmos: A Spiritual Path Arising from Eurythmy — The School of Christ & Sophia." English/German with Italian translation. With Russian concert pianist Alla Fastovskaja (Cosmic and Sacred Dance). Information: Sally Ellis-Jones, Tel: +39-0461-724893 / +39-3482-106251.
Email: sally.ellis.jones@gmail.com.

July 31 - August 6, 2017: "The Search for the Holy Grail — in the Region where the Grail Family originated." A 5½-day conference with Robert Powell and Estelle Isaacson with Choreocosmos (Sacred Dance) and Exploration of the Grail Mysteries. The conference is at the hotel/restaurant L'Ermitage overlooking the village Hohwald in the heart of the Alsace region in France, not far from the sacred Mont Sainte-Odile. The hotel/restaurant offers accommodations and meals. With excursions to Mont Sainte-Odile, Barr, Andlau, Colmar (to see Grünewald's *Isenheim Altar*), and to Dornach/Arlesheim to visit the sites of Trevrizent's cave, Sigune's hermit cell, the lake of Anfortas, the Grail castle and the modern Grail castle, the Goetheanum, designed by Rudolf Steiner. English/German with translation into French and Italian. Arrival on Monday, July 31st in time for dinner at 7:00 pm; departure on Sunday, August 6th after breakfast. Information and registration: Laurence Penetrat, 17 rue de la Mairie, 11260 Rouvenac, France. Tel: +33-468-741-479.
Email: penetrat.laurence@orange.fr

Für weitere Informationen in deutscher Sprache: <http://www.choreocosmos.info>.
Email: katherine@choreocosmos.info

**Thank You to Kelly Calegar
from Robert Powell**

Dear Sophia and Choreocosmos Friends,

I would like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude to Kelly Calegar, who, through the Sophia School of Movement, is endeavoring to bring Choreocosmos to people on the east coast of the USA, and also she has done remarkable work in making audio files of many of my lecture cycles available (see Kelly's announcement following). This voluntary work by Kelly is helping to bring Sophia's message to the world in our time, in a way that for many people is more accessible than reading books or articles.

Moreover, for students of Choreocosmos, Kelly has also made available various Choreocosmos CDs — <http://sophiafoundation.org/courses-and-events/courses-and-events/choreocosmos-music-cds-for-purchase>

Thank you, dear Kelly, for your wonderful work!

Robert Powell

Visit Kelly's website: www.SophiaSchoolOfMovement.org



Dear Community,

A very warm 2016 “hello” to you!

I am writing from beautiful North Carolina, to update you on support materials that are available through:

www.sophiaschoolofmovement.org



Music CDs:

The Music for the Prayer Sequence (Ludmilla)

The Music for the Zodiac (Ludmilla)

The Music for the Planets (Sylvia Series I and II)

The Music for the Four Elements and Prayer Sequence (Sylvia)

The Music for the Liturgy to the Earth (Sylvia)

Thank you to Ludmilla Lohbrunner-Gricenko, Sylvia Karpe, and Robert Powell for their efforts to make these Choreocosmos CDs available.

Lecture CDs 2011 - 2015:

A selection of Robert’s lectures are available for purchase as CDs.

The newest lecture set that is available is *The Great Teachers of Humanity, Melbourne 2015*, which introduces the bodhisattvas who are helping to steer the course of earth evolution, and their impulses over time.

Note of interest: I just listened to *The Seven Seals of the Apocalypse, Chapel Hill, 2011*, and even though I have heard this material several times, I was yet *again* quite *enlightened* by the content, which addresses the attack the opposing forces wage against communities, marriages, and anything that is Good, through “whispering in our ears” – whispering divisive and untrue thoughts.

Check out the site and allow yourself to be guided to the particular lectures that you are inwardly seeking.

A very special thanks to Robert for his permission to allow these *treasures* of Wisdom to be made available as CDs.

All CDs (music and lectures) are available via the website
www.SophiaSchoolOfMovement.Org.

The links are in white at the top of the home page – select *CDs for Purchase*.

With love and gratitude,
Kelly Calegar

Saint John's Tide 2016

Tracy Saucier

Alicia Santacroce, Summerfield Waldorf School and Farm's first eurythmy teacher, invited me to come and lead a workshop on Robert Powell's *Cultivating Inner Radiance* moving meditation sequence. The weekend workshop would inaugurate a space she had just built for the community to gather for study, movement and prayer. Several years ago Alicia was introduced to Choreocosmos – Sacred and Cosmic Dance, along with the writings of Valentin Tomberg and Robert Powell, and found the practices and study deeply moving. She wanted to share the work with others in her study group and the wider community. Over the Holy Nights 2015/2016 Alicia called and asked if I might be interested in coming down to lead a workshop. During the next few months we planned the workshop with great excitement and anticipation. Alicia and her assistant Chloe beautifully prepared the space and gathered a group to study in preparation for the workshop.

The weekend of Saint John's Tide, a dozen of us gathered in Alicia's movement space and immersed ourselves in the question of "why do Choreocosmos?" Realizing the breakdown of systems we are currently experiencing in our culture, and the opportunity that exists for something new to arise for which our souls long, we set out to explore how we have become alienated from the spiritual world, one another, and Nature through our transgressions and the disfiguring of our astral organs or "chakras." Out of our longing to heal and become whole again, we practiced filling our souls with Christ's Divine Light, Divine Love, Divine Life, and Divine Peace. We contemplated how He *is* the source and foundation of all healing. Conversation, meditative eurythmy, a Sophia Grail Circle, and star gazing filled our time together. The curiosity and open-heartedness of all the participants led to a warm, rich weekend filled with reverence, gratitude and Grace. I am deeply grateful that the participants were able to experience the divine blessings of Christ and Sophia in the course of our workshop as Chloe McKenna describes in the article below.

