

Dante's Vision of the Heavenly Rose

"[In Canto XXXI of the "Paradiso"] Dante sees an enormous rose, symbolizing divine love, the petals of which are the enthroned souls of the faithful (both those of the Old Testament and those of the New). All the souls he has met in Heaven, including Beatrice, have their home in this rose. Angels fly around the rose like bees, distributing peace and love. Beatrice now returns to her place in the rose, signifying that Dante has passed beyond theology in directly contemplating God, and St. Bernard, as a mystical contemplative, now guides Dante further." (Wikipedia: from Dorothy Sayers' Notes to this section of the "Paradiso" in her translation of *The Divine Comedy*.)



St. Bernard later pleads with the Virgin Mary on behalf of Dante, that he may persist and pursue his vision further (from the "Paradiso," Canto XXXIII):

*Now he who has seen the lives of souls, one by one, from the deepest pool of the universe even to here, begs you, of your grace, for enough **strength to lift his eyes, higher, towards the final bliss:** and I, who was never so on fire for my own vision as I am for his, offer you all my prayers, and pray they may not be wanting, asking that, for him, you might scatter every cloud of his mortality with your prayers, so that supreme joy might be revealed to him.*

Illustration by Gustave Doré

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Editor's Overview

While experiencing, towards the end of the *Paradiso*, his stupendous vision of the White Rose, which is to say his vision of the Divine or Heavenly Sophia as She presented Herself in his time,¹ Dante turns to discover that St. Bernard has suddenly replaced Beatrice who until then had been standing alongside Dante guiding him along on his visionary path. Beatrice at this point has returned to the place that has long since been reserved for her in the Rose, and very soon St. Bernard is intoning his prayer to the Virgin Mary on Dante's behalf, that he may persevere in strength to enter still more fully into his vision of the moment. Dante had become in respect of this power of vision, if not the chief, a highly significant representative of his epoch, just as some 500 years later Novalis would become arguably the chief representative of his epoch, looking ahead to another fulfilment of Sophianic vision in another manifestation of Her intensifying power brought still closer to our earthly experience today. Like Dante, Novalis could also speak of a great intercessor with the Virgin beyond his beloved Sophie who had been leading him up to that point. This intercessor Novalis mysteriously designates our "brother," and Novalis entreats us to follow in the footsteps of this brother: we are to follow him in his blazoning of an emerging new humanity that will now be creating still more intensely under the banner of the Virgin (the subject of John O'Meara's article below). As Robert Powell shows in the lead article of this issue, Divine Sophia has, since Dante's time, been in the process of incarnating more and more fully into our cosmos, having left the Cosmic Sun, into which Dante peered, and since the 18th century—around the time of Novalis's birth—entered the sphere of our cosmic Zodiac. There will be still further stages of Her incarnation in the future, bringing Her more immediately into the spheres of the Sun and the Moon and finally the etheric ground of the Earth itself in the 6th post-Atlantean cultural period that lies some 1500 and more years away. Such is the great panoramic view which is offered to us of a New Heaven and New Earth that is already germinally in the making in our own time, inasmuch as we can now begin to conceive of it, and forthwith begin to live in the shadow of its influence.²

The present issue offers a number of key expositions that bring this extraordinary panoramic vision forward, focusing the great event of the gradual Coming of Sophia into our own sphere of conscious thought, as conveyed especially through the spiritual-cultural work of Rudolf Steiner and the Russian Sophiologists. The further question is thus addressed: how humankind has been going out to meet this great Coming of Sophia of which we have become especially conscious in our time, a question which raises the further matter of the "path" that is required to properly live into this most far-reaching event as "panorama."³ In a good number of the first articles in the present issue the view is stressed that one such path lies through Rudolf Steiner's Anthroposophy or more specifically the *AnthropoSophia* Being Who is at the center of Steiner's work and with Whom we have been exhorted to

¹ See Robert Powell's contribution to *The Mystery of Sophia, Bearer of the New Culture, The Rose of the World*, Great Barrington, MA: Lindisfarne Books, 2014, p.109: "Those who know the mystical tradition relating to Divine Sophia will know that this image relates to Sophia, referred to as the Heavenly or Celestial Rose."

² For the further implications of this Coming of the Divine or Heavenly Sophia (the main subject of the present issue) in relation to the greater Sophia, or Trino-Sophia, also in Her two other aspects of Divine Mother and Holy Soul, see the article "The Riddle of the Sophia: An Inquiry into Her Many-Sided Manifestations" from the Easter 2017 issue of *Starlight*. This article functions as a full review of *The Mystery of Sophia, Bearer of the New Culture, The Rose of the World*, cited above, with a focus especially on the visions of Estelle Isaacson that are also contained in this book. See also, by Robert Powell, *The Most Holy Trinosophia and the New Revelations of the Divine Feminine*, Great Barrington, MA: Anthroposophic Press, 2000.

³ Robert Powell offers this distinction between "panorama" and "path" in a section of an article to be found among the last pages of the Easter 2019 issue of *Starlight*, p.74.

align ourselves as one form in which Sophia is making Herself directly known to us today. More and more, Anthroposophy has come to be seen as one of the sure ways by which Sophia lifts us at last unto Herself as it were from the more limited and much challenged evolutionary condition in which we find ourselves at present. Given this singular focus in the first part of this issue, the further question is raised as to the relationship the Russian Sophiologists would have had to Steiner's Anthroposophy, at a time when both were developing a new connection to the Sophia in leaps and bounds.

This is the immediate subject of Natalya Bonetskaya's brilliant, scholarly article, which we are very fortunate to have, since it is one of the rare in-depth accounts of that relationship. The evidence on this authority, however, is of significant bafflement in the Russian Sophiologists in their historic encounter with Steiner's Anthroposophy, not to mention even a relative indifference, as in the case of Pavel Florensky who otherwise quotes from Steiner's early books.⁴ Among the Sophiologists most notably given to Anthroposophy as discussed by Bonetskaya, one counts especially Andrei Bely and Sergei Bulgakov, but Nikolai Berdyaev is also included in this account.⁵ We are made aware of the common links of these avid Sophiologists with Anthroposophy: the focus on Christ (in Bely), on virginity of soul (in Florensky), the Grail (in Bulgakov), and spiritual understanding or gnosis (in Berdyaev). Nevertheless the encounter speaks of a combination of inevitable attraction to Anthroposophy and an equally inevitable rejection of it, because of the markedly different standpoints from which Russian Sophiology and Anthroposophy begin that set them apart in spite of a profound commitment on every hand to the culture of Sophia.

It is a remarkable case-study in cultural dis-association (in spite of some cultural overlap between adherents in each party), highlighting the fundamental problem of the harmonizing of experiences that originate from different sources. If one of the main pillars of Sophianic culture in the future is to be the harmonizing of all cultures, nations, and races, then the story of Russian Sophiology's baffled encounter with Anthroposophy should serve as a dramatic example of the significant problem humankind faces in coming together over the Sophia. It goes without saying that it remains for us in our own day to proceed to a greater, more socially effective, and real concept of openness across spiritual cultures. Dis-association continues, for example where disciples of the work of Rudolf Steiner fail and even refuse to understand those who have taken up the work of Valentin Tomberg (and also vice versa⁶), or where these same disciples fail in their relationship to the work of Peter Deunov (to whom some anthroposophists at least have shown more openness; also among disciples of Deunov today we find a certain sense that one may have an experience of Deunov without Steiner⁷). We can postulate that behind what we continue to experience even in our day as a failure to genuinely meet over our common concern is the instinctive impulse to reach out to Sophia's great Dispensation out of our own vested interests only, perhaps even somewhat greedily. This will

⁴ For Florensky's references to Steiner, see the Advent 2018 issue of *Starlight*, p.31. Otherwise, I agree with Bonetskaya that "it may be that Florensky was closer to Steiner than was any other Russian sophiologist, in the entire spiritual and mental make-up of his personality." (See Bonetskaya's article below.)