Three-Day Choreocosmos Workshop with Tracy Saucier on *Cultivating Inner Radiance*

June 2016

Chloe McKenna

Studying eurythmy in a eurythmy school setting for almost two years gave me one perspective on moving meditation. Yoga is another form of moving meditation, as well as t'ai chi, and both have taught me and given me a way to look into Being. There is also the silence and stillness that can come with other forms of meditation and surrender. I have worked with many of these forms, as well as doing the inner work that results from just trying to tame my soul and communicate with both the good and the bad. I've also meditated on working with the Spirit, the life force that is outside of me and yet a part of me. This is the great beauty of living, of actually being on this earth, in relationship with this/these beings. It is the moment-to-moment work, process and remembrance which I strive to be a part of and participate in as much as I have the capacity to do so.

It is only over the last two months that have I started to study Robert Powell's works: *Cultivating Inner Radiance*, *The Star Journal*, and *The Planetary Dances*. Inspired by all of these writings, movements, and meditations, I was excited to see what else would come to me through one of Robert's students. When Tracy Saucier arrived in Fallbrook, right away I could feel that a light had entered. After all my struggles with anxiety, depression, fear, and self-judgement, somehow in this moment a wave of peace began to flow over me, and it continued to flow throughout the three days of the workshop. I finally felt worthy of shedding tears and of experiencing devotion and an inner calling towards God. Sophia brought to me a whole new meaning of *love*. It was almost like remembering what it felt like to be held in the womb again, yet still be completely upright and fully in the Truth. The difference with this experience compared with other spiritual and meditative paths I have crossed is that it was nearly effortless. Just opening up to the guidance of Tracy and the circle that we created allowed this love to pour in. I write this with tears of pure joy for the peace that I felt during those three days. And now how inspiring and comforting it is to know that I have just to practice these meditations and I will be able to cultivate that same peace and love every day, every moment!

As greatly impacted as I had been by Powell's work, I was also deeply moved by Tracy's presence and teachings. She is truly living proof of an "inner radiance" working within her through Sophia, Christ, and her practice and way of life. "Gratitude" does not begin to express what this experience gave me. My faith feels reunited with the Truth. My heart feels warm and in love with the eternal life again and, more than ever, I feel the pure surrender and devotion that satisfies all parts of this human existence of which my soul is a part. I am so grateful that I was shown this light and was reminded that it is within everything. The light of Christ is within my very being, and I can now awaken to and cultivate a relationship with it so I can better accomplish God's will and work in this world. When I have been able to work on these practices on my own since the workshop ended, they have brought me great peace and a sense of ease through service in my daily life. It's as if this meditation sends me all the loving energy and strength I need to serve and not be depleted when I work out of this light and love of the divine. I feel as if I have been given a tool which brings me ever closer to feeling saved from my own inner darkness and sufferings, so I can let go of the self and work through the help of the Highest. This has been my experience and, with honesty and grace, I say *thank you*.

**The Black Virgin, the Labyrinth, and the Full Moon
Conjunct the Central Sun on Father's Day**

June 19, 2016

Tracy Saucier

As I begin my meditative journey into the heart of the labyrinth circle, I pray the Lord's Prayer and conclude with the Tree of Life (For thine is the Kingdom (Malkuth), the Power (Yesod), and the Glory (Tiffereth) in Eternity (Kether)), and gratitude fills my heart. I turn to my Guardian Angel and send love and gratitude for guiding me to this moment of my life, and I open myself to his wisdom in complete faith, hope and love, asking for revelation to what I need to do to

become a better vessel for Spirit and to become more open and conscious of the presence of Christ and Sophia. As I look up to the Full Moon, it is as if a door opens and Love comes pouring into me, and I remember Robert's instructions for three-fold walking to receive the light and love through my two-petal lotus flower and send it down into the Earth – to Mother Earth, holding the breath while love and blessings flow down into the Earth, and then receiving the flow of warmth and Life from the Mother up through the feet into my heart and then up to the Heavens. As I continue this practice while walking, I feel the love of the Angels for Mother Earth flow through me, and joy beyond words passes through my being, and wave after wave of Love – currents flowing through me from the Earth to Heavens and from the Heavens to the Earth.



Hecate
Claudia Olivos

Hecate comes to my mind – she who is the Goddess of the (unseen) Moon and the Underworld: Cosmic Soul, unseen, imageless, powerful; Goddess of the Threshold, connecting the depths and the heights. And in a completely new way, I experience the deep connection between the Earth and the Moon – how they were once united physically, and how their Life Forces are still united and their great longing and love to be One. Likewise the human being longs for a reunification of spirit, soul and body – the Tree of Life – the Resurrection Body – healing and regeneration: a Moon Mystery. As I feel this joy, I realize that the Moon is at this moment a portal for the Divine Father's Love as the Moon is receiving from the Central Sun and we are a receptive vessel to send this Light and Force into the Earth Mother – a unity of Love in perfect balance. We are just hours

from the Summer Solstice, the day with the most light, and yet here in the still reflection of the night we are participating in creating a balance and a connection between the Father and the Mother. My heart swells and overflows. The Blessings pour over me, and I have to remember to keep sending this force into the Earth. It is thinking me. Walking is a moving meditation, activity with consciousness – masculine and feminine forces that connect in my heart that feels as though it is about to burst. Divine Love is with me – “Lo, I am with you always,” and Wisdom is sharing her Grace. And I am in Holy Awe walking with the stars as my guides.

The planets, Antares, Spica, and Arcturus are the only visible “stars” in the sky, and I become aware of Jupiter (in Leo), Mars (in Libra) and Saturn (in Scorpio) – the three planets associated with the upper three chakras and masculine gods – and the Moon (in Sagittarius). I immediately sense the speaking of the planets (to the subconscious realms of) the soul. I ask to sense what the configuration is gracing us with. These hierarchies representing the divine thoughts, feelings and will of the Father were standing with the Moon as the portal to the Earth Mother. The Moon is receiving the wisdom and courage of the heart (Jupiter in Leo), the alignment of divine will with human will through the focal point of the heart (Mars in Libra), and the memory of the archetype in the heavens – the Resurrection Body – the image and likeness of the Father (Saturn in Scorpio). And the angels collect all of the planets' impulses – *pulses* of force – the sounding of the Spheres. We must listen to hear these harmonies of grace. As I experience this harmony I remember that it is Father's Day and know that there is no Father without a Mother, and I feel the embrace of the Mother and hear the song of the Father, and the Moon is the portal. Wisdom is everywhere.