⁵ Vladimir Solovyov, who has been seen quite properly as the father of Russian Sophiology, died in 1900, some time before Steiner's anthroposophical mission got under way.

⁶ See Roger Buck for example, in his book *Cor Jesu Sacratissimum: From Secularism and the New Age to Christendom Renewed*, Angelico Press, 2016. A confirmed devotee of Tomberg and his pro-Catholic allegiance, Buck cannot, as he puts it, "endorse Steiner's 'esoteric Christianity' —lamentably hostile, as it is, to the Church." (392), nor can Buck "justify his [Steiner's] Anthroposophy, which remained severely critical of the Church!" (12)

⁷ A notable exception to this pattern is the work of Emily Michael. See *Sealed by the Sun: Life Between Rudolf Steiner and Peter Deunov (Beinsa Douno, the Master)*, Varna, 2014.

be found to be true of every group that has been mentioned here. On the other hand, at the other extreme from this situation, and perhaps part and parcel of it, is the threat of our not being ready enough for the Sophianic developments that are taking place today, which, as Robert Powell notes, would then create a “vacuum” into which “the powers of evil may work” in place of the much hoped-for, conscious alignment with those developments.

Focus on what Sophia’s future reign will require from a variety of leading cultures that are in preparation today begins in full earnest in this issue with Harrie Salman’s first, main article. Here we are directed to see that it is a matter of *tributary* cultures, each of which is meant to pour its special treasures into our common Sophianic future: the culture of Anthroposophy representing Central Europe, the culture developing around Peter Deunov representing East Europe, and the Finnish culture representing Baltic Europe about which we are beginning to hear more and more. We come to see it all

as a matter of tributaries flowing into a great future River, or numerous petals taking their appropriate place in the whole complex structure of an evolving Rose that has yet to take shape: the Rose of the World, precisely. But adjustments will have to be made and interassociations more rigorously pursued, for it shall be in future especially a case of mutual support across quite a range of cultures. Not that Anthroposophy is not complete in itself, at least for many more centuries to come, but because a good number of anthroposophists will have made too much an intellectual matter of it, there will be, and there is indeed already today, a need to counteract this tendency with the influence of the advanced heart culture that is being prepared especially around the work of Peter Deunov (Harrie Salman especially emphasizes this point). Likewise, although the East-Slavic, and especially the Russian, soul is destined to have the most important role in the Sophianic culture of the 6th post-Atlantean epoch, this soul will in the meantime have needed to round itself out by counteracting its tendency to an overly subjective connection to the world; this it should do by embracing the more objective connection to the world which the Finnish culture should especially help to provide for it—if all goes according to plan. The Balto-Slavic association will itself be in further need of another power of consciousness-soul in relation to world developments at this time, and this the Central European culture of Anthroposophy is especially meant to provide (all of these again Harrie Salman’s points).

Moreover, already in our time we have evidence of a deep connection to the future Sophianic epoch via the stream most central to our cosmic evolution, namely the Grail stream, for example in the more esoteric practices linked to this stream that took place around Peter Deunov in his time. The article by Emily Michael offers an especially privileged view of some aspects of these practices and how they unfolded in preparation for the cosmically fateful year of the Coming of Christ in 1914 as announced by Peter Deunov. Cynthia Avens in her elegant article takes us in turn into the heart of the Grail stream which is seen as, in fact, engaging equally Christ *and* Sophia, as *one* all-encompassing inter-associated figure which she names ChristoSophia. Also to be found in this issue is a deep insider’s account by Robert Powell of the Mass of the Lamb and His Bride, as celebrated under the auspices of the Sophia Foundation of North America. What this account offers is an equally privileged view of the practice of yet another group whose purpose is, likewise, to begin to prepare us for that



Detail from *The Banquet Icon*, from the Cathedral of Athanasius and Cyril the Alexandrian Kirillov Monastery
"She has mingled Her wine."

future Sophianic epoch when Sophia and Christ will be working in our world in progressively more and more associated terms.

In addition to a glimpse of these inspiring preparatory experiences, this issue also brings forward what can only be described as powerful prophetic intimations of the reality of the 6th epoch as this already bears its influence into our present era, as witnessed in some extraordinary accounts to be found in the work of Novalis and Peter Deunov (see below pp.77-84). Over and against these accounts, which act as professions of great accomplishment and hope, we can hardly forget also the disturbing oppositional power and influence of the Antichrist forces whose own purpose is to thwart all progress in these many directions. The shadow of these forces also lies over this issue. The lead article by Robert Powell itself meaningfully alerts us to the ongoing work of these forces in our modern world, and Bill Trusiewicz has done us the service of inquiring in detail into these forces and especially how they are to be dealt with, in an article of singular depth and penetrating insight.

Finally, at the center of all is the Mystery of Golgotha, which we re-visit in this issue with the distinctive insights of Nikolai Belotsvetov who makes a special point in his presentation of seeing this Mystery in a direct relationship to the deepest conflict of all, the conflict between the forces of good and the forces of evil. This conflict is ultimately resolved, according to Belotsvetov, in the Mystery of the Cross, though this Mystery waits in turn upon our own evolving efforts of alignment with it, in order to materialize further the final victory contained in it.

This issue of *Starlight* is the last in a series of three issues that go back to Advent 2018. The main theme for that issue was our Sophianic Mother as She bears Her influence in our world principally out of Her long cosmic past. The theme of the Easter issue which followed was the Grail stream, which was traced for the most part from the time of the Mystery of Golgotha up to the present era.⁸ The present issue can be said to have as *its* main theme what could be described as the next phase: pointing to that great Sophianic culture of the future, which we normally bring into focus especially in relation to the 6th post-Atlantean epoch but of which we are already being given intimations today, when we already face mounting challenges to this future. At some point this theme is treated in a direct continuum from our previous concern with the Grail stream in an earlier issue. Naturally, also, we have concentrated in this issue to a large extent on the prominent role to be played by the Russian and East-Slavic people in this future. This is a very large subject, and inevitably a good deal of the material that is included here remains at the level of intimations, and is necessarily fragmentary. Yet hopefully in the midst of these efforts by various hands glimmers of the reality of our highly complex and extraordinary evolutionary destiny will have come through, to inspire a still greater search along these lines in future, among ourselves and associated friends.

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⁸ One article from that issue demonstrates how the Grail stream originates in fact as far back as the Sun incarnation of our Earth. See "The Initiation of Christian Rosenkreutz," by Claudia McLaren Lanson.