Polish Black
Madonna

As I reach the center of the labyrinth, a deep silence opens down into the Earth, and I offer the Our Mother Prayer to the center where the crystal sentinels hold the space and receive us. I long to drop to the ground and press my heart to Her heart, but alas I am too self-conscious to drop to the ground. I know that She feels my heart and knows what lives inside, and I am feeling Her love for me and for all of creation.

Black Madonna, Mother of Hope, who holds our Resurrection Body for us, may love of thy Divine Son fill every cell of our bodies, and the wisdom of Sophia penetrate into our will, so that we may become your children. I am eternally grateful.

Connecting with the Mother

Kim Marie

This year's Sophia Foundation Annual Conference on the topic of the Black Madonna was a powerful and profound experience. While I'm quite sure that each person at the conference had his or her own powerful experiences and understandings, I would like to share what the conference sparked within me, and how it has been living in me since.

We began the workshop on Friday evening as the sun was precisely aligned to where it was at the time of Pentecost. Robert reminded us that the Divine plan of creation is revealed by Sophia, just as the descent of the Holy Spirit was facilitated by Mary Sophia at Pentecost. I have always felt deeply connected to the Mother, longing to understand Her better, while at the same time, somehow feeling a deep understanding already present. Robert spoke of how the Divine Mother is what becomes creation, the manifested counterpart to the transcendental being of the Heavenly Father beyond all creation.

Robert shared a favorite verse from Rudolf Steiner, the *Ode to the Divine Mother of All*:

If you seek me with true desire for knowledge, I shall be with you.

I am the seed and source of your visible world.

I am the ocean of light in which your soul lives.

I am the ruler of space.

I am the creator of cycles of time.

Fire, Air, Light, Water, and Earth obey me.

Feel me as the spiritual origin of all matter.

And as I have no consort on earth, call me Maya.

This verse speaks to the many manifestations of Spirit. We have our Earth Mother, and yet She is a small part of creation, just as the Sun, Moon and Stars are each only a part. It is in relating to these parts as important elements of the whole that we strive to fully know the transcendental nature behind them.

When desire penetrated into the astral body of the human being via Lucifer in the Garden of Eden, human beings came to a desire to incarnate upon the Earth. We wanted to understand the various manifestations of Creation and their expressions. This idea feels so empowering to me. We *wanted* to understand. What if we lived our lives, facing the many challenges that we do each day, with the remembering that we wanted to understand life in this way? We ultimately chose to leave the Garden through our desire, and we can choose to return.

Robert spoke of the mystery of Holy Saturday, the focus of which is on the Earth Mother and the lost paradise of Shambhala, to which Christ descended, uniting the Father and Mother, and bringing us the strength and freedom of the "I" in the process. He reminded us that all of life receives its life energy from the Mother, that trees extend their roots to receive this energy, and the source of water springs forth from this source. I couldn't help but think of the idea that the Mother is always present, always loving, and always receiving our needs and responding to them with all that we require, as long as we seek Her just as Christ did.

I wrote in last year's Advent Starlight Journal that I've often wrestled with the idea that a mother would withdraw and leave her child to wander. I reconciled this struggle with the idea that the Mother withdrew after the fratricide of Abel and the spilling of human blood upon the earth, in order to protect the "I" that lives in the blood until human beings were ready to strengthen it through Christ and redeem the deeds of the past. I spoke of seeing this deed as the "ultimate sacrifice of the Mother." Since the workshop, this particular mystery has been living in me. I continued to notice a discomfort as I would speak the verse of the Our Mother Prayer:

Receive this day the living memory of Thee from human hearts, who implore Thee to forgive us our forgetting Thee, and who are ready to fight against the temptation which has led Thee to withdraw into the heart of the Earth.

I have resonated from the beginning with the idea that we must seek forgiveness for forgetting our dear Mother, but I have never resonated with the idea that temptation led Her to withdraw. I started contemplating aspects of the masculine and the feminine, wanting to understand this verse better. What came to me was surprising, and may not make sense to everyone. Nonetheless, the experience is real for me.



Having experienced a deepening connection to the Mother over the years simply by noticing how life works...how creation manifests...I started considering various aspects of life in which the masculine and feminine show up quite obviously. I thought about the masculine element of advancing and retreating in war time, and the feminine element of tending the hearth and holding space. I thought of the pollination process of plants in which the pollen is transferred to the female reproductive organ of the plant, the feminine standing open and receptive, while the masculine is doing the pollination, advancing and retreating. I thought about the intimate relationships between men and women and between animals. The feminine is open and receptive, making space inwardly to receive the masculine, while the masculine is again in a way advancing and retreating. I came to see a pattern here, namely that it is a masculine trait to "withdraw," and not a feminine trait.

As I mentioned earlier, the Earth Mother is always there, ready to receive the roots of the tree, the rain that feeds Her springs, the seeds that are planted, and even the blood of man. She is ever ready to return purification, sustenance and life essence. This insight began to give me an entirely different interpretation of that part of the Our Mother Prayer. I had previously been literalizing the prayer's words, thinking the Mother "literally" withdrew, and yet in these deeper contemplations, I came to see that it is the human being that literally withdrew, which left the mother with no choice but to "tend the hearth" until "he" was ready to return.

Christ's blood was spilled, and on Holy Saturday, for the sake of all of humanity, He returned to the Mother's Hearth, willing to face the darkness and entombment that comes with facing the shame and guilt humanity has felt since the Garden of Eden. As we continue to feel too ashamed to face our deeds, we will wander homeless and Motherless upon the Earth. Yet the Mother is always there, always! She has never left us. She did not withdraw; rather, she was shut out. While many would say that the Earth energy is more difficult to feel or access in these times than in previous times, I wonder if perhaps that interpretation arises simply because we as human beings struggle to access this energy, not because it is in some way "removed" or "withdrawn."

The ultimate sacrifice of the Mother has been in Her patient waiting for us to return to Her. As I look back, I see that my personal path has been a process of more deeply connecting with the Mother, returning to Her, understanding Her, and deeply loving Her. These insights have been deeply transformative in my life, and I'm very grateful for them.