The Banquet Icon, from the Cathedral of Athanasius and Cyril the Alexandrian
Kirillov Monastery

Left-center: a robed figure holding a chalice; beside the head an inscription: "Power of God, Wisdom of God." Below Her seat, seven pillars: *Wisdom has builded her house, she has hewn out her seven pillars.* Top-center: *Crying from the highest places in the city,* King Solomon, author of *Proverbs* (from which these quotes are taken). Top-right: Mary seated with the Christ-Child. Center/bottom-right: *She has mingled her wine.* Bottom-left: *She has killed her beasts.*

For a full commentary on the details of this icon, see
<https://russianicons.wordpress.com/tag/holy-wisdom/>

Stages of the Incarnation of Sophia Leading to the Rose of the World¹

Robert Powell

In the period when Dante wrote *The Divine Comedy* and had his vision and saw the snow-white Rose, the celestial Being of Divine Sophia united with the *throne of God* in the Empyrean, the highest divine realm. At the time Dante had this vision, Sophia was still united with the Central Sun. She was at that time still dwelling in this highest sphere, the Empyrean, the divine realm united with the throne of God—the throne of God being the biblical expression employed by Dante with reference to the Divine Heart of the galaxy, whence the creation of the galaxy proceeded. Through the star wisdom of Astro-Sophia it is revealed that since approximately 1775 ², Divine Sophia has become connected with the local part of our galaxy, the Orion Arm, and is now working especially through the twelve constellations of the zodiac. This is revealed in the image of Sophia crowned by twelve stars. *Sophia is clothed with the zodiac. She is at the present time working from the level of the zodiac.*³

Daniel Andreev's indication regarding the descent of Sophia referred to earlier, points to "the turn of the nineteenth century," i.e. around 1800, so the date 1775 found through astrophysical research is close to this. This point in time of Sophia's entrance into the local part of our galaxy coincides with the founding of the United States of America in 1776. There is a very deep connection here between these two events, although it is not possible to go into much detail about the phenomenon here, because of its complexity.⁴

*The goddess comes, she moves divinely fair,
Olive and laurel binds her golden hair;
Whenever shines this native of the skies,
Unnumber'd charms and recent graces rise.*

Briefly, in October 1775 Phillis Wheatley sent her poem about the goddess Columbia to George Washington. Her poem began by giving the guiding spirit of America the appellation *Columbia*. The later choice of "Hail, Columbia," written in 1798, as the original national anthem of the United States of America, shows the essential agreement of the Founding Fathers with that which is expressed in Phillis Wheatley's poem. The very name of the capital of America—Washington, the District of Columbia—links Columbia and her champion, George Washington, for all the world to see. The goddess Columbia was deemed appropriate by the Founding Fathers of the United States to represent America. Standing for Liberty, Justice, and Peace, she appears with hindsight to have been a reflection of Sophia, mirroring certain aspects of Sophia on earth. Against this background it emerges that there is a relationship between the founding of the United States of America—noting that the Declaration of Independence took place in 1776—and

¹ From *The Mystery of Sophia, Bearer of the New Culture, The Rose of the World*, Great Barrington, MA: Lindisfarne Books, 2014, pp.120-131.

² [Ed. Note that Novalis (Friedrich von Hardenberg) was born in 1772.]

³ As indicated later, the date 1775 lies six hundred years prior to the start of the Age of Aquarius in 2375—the 600-year rhythm being that of a *cultural wave*.

⁴ See Robert Powell, "The Guiding Spirit of America," in *Starlight*, vol.13, no.2 (Advent 2013), available as a free download from <https://sophiafoundation.org/portfolio/starlight-journal/>

the descent of Sophia to unite with our cosmos (by which is meant the local part of the galaxy, the Orion Arm) around the year 1775. Since that time Sophia has been working from the level of the zodiac, whereby the twelve zodiacal constellations represent for our solar system the *heart meridian* within the starry region of the Orion Arm.

In November 1875, one hundred years after the cosmic event of 1775, the Theosophical Society was founded in New York.⁵ Theosophy or Theo-Sophia, the wisdom of God, was born into cultural life at that time through H. P. Blavatsky (1831-1891), who was the central figure in the founding. Shortly before the founding of the Theosophical Society took place, the 22 year-old Russian philosopher, Vladimir Soloviev (1853-1900), while studying at the library of the British Museum in London, had a profound mystical experience of Divine Sophia one September afternoon in the year 1875. This was his second mystical experience of Sophia. Recalling his first meeting with her at the age of nine, during the Ascension Day church service in Moscow in 1862, he inwardly asked the question: “Why have you not appeared to me since childhood?” He writes further, “Hardly had I thought these words, when suddenly all was filled with golden azure, and you were there in heavenly radiance...”⁶

Soloviev dedicated his life to serving Divine Sophia. And through him, Russian Sophiology—the theology of Sophia—was born.⁷ Around the time of Soloviev’s death in the year 1900, Rudolf Steiner began his lecturing activity that led to the birth of Anthroposophy (Anthropo-Sophia), the wisdom of the human being—or the wisdom that is now becoming accessible to the human being through the descent of Sophia from cosmic heights. Anthroposophy was born into the world through the Austrian philosopher and universal genius Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925). Initially active within the Theosophical Society as the initiator of the German Section, his different approach to spirituality from that of the leaders of the Theosophical Society led to virtually the entire German Section re-constituting themselves as the Anthroposophical Society in Germany, the founding meeting of which took place on February 3, 1913. On that occasion Rudolf Steiner held a lecture titled “The Being of Anthroposophy,” towards the end of which he speaks these words: “Sophia becomes the being who directly enlightens human beings. After Sophia has entered human beings, she must take their essence, their essential being with her, and present it to them outwardly, objectively ... Sophia will become objective again, and she will take with her what humanity is, and objectively present herself in this form. Thus, she will present herself not only as Sophia, but as *Anthroposophia*—as the Sophia who, after passing through the human soul, through the very essence of the human being, henceforth bears that essence within her...”⁸

These spiritual streams—Theosophy, Russian Sophiology, Anthroposophy—have arisen directly in the wake of the approach of Sophia, who around 1775 came from the Central Sun into the Orion Arm of the Milky Way galaxy, our local part of the galaxy, for which the Greeks used

⁵ One hundred years is an important cosmic rhythm, since it is three times 33 1/3 years, which is the length of the life of Christ Jesus—see Robert Powell, *Chronicle of the Living Christ* (Great Barrington, MA: SteinerBooks, 1996), Afterword.

⁶ Paul M. Allen, *Vladimir Soloviev: Russian Mystic* (Blauvelt, NY: Rudolf Steiner Publications, 1978), p.111.

⁷ See Thomas Schipflinger, *Sophia-Maria*, tr. James Morgante (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 1998), chapter 15: “Sophia According to the Russian Sophiologists.”

⁸ Rudolf Steiner, *The Being of Anthroposophy*, lecture of February 3, 1913—a lecture given during the First General Meeting of the Anthroposophical Society at Berlin. This translation by Christopher Bamford is included in *The Effects of Esoteric Development* (Hudson, NY: Anthroposophic Press, 1977), pp.13-16.

the designation *cosmos*. The coming of Sophia was revealed to John on the island of Patmos over 1900 years ago when the Ascended Christ showed him the unfolding of the future of evolution. In the middle of this unfolding, recounted in the series of visions that he received and wrote down in *Revelations*, he suddenly beheld Sophia. John was seeing into the future. He was seeing a certain moment in time. He saw that Divine Sophia was going to appear on the world stage. He beheld her as the “woman clothed with the Sun, with the Moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars” (*Revelations* 12:1).

We can ask the question: When was this, or is it still to come in the future? The answer is that the appearance of Sophia onto the world scene is happening in stages, which are indicated



St. John on Patmos
by Luca Giordano

in John’s vision. The first stage has to do with Sophia coming into our cosmos, represented by the realm of the zodiac; this is symbolized by the twelve stars around her head. The second stage has to do with Sophia coming into our solar system and connecting with the Sun. This is why John saw her in vision “clothed with the Sun.” In the third stage he beheld her with the Moon under her feet. And then follows the fourth stage, which I will discuss below. What we are presented with in Chapter 12 of *Revelations* is a blueprint of the incarnation of Sophia. What, then, is the next stage of Sophia’s incarnation, when she will come down from the level of the zodiac comprising the twelve zodiacal constellations?

According to astrosophical research, this will be around the year 2375. Astrosophy or Astro-Sophia (“Star Wisdom”) is another Sophia-inspired impulse arising in our time through the advent of Sophia in our cosmos, our local part of the galaxy, the Orion Arm. Around the year 2375 Sophia will come into our solar system and unite with our Sun. Then she really will be the “woman clothed with the Sun.” This will take place at an interval of about 600 years after her entrance into our cosmos (Orion Arm) with its central band of stars—the twelve constellations of the zodiac. Advancing 600 years from 1775, we can reckon that this will occur around the year 2375, which is the date when the vernal point will enter the sign of Aquarius. Right now the vernal point is at 5 degrees in the sign of Pisces. It moves back one degree every 72 years. We can calculate the exact date when the vernal point will enter into the sign of Aquarius, signifying the beginning of the Age of Aquarius. This will be in the year 2375. This is the date that I have arrived at, based on an exact definition of the zodiac as presented in my PhD thesis *History of the Zodiac*. This date is also confirmed by a publication called the *American Sidereal Ephemeris*.⁹ There the date for the beginning of the Age of Aquarius is given as 2376—a slight difference of only one year. Whichever date one takes, the beginning of the Age of Aquarius is around this time. This will be the time when Sophia will enter into the next stage of her incarnation, approaching the Earth in accordance with the great vision that John had on Patmos over nineteen hundred years ago. She will then be literally the “woman clothed with the Sun.”

⁹ Neil Michelsen, *The American Sidereal Ephemeris* (San Diego, CA: Astro Communications Services, 1981), Introduction.

Preparation for the incarnation of Sophia on the Sun is already taking place. This is one of the great events in the history of our solar system. The entrance of Sophia into our solar system will signify a profound shift in our evolution, when this being of sublime majesty, beauty, celestial power, grace, and divine light and love will unite with the Sun at the start of the Age of Aquarius. Even now Sophia's influence, which at the present time (last part of the Age of Pisces) is streaming in from the world of the fixed stars, is already beginning to be received by our solar system. In the words of Daniel Andreev, this is giving rise to a new culture here on the Earth, the Sophia culture known as the Rose of the World. The more human beings experience this inflowing of Sophia (now from the fixed stars, especially from the twelve constellations of the zodiac, but soon—in the Age of Aquarius—directly from the Sun), the more will there arise a new sense for life here on earth. A quote from Daniel Andreev's book *The Rose of the World* illustrates this:

A mysterious event is taking place in contemporary times: new divine creative energy is emanating into our cosmos. Since ancient times, the loftiest hearts and minds have anticipated this event that is now taking place. This is an event so important that it can only be compared to the incarnation of the Logos nineteen hundred years ago. Vladimir Soloviev was given a glimpse of her when on a starry night in the Egyptian desert he experienced a stunning breach of his consciousness and saw the great feminine being with his own eyes. We call her Zventa Sventana, the Holiest of the Holy, She who is the brightest and all good, the experience of the feminine hypostasis of the Trinity. The long-awaited day approaches when she will descend. There she will be born in a body of enlightened ether. A host of the loftiest souls will descend with her. There she is, our hope and joy, light and divine beauty. With her coming, there will be the founding of the Rose of the World.¹⁰

This is the expression that Daniel Andreev uses for the new culture that will arise through the coming of Sophia, the Rose of the World. And this term is highly appropriate in view of Dante's great vision of Sophia in the form of a snow-white Rose in the highest celestial realm, the Empyrean. The work of Sophia in our time is dedicated to helping to prepare the way for this future culture of the Rose of the World.

In his visions, Daniel Andreev also points to forces of opposition to this arising of the Rose of the World in the future. The greatest opposition is presented by the incarnation of the Antichrist. The culture that will arise through the coming of the Antichrist is the opposite of what is to come into the world through the coming of Sophia and the founding of the Rose of the World. There are challenges to be faced. In meeting these challenges, we can especially find strength by focusing upon the Rose of the World and gaining an idea of the coming great culture of Sophia. Again quoting from *The Rose of the World*, Andreev says: "By warning about the coming Antichrist, by pointing him out and unmasking him when he appears, and also by cultivating unshakeable faith within human hearts, and also by grasping the spiritual perspectives of evolution, we will help Sophia bring to birth the new culture of love and wisdom." It has to be recalled, however, that Daniel Andreev, using his own special language, does not speak of Sophia. Rather, he speaks of *Zventa Sventana*, the Holiest of the Holy. Further, it has to be clarified that when Daniel Andreev speaks of an incarnation of Sophia, he makes it clear

¹⁰ Daniel Andreev, *The Rose of the World*, tr. Jordan Roberts (Great Barrington, MA: Lindisfarne Books, 1997), pp.356-357.

that this is not an incarnation into a physical human being, as was the case with the incarnation of Christ in the physical human being Jesus of Nazareth. Rather, it will be an incarnation of Sophia in an “ethereal body.” This ethereal body, according to Andreev, is already being prepared, and it is a body of life forces, a radiant body.

This, then, is the fourth stage of incarnation of this great Being, who will work here on the Earth in a radiant ethereal body. She will bring about a far-reaching transformation, giving rise to the culture of the Rose of the World — which Rudolf Steiner calls the sixth cultural epoch, the future Slavic culture. What Rudolf Steiner describes about this future culture is elaborated upon by Daniel Andreev in his book *The Rose of the World*. It is through Rudolf Steiner that we know the exact date as to when this sixth culture will arise — starting in 3575 and extending over 2160 years to 5735.¹¹ It will be the time of Sophia’s incarnation in her ethereal body. This is the fourth stage — from the year 3575 — after the three stages depicted in the vision of Sophia from the *Apocalypse*. The first stage is that of the stars (“crowned with twelve stars” — zodiacal level, 1775-2375); then will come the stage of Sophia’s incarnation upon the Sun (“clothed with the Sun” — Sun level, 2375-2975); following that will be the stage of Sophia’s working from the Sun through the phases of the Moon (“the Moon under her feet” — Moon level, 2975-3575). The rhythm of Sophia’s incarnation follows a 600-year rhythm, which is connected with the planet Venus.¹² This is also referred to by Rudolf Steiner, who speaks of the 600-year rhythm as an important rhythm of cultural history, referring to it as a cultural wave.¹³