The Annual Conference was a profound step into the depths of these mysteries of Shambhala, or the Mother's Hearth, and the effects of stepping into these mysteries have stayed with me since returning home. The course content continued to deepen in me as we studied together through the conference.

Robert spoke of Isis being referred to as the World Mother, the origin of the Black Madonna. Egypt was thought of as a black, fertile land, and Isis as a black Goddess of fertility, growth and life. He spoke of the Alchemy of the Mother, and the origin of the word *alchemy* being comprised of:

al, the Arabic definitive article "the" and

chemy from an old name for Egypt, Khemia, meaning literally "land of black earth."

An aspect of this alchemy is the transformative nature of the black or darkness. Robert spoke of Khemia being the work of the soul and of transforming matter. Robert's wife Lucky opened my eyes to the sound of my name "Kim" in relation to the sound "khem," khem being the black earth, the Goddess Isis, and the Earth Mother. Lucky's insight somehow validated my years of fascination with what I had come to lovingly refer to as the "Dark Mother" and Her transformative strength, as well as my personal work as a life coach in this realm.

I was fascinated by Robert's stories of how the Black Madonna was connected to our Mother Earth, and was "smuggled" into Christianity to represent the Earth Mother as a living being. He spoke of the indigenous peoples having had a long-lasting connection to the Earth Mother and to all of life.

After the conference, I continued to be inspired by the efforts of the indigenous people to protect our Mother, and finally I surrendered to an inner call. In early October, over Indigenous Peoples' Weekend, I took a youth group of 19 youth and 10 parents to do volunteer work to support the Standing Rock Tribe in North Dakota in protection of the water and the earth. We helped with winterizing the camps, taking care of the land, preparing food for our brothers and sisters, and donating much-needed supplies. What a treasure to see how the youth of our time have the fire of the Mother burning so strongly within them!

One cannot be amongst these indigenous people and their brave efforts, or stand on the banks of the beautiful life-giving river, and not hear the cries of our Mother calling us to return to Her. Since my return from Standing Rock, I have been feeling heartbroken over the horrible treatment of the indigenous people, and the painful disregard for our Mother and her life-giving water. I have felt my connection to the Mother deepening even further, and find it to be the most painful journey I've ever taken as my heart continues to be pierced by both the reconciliation of my own deeds of the past, and the injustices of today that must be addressed.

As Robert noted, with 98% of the Redwood forests being chopped down, and the bison being nearly eliminated, among so many other things, human beings have gone too far. We have so much to learn from the Indigenous people who carry the memory of the Mother in their hearts. They are leading the way as we learn to return to Her, and showing us the sacrifice required to do so. We will remain homeless wanderers until we connect to Mother's warmth and unite it with Father's light. Both are always there, but only available to us if we choose to seek them.

Karen also shared profound insights during her lectures at the Annual Conference on Saturday, beginning with the many representations of the "Dark Mother" (as I've come to know Her) present throughout history, and their representation of the striving to bring what is out of alignment into alignment. She pointed out the powerful images of the Earth Mother holding her children, noting that often we see the Mother holding a "miniature person" rather than an infant, indicative of the truth that the Mother holds all of creation at all times.

Throughout time, the Dark Mother has striven to bring forth our highest, waking us to transform the shadows of our being and regain our true spiritual essence, often through our pain and suffering. Karen reminded us that we are accompanied on our journey by the grail-bearing Mother who holds the essence of our being in the blood. As many of us strive to find greater neutrality with less reactivity to life's challenges, noticing the neutrality in the facial expressions of the many Madonnas' images displayed in the sanctuary was a powerful reminder that there must be those who can witness without reactivity in order to carry the wisdom forward. It is interesting to consider that many of the initiatory practices in Indigenous Wisdom include the need to remain neutral and expressionless in order to move through the rite of passage.

Karen also shared a history of the various appearances of the Black Madonna images through the Archangelic Ages. I found it fascinating to consider that as the consciousness of the human being began to dim, more statues of the Black Madonna appeared as reminders, and that the healing of the human being was presented through these statues and other art during the age of Raphael, 816-1170. The placement of statues by the Knights Templars near water lines during the age of

Samael, 1170-1524, also intrigued me, particularly now as I imagine the veins of our Mother providing life in our waterways.

The fierceness and/or aggression of the Black Madonna is not depicted in Her outer image, but is part of an inner experience as the soul is purified, and becomes purposeful with love to create growth. I have constantly been reminded of this teaching since the conference, considering how the Mother will “eat her young” if needed for the sake of protection. We can look at massive storms, and the need for human beings to face some of the greatest dragons of life as being indicative of this process. If we look at this process as being purposeful and loving, I wonder how many more of us might have the courage to meet those dragons, like those meeting the Black Snake in North Dakota.

The darkness or blackness of the mother is represented in Sheba’s statement, “I am black, but I am beautiful,” and in Hermes’ note that Isis was “given the gift of perfect blackness.” The color black was cast negatively during the Renaissance and considered as evil, and dark-skinned human beings are struggling to overcome this bias to this day. Darkness is fecundity. Darkness is the womb from which all is born. Darkness is what holds up the stars. It is the space of infinite potentiality and generative capacity. Out of the dark, life emerges. The Black Madonna reveals the light, reminding us that only in darkness can the light shine forth.

Our soul’s creative work takes place in the dark. We must walk in the uncertainty of the dark of night to become a bringer of the light of day. In the darkest, most empty place, the Christ is born. Jesus of Nazareth poured forth his pain and grief in finding no teachings remaining upon the earth to support the evolution of humanity, emptying himself to the Mother, who received His pain for the sake of purifying all, and bringing forth the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

This concept reminded me of a wise healer who taught me of the indigenous view of women and their capacity to purify with their moon cycle. Women gather physical toxins and unresolved energies and issues, which they release during menstruation, giving this process much more meaning than simply as a reproductive/biological expression. They release these energies both for themselves and often for the collective through the moon cycle, cleansing and purifying them as they are returned to Mother Earth. The way of the woman is the moon lodge, rather than the sweat lodge. The moon path has phases, including a dark phase, and as we learn to honor the darkness, we can more effectively work to purify. Perhaps there is an additional mystery of the blood in connection with the Christ and Golgotha that can be contemplated here in connection with the Holy Mother.

Karen also spoke of the three stages of alchemy, the first being the Black Stage (Black Madonna), which is a purification process in which raw matter is purified to white. The White Stage of illumination (Madonna of Light) is a raying out of the purified astral as starlight in which the masculine and feminine principles become harmonious. Finally, the Red Stage of alchemy brings union. This is the red work through which Christ comes to birth and lives within, a process in which we become Christed. I could not help but consider this as an aspect of what our Native Americans refer to as “The Good Red Road.”

These stages come together in the final teachings of the Black Rite, a process of learning how to bring one back from the dead. In other words, these three stages bring forth a re-birth as a final result. I was reminded of the four verses of the Foundation Stone Meditation, the first being a remembering (Spirit Recollection), the second being a reconnecting (Spirit Awareness), the third being a re-envisioning (Spirit Beholding), and the fourth being a rebirthing (Spirit Light), which I had been working with for some time as a framework for my program offerings as a life coach. This alchemical process fit so perfectly into my understanding, and brought much deeper meaning for me to the Foundation Stone Meditation.

On Sunday, Robert offered us star wisdom in connection with Pentecost, reminding us that our entire body and the body of the Earth are star maps. As human beings, we stand as mediators between Heaven and Earth, and through the deed of Christ bringing the I Am, the Earth Mother is now being revealed to us in greater ways. As the Mother is revealed, we find her dwelling in the center of the human heart, burning the vestiges of shame out of our body as the Holy Begetress of the True, Good and Beautiful.

We were reminded of the nine sub-earthly layers through which we must pass to get to Shambhala. We can certainly see in life around us that Christ's time in the eighth layer is bringing forth significant divisiveness on the planet, and of course the opportunity to purify it. Robert's plea that we must learn to see each other clearly and attune to the higher self and true name of the other only reinforced the importance of knowing ourselves. We cannot see the truth in others if we cannot see the truth in ourselves. This is such a powerful concept to remember when we notice ourselves getting triggered by others, unable to see the best in them, as it inspires us to discover what we may not be seeing in ourselves, and in turn to redeem all that might otherwise serve as nourishment for the sub-earthly layers.

Through the deed of the Son, we now have the capacity to liberate ourselves by making the choice to return to the Mother, redeem the past, and create a new future. The Shambhala Path is about connecting to the Earth Mother, who holds the rudiments of our resurrection bodies. The Shambhala Path will bring forth a New Earth, just as Choreocosmos supports the bringing forth of a New Heaven.

In the first coming of Christ, the veil to the Father was lifted through the Nine Beatitudes and the Lord's Prayer. In Christ's second coming, the veil to the Mother is being lifted with the Our Mother Prayer and Christ's passing through the sub-earthly layers so that we may know and cleanse the evil that lives within us. Christ is showing us the path to overcoming evil and realizing Shambhala.

Robert shared that his book *Inner Radiance*, is very much about opening to and preparing for this path. In my personal experience of working with all of the sequences in this book for five years, I have also found that working with the sequences Karen Rivers provides in her *Morning Meditation to Sophia* is a significant part of what has allowed me to meet the Mother, and know her more intimately.

The artistry of Marcia's piano playing and the music she offered as well as the theatrical play we enacted created a lovely connection to the Mother. We were also blessed to enjoy a magical evening walk through the labyrinth by candlelight and a full moon, as well as the glorious colors of the sunset during the weekend. The Great Mother was expressing Her love and presence to us in powerful ways throughout the conference.

As we closed the conference, going around and sharing our experiences, many people shared their gratitude and awe for this new material of the Shambhala Path and the connection to the Black Madonna. My work for many years with the Mother has been profound and deeply transformative, truly the alchemical process that Robert and Karen spoke of. I believe that this path, unlike any other, will bring us Home. May we all have the courage to traverse the path. May we know that the Mother is there for us always.

The Mother bears the memory of all that is. She shows up in all her expressions in the multifaceted domains of life. She stays with us as we realize and fulfill our Spiritual Nature. An Indigenous Elder once told me,

Talk to Her. Remember that if we don't give attention to our limbs by using them and communicating with them, they atrophy. If we don't pay attention to a child, that child dies.

Let us all talk to our Mother each morning, and allow Her to support our remembering and journey toward re-birth.

I end this article, inspired by a portion of the song "The Saddest Word" sung by Celine Dion, spoken first from the child to the Mother, and then from the Mother to the child. May it inspire and nourish you on your journey as well.

[from child to mother]

*The love you give will always live
You'll always be there every time I fall
You are to me the greatest love of all
You take my weakness and you make me strong
And I will always love you 'till forever comes*

[from mother to child]

*And when you need me
I'll be there for you always
I'll be there your whole life through.
I'll be there this I promise you.
I'll be your beacon through the darkest nights
I'll be the wings that guide your broken flight
I'll be your shelter through the raging storm
And I will love you 'till forever comes*

A Short Biographical Note on Kim Marie

Kim Marie is the administrator of the Sophia Foundation, having studied the works of Rudolf Steiner, Valentin Tomberg and Robert Powell for twelve years. She brings practicality to spirituality as a Lifestyle Coach committed to inspiring her clients to awaken their inner wisdom, transform their lives, and connect with their purpose aligned with the change they want to see in the world. Her programs and courses, including "Mother's Medicine," support a return to the wisdom of the Divine Feminine, and nurture the soul's journey of remembering, reconnecting, re-envisioning and rebirthing for the sake of a new future. She offers weekly writing and inspiration through her blog at KimMarieCoaching.com.