To summarize the stages of Sophia’s incarnation, which are important to hold in consciousness: the first stage was around 1775 coming from the galaxy into our cosmos, uniting with the Orion Arm, represented by the central band of stars, the twelve constellations of the zodiac, the “twelve stars”; six hundred years later, in 2375, the Age of Aquarius will begin and Sophia will unite with the Sun, when she will appear as “the woman clothed with the Sun”; a further six hundred years later, in 2975, Sophia will start to work increasingly from the Sun down to the level of the Moon: then the third aspect beheld in John’s great vision, with the Moon “beneath her feet,” will be actualized. Sophia’s incarnation means that she is working ever closer towards the Earth. And then a further 600 years later, in 3575, the incarnation of Sophia in an ethereal form in a life body in the Earth’s aura will take place, in what is called the “world of the elements.” This is the date — the actual date is 3574 — indicated by Rudolf Steiner for the beginning of the sixth cultural epoch. This is what Daniel Andreev is referring to with the birth of the Rose of the World as a new world culture inspired by Divine Sophia. Thus, with the help of star wisdom, it is possible to come to a precise understanding of the incarnation of Divine Sophia bringing the future culture known as the Rose of the World, underlying the sixth cultural epoch, which will last for 2160 years, from 3574 to 5734. The coming down of Sophia from celestial heights is our hope, our joy, and our source of comfort for the future.

¹¹ Robert Powell, *Hermetic Astrology, Vol. I* (San Rafael, CA: Sophia Foundation Press, 2006). Chapter 3 describes the sequence of zodiacal ages and corresponding cultural epochs, each 2160 years in length.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Rudolf Steiner, *Background to the Gospel of St. Mark* (London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1968), p.153. See also, Robert Powell & Estelle Isaacson, *Gautama Buddha’s Successor: A Force for Good in Our Time* (Great Barrington, MA: SteinerBooks, 2013) concerning the start of a new 600-year cultural wave in 2014.

The descent of Heavenly Sophia, the feminine aspect of Christ, is mysteriously aligned with His descent at the time of His Second Coming. Christ, according to Rudolf Steiner, began to appear in the Earth's auric field around the 1930s.¹⁴ This appearance is not in a physical body as was the case two thousand years ago, but is in the sphere that surrounds the Earth, just outside the boundaries of the sense perceptible world—in the biosphere, the body of life forces encircling the physical Earth.

The advent of Christ in the 1930s, his Second Coming, marks the onset of the greatest imaginable blessing for humankind and the Earth. However, because of the all-pervasive influence of materialism occasioned by the triumphant march of science and technology in our time, there is a widespread lack of consciousness with regard to awakening to the new *Presence* of Christ in the Earth's etheric aura. The Greek expression used in the Bible for Second Coming is *Parousia*, meaning *Presence*. Thus, although Christ through his Second Coming is ushering in a New Age—indeed, the New Age *is* the Age of Christ's Second Coming¹⁵—because of the general lack of awareness on the one hand of Christ's Presence and on the other hand of Sophia's inspiration from heavenly heights, there is correspondingly a vacuum present in human consciousness into which the powers of evil may work.

Looking back to the devastating events of the twentieth century—continuing in the twenty-first century—it is evident that this is exactly what occurred and is still happening. That is, it is clear that the forces of evil were able to break through and wreak havoc and destruction, clouding the dawning of the New Age not only during the first twelve years (a Jupiter cycle, 1933-1945) of the Second Coming, which began in 1933, but also since then in a more or less continuous onslaught that can be followed in relation to the 12-year rhythm of Jupiter.¹⁶ It is noticeable that it is precisely during times when significant spiritual events are occurring that the forces of evil choose to launch their attacks. Exactly when the onset of Christ's Second Coming began, Hitler came to power in January 1933, and the Nazi scourge that ensued was a manifestation of the work of the anti-forces, just as Stalin's reign of terror in Russia was also.¹⁷

¹⁴ Robert Powell, *The Christ Mystery: Reflections on the Second Coming* (Fair Oaks, CA: Rudolf Steiner College Press, 1999).

¹⁵ Rudolf Steiner gave a very specific meaning to the term New Age, which is discussed at length in Robert Powell & Kevin Dann, *Christ and the Maya Calendar* (Great Barrington, MA: SteinerBooks, 2009), chapter 6, and in Robert Powell, *The Christ Mystery: Reflections on the Second Coming* (Fair Oaks, CA: Rudolf Steiner College Press, 1999), pp.26-27, 87-90. It is evident that the New Age, also known as the Age of Light, is the Age of Christ's Second Coming, which began in the twentieth century and extends for some 2,500 years until the coming of the Maitreya Buddha/Kalki Avatar in the middle of the fifth millennium, shortly before the end of the Age of Aquarius—see Robert Powell & Estelle Isaacson, *Gautama Buddha's Successor: A Force for Good in Our Time* (Great Barrington, MA: SteinerBooks, 2013). The New Age can be divided into two parts: the first part encompasses the last phase of the Age of Pisces (ending in 2375), and the second part encompasses almost the whole of the Age of Aquarius (2375-4535), whereby the first part is preparatory—comprising the work of Christ leading us into the Age of Aquarius.

¹⁶ Robert Powell, "Sub-Nature and the Second Coming," in *The Inner Life of the Earth* (ed. Paul V. O'Leary; Great Barrington, MA: SteinerBooks, 2008).

¹⁷ The reign of terror began 1929-1933 with the cold-blooded plan to eliminate the "kulaks," i.e. peasants with a couple of cows or five or six more acres than their neighbors. In December 1929 Stalin announced a resolute offensive against the kulaks to break their resistance and eliminate them as a class. On January 30, 1930, the Politburo approved the liquidation of kulaks as a class, decreeing that they be sent to concentration camps or banished to remote parts of the USSR. Then followed the great purge that lasted until 1939, when Stalin instituted a campaign against "alleged enemies" within his regime. Hundreds of thousands were executed, convicted of plotting to overthrow the government and Stalin.

These forces were acting in an inverted manner, as described in the vision of St. John in the twelfth chapter of the *Apocalypse*. Here the manifestation of the demonic power of the dragon, who seeks to destroy the woman (Sophia), was set loose in an unprecedented way upon the Earth in Nazi Germany and communist Russia, causing widespread death and destruction and immense suffering for countless millions of people.

Through the awakening of consciousness, however, there need no longer be a vacuum into which evil is able to strike. Now (2020), eighty-seven years have passed since the time of the onset of Christ's Second Coming in 1933. This is three years more than a complete Uranus cycle of eighty-four years. Uranus is currently (2020) in the constellation of Aries, where it was located during the decisive years of the 1930s.¹⁸ Consciousness is called to awaken so that the misery caused at the early beginning of Christ's appearance not be repeated. We are summoned to embrace Sophia's culture—her heavenly Rose of the World—at this time when Sophia is calling together communities seeking her Light.

"Woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!" And when the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to the earth, he pursued the woman who had borne the male child." (Revelations 12:12-13)

In this great vision, St. John, who was gifted with a power of clairvoyance that penetrated into the far-distant future, beheld clairvoyantly, whilst on the island of Patmos, the onslaught of the dragon that would take place at the time of the Second Coming. He saw in vision the birth of the Risen One taking place out of—or with the help of—the cosmic wisdom (as an aspect of Sophia), and how the powers of evil would launch an attack against the woman and her child. The Nazi scourge and the Stalinist reign of terror were manifestations of these evil powers. Hitler's expansionism, motivated by his will-to-power, resulted in his gaining control of much of Europe before the Nazi scourge was finally overcome in 1945, twelve years after the onset of Christ's Second Coming, His manifestation in the Earth's etheric aura that commenced in 1933.



The Virgin of the Apocalypse
by Miguel Cabrera

¹⁸ Julie Humphreys, "Uranus in Aries: Disturbing Cosmic Parallels," *Star Wisdom, vol.1: Cosmology Reborn* (Great Barrington, MA: SteinerBooks, 2018), pp.90-102.

Transparency, and the Unveiling of Evil in Our Time: Sophia's Technique of Wisdom

Bill Trusiewicz

[This article is the third part of a three-part study on the ancient authoritarian principles of priestly wisdom—independence, hierarchy, and secrecy—which *today* act as *counter*-evolutionary forces that seek to block the progressive streams of human evolution, impeding the development of the Christ Ego in humanity. This article is also the fifth instalment in a larger series entitled “Towards Building a Community of Grail Knights.” All the articles in this series have been appearing exclusively in these *Starlight* pages and date back originally to the Advent 2012 issue.]

... and the city [the New Jerusalem] was pure gold, like unto clear glass ...
and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

New Testament, *Revelation* 21:18 and 21

The modern science of the spirit recognizes that the transformation of egotism is accomplished by an alchemical *en-Christing* of the human ego, in which the lower ego absorbs and is absorbed by the Christ—the higher Ego. The secret of this process is found in the Grail Mysteries, the vital stream of esoteric Christianity that has its source in objective, imaginative, world-pictures; these have their embodiment in the spiritual hierarchies who express themselves through these pictures in the supersensible school of Archangel Michael and his successor Archangel Ramael.¹ The world pictures of the Grail Story serve as a repository for multiple copies of the Christ Ego, as discussed by Rudolf Steiner in his lectures on spiritual economy,² copies that can be disseminated to those who make themselves worthy vessels for Christ. These world-pictures that constitute the Grail Mysteries are *the revealed secrets of the Mystery of Golgotha*, to those who can decipher them. Human beings who bear the Christ Ego are those who are preparing the future community of Grail Knights and are the forerunners of the coming sixth epoch culture, the Russian/Slavic culture sometimes referred to as the “Rose of the World,” which will be a community practicing true brotherly-sisterly love: a rich, creative, “Philadelphia” culture.

However, besides beginning to create a culture of human love, another of the goals of the consciousness-soul age in which we live is to unveil the “deeper vestiges of counter-evolutionary aims in humanity” that will be revealed with the incarnation of Ahriman, the embodiment of one of the principal adversaries of humanity’s development. This world-shaking event will coincide with the return of Christ in etheric raiment and the unveiling of Isis/Sophia who also plays a fundamental role in the Second Coming. The struggle with evil that the world is now experiencing will culminate when the satanic spirit finally emerges as a powerful mirror-image of Christ indwelling Jesus of Nazareth. Ahriman’s far-reaching, deceptive appropriation of the image of Christ, especially in the aspect of benevolence and peace-making, will have been, in the

¹ The archangel of esoteric Christianity. See Adriana Koulias, *The Trinity of Nathan Soul, Vidar, and Michael*, Sydney, Australia, 2003.

² *The Principle of Spiritual Economy*, Eleven lectures by Rudolf Steiner, 1909, GA 109.

last analysis, the counter-evolutionary doing of the Antichrist or Sorat the sun demon, whose goal is to negate all of the authentic possibilities inherent in the “human I.” Christ IS the “I am.” Antichrist will use the incarnation of Ahriman to advance *his* agenda: to darken the light of the Christ Sun, to blacken the prospect of authentic freedom and love, which can be attained only through the en-Christed human I. Sorat’s relentless opposition to Christ, while it seeks to negate what upholds humanity in the veritable “image and likeness”³ of the Divine, will nevertheless produce the opposite result—it will or should awaken humanity to its true nature and destiny with Christ...

Let us look now at the issue of transparency in relation to these deeply challenging developments.

Today an organization that keeps secrets from the masses is suspect. What is expected and demanded in today’s consciousness soul age is *transparency*. Secret societies are suspected of hiding information from the public that could either be beneficial or harmful to others; not divulging it is therefore not in keeping with modern ideals of equality in the social sphere. Increasingly, we expect our leaders to be open about their dealings and do as little as possible behind closed doors. In the sphere of personal relations, how easily we develop intimacy with fellow spirit-seekers who are not above revealing their weaknesses and their sins to us. If we are transparent in our relationships we share the blessing of truly knowing, understanding and even forgiving one another if we are equal to it, allowing honesty to rule in our relationships.

But the sort of transparency we see in governmental and business matters, discussed above, is a relatively superficial matter, not insignificant, but nevertheless, of limited value from a spiritual-scientific perspective. What is at stake when opaqueness prevails in human social life, on a world scale, among nations and in the political arena, is much more than losing or gaining trust and respect in the view of others. What is at stake is the availability of the supersensible presence of the Holy Grail itself—the key to the future evolution of humanity. There are hidden forces in the world that seek world domination and that are fully cognizant of the fact that the fiery impulse of the Christ Ego, the presence of the Holy Grail in the world, is the sole factor that could prevent them from attaining world domination. Individuals who identify with these forces understand that the more copies of the Christ Ego are disseminated amongst humanity the more difficult it will be to subject the world to the Antichristian spirit—the Satanic influence seeking world domination.

Opaqueness is the cloak of secrecy. It is the opposite of transparency. In line with the focus of this issue, let us look at a concrete personality from the Russian culture who might well represent “opaqueness”: Konstantin Petrovich Pobedonostsev. He lived from 1827 to 1907, was a statesman/adviser of three Tsars, and a jurist. He was a prominent figure whose importance Rudolf Steiner referred to as “underrated.”⁴ Pobedonostsev served during the reign of Alexander III of Russia as the Ober-Procurator of the Most Holy Synod, the official supervisor of the Russian Orthodox Church. His objective was to preserve the autocracy of the Byzantine tradition, in direct opposition to the goals of the consciousness soul age. In effect his goal was to promote the death of the individual personality so that the tyranny of the Russian Empire could

³ Holy Bible, *Genesis* Chapter 1:26: “And God said, let us make man in our image after our likeness...”

⁴ See Rudolf Steiner, *From Symptom to Reality in Modern History*, Lecture of 20 October, 1918, Rudolf Steiner Press, 2015, p.81.

continue. One can easily imagine what motivated Pobedonostsev and motivates others who promote similar counter-evolutionary autocratic regimes. Attaining and maintaining power and wealth has been the principal interest of a significant number of individuals through many incarnations: these are servants of Mammon, another Biblical name for Satan that indicates the “god of money.”