Steiner Madonna Notecards and Prints Ordering Information

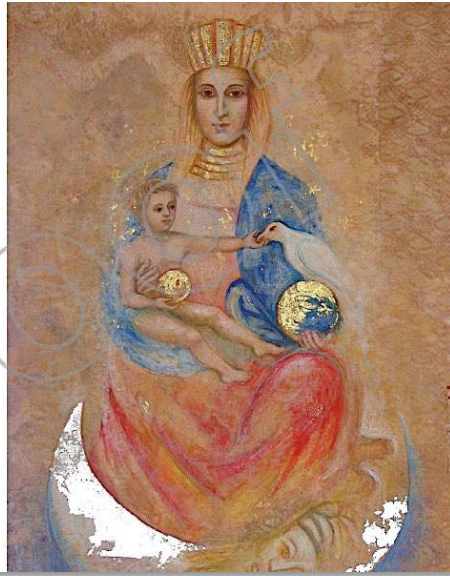
Our Italian Sophia friend and artist Mara Maccari has created a beautiful painting based on Rudolf Steiner's 1911 sketch with color indications. This painting offers deep meaning and is an ideal focus for meditation. The Sophia Foundation has partnered with Mara Maccari to sell prints of this image as a fundraiser for the Sophia Foundation. The cards and prints make a wonderful gift, thank you notes, and/or meditation support.



In 1911 Rudolf Steiner, when staying at Portorose/Triest, drew a sketch of the Madonna, with color indications. This sketch was not published until 1972. The artist Mara Maccari has now painted this Madonna sketch by Rudolf Steiner, using his color indications. This Madonna is very unusual, in comparison with other Madonna paintings, because it

includes many details of a spiritual nature never seen before in connection with the Madonna. For example, the head of John the Baptist appears on the Moon; and a bird—perhaps the Dove of the Holy Spirit or possibly the Eagle symbolizing the writer of the John Gospel—can be seen perched on the globe of the world held in the left hand of the Virgin Mary. These are just two of the striking features of this Madonna. In fact, Rudolf Steiner's Madonna is a treasure-chest of profound truths expressed in pictorial form, and Mara Maccari has succeeded in rendering this sketch as a beautiful Madonna image suitable for meditation.

Robert Powell



Here is a proof of the notecards with a view of the front and the back. The Altar Card is exactly the same as the notecards, but is one flat card, printed on the front and the back, rather than a folded card with a blank inside. The Note Cards are 4" x 5.5" with envelopes, and the Altar Cards are 4.21" x 5.47" without envelopes.

These cards can be ordered on our Sophia Foundation website at:

<http://sophiafoundation.org/book-store>

and will be shipped via USPS priority mail.

(Please contact the Sophia Foundation for international orders).

Package of 10 Note Cards:

\$15 (plus \$6 priority shipping in the U.S.)

Altar Card: \$2.50 each

(includes shipping in the U.S.)

Fine Art Canvas Wrap:

1.5" Edge with Digital Stretched Bordered Wrap

5x7 - \$75.00 plus tax/shipping

8x10 - \$83 plus tax/shipping

11x14 - \$103 plus tax/shipping

16x20 - \$143.00 plus tax/shipping

24x30 - \$240.00 plus tax/shipping

Please contact the Sophia Foundation by calling 303-242-5388,
or emailing Sophia@SophiaFoundation.org to coordinate a fine art canvas print order.

Vlad — The Humble Warrior

Cheryl Mulholland

October 7, 2016

There was once a brave warrior named Vlad, the Humble. He was chosen by his people to defend them from a growing threat of evil. A colossal dragon with seven heads and five eyes had coiled itself around their country. Its spewing smoke polluted the air, poisoned the water, and obscured a third of the stars. Its vaporous fire-breath scorched the land. A third of the trees and a third of the grass lay burnt. Only the sacrifice of the country's youth and ransoms of precious resources appeased the insatiable and ravenous creature. It threatened to destroy the whole world if it was not continually fed with blood and gold.

The resources of the earth had been bled. Knight after brave knight had been lost. A third of the maidens had been devoured. No one was safe anywhere. "Lead us to peace and prosperity!" was the cry of Vlad's people, and the cry of all peace-seeking people of the earth. Though he knew not what would come of it, Vlad did know it was his destiny to confront this miscreant. He gathered the best advisors and weaponry his country could provide. He asked for the prayers of his people, who formed themselves into two battalions — an Army for War and an Army of Love. Vlad donned his armor and petitioned for the protection of Holy Archangel Michael, the Arch-strategist who had done battle with evil in the heavens. Then, fully prepared to sacrifice himself with only his trusty saker falcon for a companion, he strode forth steadfastly.

The dragon disdained his opponent's approach. "Which of your armies shall I destroy first?" it ridiculed. Always a valiant and courteous Knight, Vlad tried first to reason with the beast. "I come not to fight you, but to tame you, comrade," he persuaded. A hiss and a sneer issued forth from the hideous beast, to which Vlad cordially replied, "Let us join together to subdue evil and create instead an enlightened society."

Vlad's proposals seemed only to further incense the hubris of the beast. Assessing its ghastly nature, and cruel power, the humble warrior now knew nothing in his arsenal could ensure certain victory. He stood quite powerless, humbly aware that he could likely be sacrificed. But this realization did not detract him from his mission, and he turned to face the beast.

To Vlad's surprise, for a moment he saw the dragon falter, seemingly dismayed, and Vlad took heart. The beast had caught sight of its most feared enemy—the Archangel Michael, defender of Truth and Justice, standing at Vlad's back. But it was only a momentary setback for the dragon, and it rose on its haunches, fomenting with power at the realization that fighting its archenemy could be the decisive battle that would rid the earth forever of this "cosmic nuisance." With the opportunity now at hand to defeat the Archangel and secure a final triumph of evil over all the earth, the dragon seethed against Vlad.

With a sudden elevation of mind and spirit, Vlad felt himself lightening—fortified by Michael's in-streaming force. Though he was not without trepidation, he was master over his fear. A great volition took hold of his heart and limbs, and a resolute strength issued from his countenance.

Again the dragon momentarily faltered, slightly unnerved by the sudden force asserted against it, but the battle raged on. With deft and measured might, Vlad severed claws and appendages from the beastly apparition. Several of its hideous heads were slashed asunder. With each such victory Vlad's tenacity increased. The shining swift-winged saker falcon circled the periphery of the battlefield, and with shrill cries dispensed news of Vlad's victories to the world.

Days and nights turned to weeks and months. Years seemed like centuries of war. The more deeply Vlad entered into the battle, the more resolute he became. The power of the beast was immense, and one by one Vlad's weapons were defeated in the battle against the dragon's hegemony. His lance was broken, his shield smashed, and his sword was shattered. Vlad the Humble now stood unarmed, facing the salivating fiend. The warrior stood upright, composed, and resilient. He removed his helmet. The dragon, which by now was left with only one eye, watched as a smile crossed the warrior's face. For the third time, the dragon was taken aback by its opponent's surety and courage.

Vlad was a prize for sure. Never had anyone inflicted such pain upon the beast. There was a quality in Vlad that the beast could not name, but he was greedy to know what it was. Obtaining such information before he devoured Vlad would be useful for future conquest. "Before I consume you," the dragon mocked triumphantly, "Tell me what it is that makes a man smile before he goes to his grave."

Vlad knew the battle of the sword had been lost. Only through the Power of the Word could Vlad hope to defeat his opponent. He paused, and the courageous force of Truth-wrought speech flashed through him. "That you will surely know *after* you have eaten me," was Vlad's answer. "For once you swallow me, Truth will live inside you, and from within I will master you. I am the victor, and by Truth you are overcome."

The power of Vlad's words reverberated far into the firmament. In response to this human speech, Archangel Michael raised his golden blade. A scintillating shower of celestial sparks from an unseen heavenly forge burst across the heavens. From the starburst, beneficent healing dew rained down upon the earth. Its vivifying power of mercy and renewal blessed everything it touched, and all the world rejoiced to receive this healing grace. Only the vile dragon writhed in horror and fear as the droplets fell upon its gruesome form. The beast gasped as imprisoned light and stolen metals were liberated from its anatomy. Steam and vapors in every color of the rainbow rose out of its body. The rising mists from the dragon and the descending rain of starlight dew mingled, causing shimmering veils of color to pulse in waves across the sky.

The shining swift-winged saker sang *Victory! Victory! Glory to God!* And the people raised their eyes to behold a wondrous vision. They watched as a gilded bridge took form in the quivering atmosphere. A crystal bridge reflecting all the colors of the rainbow arched upward from earth to heaven. The resplendent sight awoke a distant memory of an ancient story that had foretold of a time when the dragon would be overcome and heaven and earth would again be united.

Vlad the Humble turned his glance downward and gazed deeply into the remaining eye of the defeated and collapsing beast. Vlad's noble heart was moved with pity and compassion for this poor creature, for it had forfeited its own godly essence to the false power of evil. The one thing the vile creature could not bear was this beholding gaze of compassion, and this gaze proved to be the noble warrior's final stroke—the *coup de grâce* that overcame evil. Slithering and slouching, the beast recoiled back into the underworld, preferring an existence of nothingness in the bottomless pit to the eternal triumph of good forever overcoming evil.

As was foretold in the ancient prophecy, Archangel Michael, the Heavenly Warrior, sealed and locked the bottomless pit forever. The happy ending is a long, long story. Among some of the sequels are: The saker falcon is disenchanting and returned to its true form—the Dove of Peace. A lasting and eternal covenant is sealed between humanity and the Creator. Through the cooperation of divine and human effort, a New Heaven and a New Earth are born. A Sacred Wedding Feast ensues, and the Mother of All Creation regains her rightful throne. Perhaps eventually the dragon will come around. All of this will take a very long time to happen, but in the Divine plan, there is no end to eternity.

Postscript to “Sophia and the God of the Flood”

previously published in *Starlight*, Vol. 16 no.1, Easter/Pentecost 2016

John O'Meara

In the above-mentioned article, it may have been misleading of me to write as if the Psalms were the creation of one single individual, namely the historical King David to whom ... a good number of the Psalms at least are attributed. Modern scholarship would appear to have conclusively established that the Psalms were composed by a whole range of authors, one of these (Psalm 90) even written by Moses⁵, and that the composition of the Psalms spans a long period of time – over 700 years – between the time of Moses and the time of the Babylonian captivity more than 300 years after David, and indeed beyond (right through to the 2nd century B.C.).⁶ It also appears as if the Psalms were not actually written down until as late as three to four hundred years after David.⁷ The following sentences from my article will have perhaps given the false impression that the Psalms were strictly the creation of David, the historical figure of the 10th century B.C.:

David's words accompany her [the Sophia] closely ... clearly in a prophetic way in his case, these final events [the redemption and restoration of the Sophia] taking place after his time. (pg. 38)

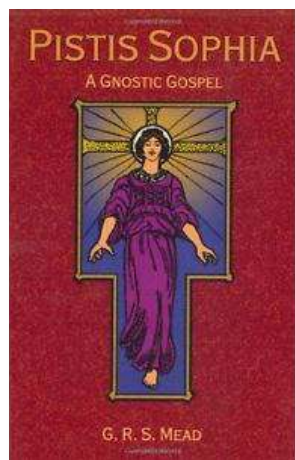
⁵ <http://overviewbible.com/who-wrote-psalms-besides-david/>

⁶ See <http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780195393361/obo-9780195393361-0099.xml>

⁷ See http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Psalms,_Book_of

David himself had witnessed this experience and been through it all [i.e., Sophia's progress from the dark waters of Chaos to Her assumption of the crown of light bestowed upon her by Christ, according to the *Pistis Sophia*]. (pg. 39)

In the case of the Psalms concerned in the first quotation (Psalm 7 and Psalm 107) it is in fact a generic "David" that affirms itself, from the time of David's reign right through to the Babylonian captivity.⁸ So that "after his time" can only mean, in fact, after the whole of this rather long period.



When I wrote my article, I had been aware for some time of the Psalms as a case of multiple authorship extending over a long period of time. However, I did not concern myself with this issue for two reasons. I took my cue for my way of speaking about "David" first from the *Pistis Sophia* itself, which considers the Psalms very simply as the work of "the prophet David," and secondly from the nature of the focus on "David" among 17th century alchemists. Certainly when an alchemist like Michael Maier invoked the example of "David," he had in mind an individual hero like himself struggling to establish a relation to the forces that might lead him out of his material darkness. The assumption among the alchemists of this time was that the Psalms were very simply written by the single historical individual named "David."