What may be surprising here is that the goals of Pobedonostsev, to extend the authority of Byzantine ecclesiastical tradition, trying to suppress all reforms, backfired. It had the opposite effect than what was intended. Instead it weakened the religious autocratic state. Soon afterwards a level of dissension and violence increased leading to the overthrow and collapse of the Russian Empire. After the “February Revolution” of 1917, a Russian democratic federal republic was formed, ending the absolute monarchy that had lasted almost two hundred years beginning in 1721. But this republic endured only until October of 1918, when a socialist state led by Vladimir Lenin was formed, which became the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in 1922.

The age-old monarchy was dissolved and what followed was a socialist state formed by Lenin using a democratic-sounding slogan: *Workers of the world unite*. Ostensibly, socialism puts the human personality (the worker) before autocratic rulers, but what followed was another kind of oppression as a reaction against the ancient priestly wisdom that had survived for so long in the former Byzantine ecclesiastical tradition. The religious monarchy was replaced with a socialist regime of Marxist-Leninist states (from 1917 onwards); this regime instituted a “doctrine of state atheism,” a “government-sponsored program of forced conversion to atheism.”⁵ This goes to show that the attraction to and dependence on authoritarianism is deeply rooted in human nature and is not the province of distinct ideological sects. If one reviews Russian history up to the present (especially before the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1991) what one sees in the official versions, which are always a whitewashing of events and yet pervade Russian life, is an instrument of death. What Pobedonostsev promoted and what followed with Marxism-Leninism was a *machinery of death* intended to swallow souls.

What Rudolf Steiner says about this element of death working in Russian history is worth quoting:

*[This death] appears here in a most characteristic form because the greatest future lies in Russian life. And because Russian life bears within it the seeds of the development of the Spirit Self, all external achievements of the era of the Consciousness Soul up to now conjure up stronger death forces and a stronger stench of decay. However this had to be, since what seeks to emerge as spiritual life needs the foundation of death.*⁶



The Worship of Mammon
by Evelyn De Morgan

⁵ Dilip Hiro, *Inside Central Asia: A Political and Cultural History*, Penguin, 2009.

⁶ *From Symptom to Reality in Modern History*, p.81.

We will come back to this important thought of “the foundation of death” for the development of the spiritual life later. Let us press on to illuminate realities that exploit a still greater degree of opaqueness, and the evil agenda that demands such darkness...

Remembering that one of the goals of our present fifth cultural epoch, the epoch of the consciousness soul, is to unveil the mystery of evil, we understand that it is imperative that we probe the darkness of our common humanity in order to discover what hides there so that it can be illuminated and transformed, ultimately to extend freedom and love to all. In the coming sixth cultural epoch, the Russian Epoch, the light of Christ, which is the clothing of Sophia⁷, will shine in the souls of those human beings who have conquered the darkness in themselves and are therefore equipped to help other souls discover the light. The light of Christ is the light of Spirit-Self, the Higher Ego, which streams down to souls who have opened their dark recesses to the light; they have thus transformed their astral bodies, their desires, so that they may freely serve the beings of the higher worlds who guide progressive human evolution.

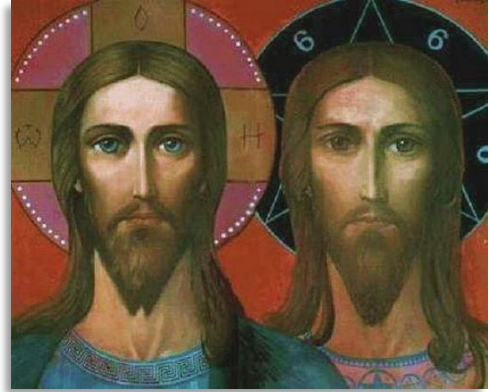
I have made reference in an earlier article⁸ to the alliance forged between high-level Jesuits and the Western Lodges (of Freemasonry) that have world domination as their ultimate goal. This objective is kept as shrouded as possible, while the outer face of Jesuitism (Catholicism) and Freemasonry, superficially speaking, seems benevolent—beneficial to society. This is the belief of the masses. Virtually all Jesuits and Freemasons would deny that such machinations exist. Those at the highest level would never breathe a word to the contrary that might reach the public. The Beast/Ahriman working in the spirit of the Antichrist, will come as “a wolf in sheep’s clothing”: he will represent himself as a progressive spirit, counterfeiting many of the goals of Archangel Michael: cosmopolitanism (which is anti-nationalist, anti-racist, world-embracing), the uniting of religions (a catholic movement under the umbrella of a Jesuit Pope—i.e., a “false prophet”), the promise of the end of war between nations, financial stability, food and safety for all. This will come after something like a world-catastrophic financial crisis, orchestrated on purpose to paralyze the infrastructure of the developed world, causing shortages of everything we take for granted: food, fuel, medical care. Most significantly, money and credit will be frozen until a new order of banking is established. This new worldwide monetary system will be centrally commanded, requiring everyone to receive implanted microchips to buy and sell goods, eliminating the need for money and credit cards. Under these circumstances who would not be willing to trust an ostensibly benevolent ruler—a brilliant, progressive world-loving leader? This will be the “cloak,” the “sheep’s clothing,” that will be used to achieve world domination by the Beast—all in the name of “Christ.”⁹

⁷ New Testament: *Revelations* of St. John, chapter 12. “A portent appeared in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun with the moon beneath her feet and on her head a crown with twelve stars...”

⁸ See “Re-envisioning Hierarchy Through the Grail Story,” *Starlight*, Easter 2019.

⁹ [Ed. Compare Robert Powell’s sobering account given recently of the anticipated appearance in some near future of such a world Dictator out of the fearful chaos of our own time. See Powell’s *Prophecy, Phenomena, Hope* (Great Barrington, MA: Lindisfarne Books, 2009): “In the present world a condition of perpetual war, based on fear-mongering owing to the ‘threat of terror,’ provides an atmosphere in which longing arises subconsciously for a ‘world savior’ who will be able to restore peace on Earth” (p.37). In this context, however, what will be offered is a frighteningly false peace. Powell’s book was written with the intention of helping us recognize “the signature” (p.12) of this coming individuality who will work principally through an especially subtle form of “deception” (p.20). In his presentation Powell builds on the prophecies of Daniel Andreev in his *Rosa Mira*, and he quotes Andreev as to the

The servants of Mammon who lie behind this scenario are individuals of the western brotherhoods of the left, freemasons of the highest degrees who lie behind this scenario and are among the richest human beings on earth. Or they are servants of Lucifer. In Jesuit training the following formula is introduced: “King Jesus must become the Ruler upon earth, and we who belong to His army have to employ every means to make Him Ruler of the earth...”¹⁰ Never mentioning Christ and obviously seeking to establish an “earthly Kingdom,” which Jesus Christ forbade, this formula is the means to justify yielding to the temptation of the devil who brought Jesus Christ to a high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and said: “All this power will I give thee and the glory of them if you bow down and worship me.” This power, or at least the *illusion* of this power, is made available and granted to these servants of Mammon and Lucifer for a short season, ultimately for the benefit of humanity’s instruction. In these collaborations between Freemasons and the Jesuits, who normally are mortal enemies, we see the spiritual relationship between Ahriman and Lucifer reflected on the physical plane.



Christ or Antichrist?