In the Psalms as a whole a certain extension of the same or a similar experience must be assumed that runs, in fact, from a time before David, through him, and beyond him. But what is equally clear is that in virtually all of the Psalms as they stand, the figure of David is held up to view as the main focal point, even when the speaking voice is at times a communal voice, dating from before and after David, which rises up in "David-like" and "David-inspired" fashion. Because of this insistent focus on David as the main "speaker" of these Psalms, there would have to be, in certain situations, a convenient way of referring to this "David" as a single entity representatively identical with the individual, historical David with whom the Psalms are primarily associated. It is thus as a matter of convenience that David is treated in my article as if he were the single author of the experience the Psalms convey, having to do with the deeper relation implied with the ongoing cosmic struggle of the Sophia.

⁸ See <https://www.blueletterbible.org/study/parallel/paral18.cfm>

Verwandlung (Transformation)

© C. Lawrie

As the oyster,
Suffering the friction of the grit,
Surrounds its pain with layers of nacreous tears,
So, Goethe,
Hearing of his son's demise in Rome,
Speaks not a word thereon,
But nursing the wound within him,
Falls ill, recovers, and builds where he can
Shells of beauty with transfigured tears —



Dedication

a poem by J.W. von Goethe

translated © C. Lawrie

J.W. von Goethe set his poem as "Dedication," not only to his incomplete epic "Die Geheimnisse" – "The Mysteries," but to his whole poetic oeuvre.

Dedication

August 1784

The morning came; its footsteps scared away
The easy sleep which round me softly clung,
So, now wakeful, from my quiet hut made way
To climb the mountain with a heart that sung,
What joy, each step, to greet fresh flowers at play,
Upon whose faces sparkling dewdrops hung;
Up rose the bright young day in full enchantment,
And all around refreshed, brought me refreshment.

And as I climbed, climbed from the river-meadows
A veil of mist in layers soft before
Which, spreading, drifted round me now to flow,
Then rose on wings, above my head to soar:
No more could I enjoy the lovely view,
The region found me like a shaded flower;
I saw myself with thickening cloud surrounded,
And felt myself in twilight dim compounded.

At once appeared the sun to pierce right through,
Allowing now some clarity in the mist,
Here it sank away, went swinging far below,
Here climbed back up, concealing wood and height.
Ach! I was hoping for a chance to greet you,
Now doubly keen, for all I since had lost.
The aerial struggle was for long not ended,
When brilliance shone, and I stood dazzled, blinded.

But soon the impulse stirred my eyes to open,
Deep in my heart, to make me once more bold,
Yet could I only risk quick glimpses, sharp ones,
As all appeared to incandesce and glow.
When showed above me, hovering and cloud-borne,
A heavenly woman, in a radiance gold:
No lovelier vision saw I in my life,
She looked at me, and stayed above, aloft.

"Do you not know me?" How full of love and trust
Her voice enfolded me with heart-felt tone:
"Surely you know me, who in life's sore distress
Have often salved your wounds with purest balsam?
You know me well – who to your striving breast
Eternal union pledged, and closer came.
Did I not see you, already, in your youth
Yearning ardent for me with hot tears of love?"

"Yes!" I cried out, while sinking slowly lower
Blest now, to earth, "Long have I felt you by;
You gave me peace, when youthful passion's power
Surged through my limbs with restless urgency;
Heavenly wings have sheltered me of yours,
And cooled my fevered brow so tenderly;
Earth's wealth of gifts you showered on me fully,
Through you alone I come by Fortune truly.

I do not say your name. Although I hear you
Often named by those who claim you theirs.
How every eye must set its sight towards you;
For almost all, your rays must end in tears.
Sad, that I strayed, with many a playmate too;
Now that I know you, who remain my peers?
I must cherish in my self my source of joys,
Your holy light keep hidden, and not disclose."

She smiled at me. She spoke: "You see, how shrewd,
How necessary, to show you up a bit!
You're scarcely certain of the grossest fraud,
How little master since your childish habit,
Believe your self already overlord,
And what a human being ought, neglect!
How different are you really from your peers?
Know your own self, and live with the world at peace."

"Forgive me!" cried I back, "I meant no ill;
Now eyes are opened, should it be in vain?
Within my blood there lives a joyous will!
How well I know the value of your giving!
For others grows this inmost gift so noble,
Its talent now I'll share, no more keep hidden!
Why sought I out the way so full of longing,
If not to show the brothers what's belonging?"

And as I spoke gazed on me this high being
With look that held compassionate concern,
I found myself in her eyes clearly reading
What still I lacked, and what I'd rightly done.
She smiled, and I experienced redeeming,
My spirit rose to sense of joys to come;
Now could I incline with innermost entrusting
Closer still to come, her Presence clear-insighting.

She stretched her hand into the vaporous layers
Of gentle cloud-breath and of flower-aroma;
As she took hold, they let her shape their airs,
She drew them back, and mist there was no more.
Again my gaze could sweep the distant vale,
To heaven glance, where all stood high and clear.
I saw her now the finest veil upholding,
It rippled round her, thousandfold unfolding.

"I know you, I know all your faults and foibles,
I know what good within you lives and glows!"
So spake she – I hear her voice eternal –
"Receive now, what so long I've held for yours;
One fortunate can nothing now imperil
Who takes this gift to heart with tranquil soul:
From warp of morning scent and sunlight woof,
The veil of Poetry from the Hand of Truth.

And when your friends and you sit sweltering, lolling
At high midday, just throw it in the air!
Comes whispering then the eve-breeze, gently cooling,
Breathes flower-scents around you, sweetest odour,
Which calms the woes of anxious earthly feeling,
And to a bed of cloud transmutes the grave.
The waves of life flow smoother, lap the quieter,
More loveable comes the day and night's made lighter.

So come then, friends, when on your earthly ways
Life's heavy burden presses hard and sore,
The path you take now fresher blessing paves
With golden fruit and many a lovely flower,
We fare together into each new day!
So, on we live, so onward happy venture,
And should grandchildren come to share their woes,
Our steadfast love will cheer them as it knows."

Starlight, the journal of the Sophia Foundation, appears twice a year, usually around Easter/Pentecost and Advent/Christmas. If you are intending to send a contribution to the next issue, please do so by March 1, 2017. Now that the journal 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 journal and whether you have any suggestions for it.