Rudolf Steiner pointed out in his time that it is an illusion to think that politics has any significant independence apart from the control of the banks. It has become almost obvious today: politics, by and large, is the puppet of money interests¹¹ and ultimately of the Western Lodges. The Mystery of Evil is being revealed. One can see a heightened awareness of the overwhelming power of money working in politics. However, as the incarnation of Mammon¹² approaches, it is remarkable to witness forces that are rallying in opposition to it, refusing to be puppets of big money—the real sources of which are not evident yet. Ultimately, it is not a question of political parties, democratic, socialist or capitalist forms of government; it is a matter of who is controlled by and subservient to money and who refuses to bow to big money interests controlled by the Western Lodges.¹³

To all of this, and to whatever one can deduce from it, let us add a statement by Rudolf Steiner:

Before the Etheric Christ can be properly understood by people, humanity must have passed through the encounter with the Beast ... [B]y a strange paradox [hu]mankind is led to a renewed experience of the Mystery of Golgotha in the fifth epoch through the force of evil.

nature of this deception: “He will be uniquely and terribly beautiful ... it will be difficult to place him in any particular race or nation. Rather, he will be seen as a representative of the collective of humanity” (p.23; see also pp.85-86).]

¹⁰ Rudolf Steiner, *From Jesus to Christ*, Karlsruhe, 5 October 1911.

¹¹ See *The Bilderberg Group*, Daniel Estulin, 2nd Edition, North American Union edition, TrineDay LLC, Waterville, OR, 2009.

¹² One of the alternate names for Ahriman or Satan found in the New Testament.

¹³ The reader will note that whereas in the Western world the forces of death have been somewhat submerged beneath presumed, so-called progressive movements, in contra-distinction the Antichrist has been working more plainly through repressive regimes in the Russian/Slavic world. While the Western Lodges are conspiring to bring the world under their iron rule, the Russian/Slavic states/republics, it would seem, have more or less succeeded in suppressing the development of the “free I” in countless people who have in this way been prepared for subservience to the Beast.

Through the experience of evil it will be possible for the Christ to appear again...¹⁴

Here we come back to the remark of Rudolf Steiner: “spiritual life needs the foundation of death.” Put another way: only through the experience of the forces of death can the spiritual life be found, can humanity awaken sufficiently to its true vocation.

What does this mean? It means that the Guardian of the Threshold stands between humanity and the spiritual world. The Guardian is the force of evil and death in us and in the world. Those seekers who are mature enough to meet the Guardian in the right way will recognize the working of death in the world and will be able to meet it consciously and potentially divert it and reduce its impact in the world—ultimately making it serve the good.¹⁵ Having confronted Death, in the form of the Beast, who appears as the guardian of *humanity*, as the gatekeeper to the spiritual world, ensures that what passes through the gate is not the “lower unredeemed I” but the “en-Christed I” —the “not I but Christ in me.” Only a life tested by death is equipped to enter the spiritual world or to fight in the battle that humanity, now and in the future, must face—a battle with the forces of evil on a global scale. This is what it means that “spiritual life needs the foundation of death.”¹⁶

In the end we can say that to the en-Christed I the dark forces that cloak themselves in obscurity are laid bare—they become transparent to spirit vision. Transparency not only denotes a quality or state of being; it also invokes a capacity to see through things—to shine a light on and reveal what would otherwise remain hidden. Ahriman loses his power when we see through him,

¹⁴ *From Symptom to Reality in Modern History*, pp.112-113.

¹⁵ Recall Goethe’s portrayal of Mephistopheles, in his *Faust*: “I am part of that force that always wills the evil but always produces the good.”

¹⁶ Behind this working of death deep knowledge of the Grail Mystery is revealed. With it one finds the key to understanding what it means for a Grail Knight to possess the Spear of Destiny. A true and revealing imagination of the Lance in the Grail Mystery is found in Richard Wagner’s opera version of the Parzival story. In this historic opera the spear was wrested by Parzival from the evil magician Klingsor, the magical spear that had been given to Anfortas, the Grail King, and which he had lost in his fateful battle with Klingsor at the Castle of Marvels. It was this spear that Klingsor used to wound Anfortas in the groin. Parzival seized it from Klingsor and brought it back to the Grail Castle, and through its power, healed the long-festering wound of Anfortas. By these facts we know that Wagner was either a knight of the threshold or he intuited its secrets. At the threshold one comes into possession of the spear of destiny, taking it out of the hands of one’s adversary, the Guardian of the Threshold, who is our personal representative of Death. As long as the Guardian possesses the spear we are subject to its influence in the hands of death. When we confront the Guardian we have the opportunity to take the spear and become conquerors of death. Wrestling the death spear from the Guardian, in truth, we gain eternal life. Possessing the spear is owning the power *over death* that is found only in the blood of the savior. Here we understand the saying of St. Paul in *I Corinthians* 15:55: “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” When Rudolf Steiner (in *How to Know Higher Worlds*) tells spirit seekers that after meeting the Guardian of the Threshold they henceforth have his companionship throughout life as their helper he is speaking of the mystery of the spear. The spear is the power of death brought under the control of the individual who possesses it. It becomes a weapon to conquer death—to bring life and healing to ourselves and others. Without the spear the grail cup remains empty, for it is from the tip of the spear that blood flows filling the cup; and it is the blood that is the vehicle for the Christ ego, the “I am,” which by spiritual economy, becomes available in multiple copies to all who prove themselves worthy of the grail’s nourishing victuals. Those who have not consciously met the Guardian and “captured the spear” will have their opportunity to meet their personal Guardian in their inevitable struggle with the Beast (Ahriman incarnated). They will have to be wounded by the spear to overcome the dark forces. This encounter offers the possibility to acknowledge and objectify one’s inner complicity with the Beast, and of it to make good—to re-align oneself with the goals of the progressive forces of human evolution.

when he cannot hide his evil intentions. He depends on deceit and obfuscation to make humanity subservient to his wishes. He wants to be perceived as a great benefactor of humanity, a savior; as long as he can accomplish this he will remain in power. As soon as it becomes clear that he is a narcissistic tyrant and not a beneficent savior, he will forfeit his authority. The Beast's false guarantees of peace and prosperity for the world will be a temptation to choose ease in exchange for freedom, an ease that leads to slavery and worship of an evil power. To reject this temptation could lead to extreme

hardship, but a hardship behind which are to be found the true benefactors of humanity: Christ, Archangel Michael, and the Divine Sophia.

As Steiner once noted, what is needed now is not more of the Christ power and the Christ will, but Sophia, the knowledge of Christ, the Wisdom of Christ, so that humanity can see and know the Christ in the light of waking consciousness. The Christ impulse is very much alive in our world, in the etheric. It is powerfully present in the sphere of life forces around and within us, blessing us who are awake with wisdom and courage, pushing unredeemed humanity, painfully, across the threshold. Through the Christ power Michael is holding the Guardian of the Threshold up to humanity – unveiling the elemental power of the Guardian for humanity to see what it has created, what *we* have created. How, then, can we characterize the part Sophia plays in the “parousia,” the “appearing” of Christ in the etheric, that has been occurring since the early 20th century, and will increase as the mystery of evil unfolds? The wisdom of Christ, the Sophia of Christ, provides the conceptual technique in the souls of human beings that alone can awaken consciousness of Christ's presence in the etheric.



Ahriman
by Rudolf Steiner

Sophia's Technique of Wisdom

If we use the *Revelations* of St. John to answer our question: *What is Sophia's technique of wisdom* – what John has given to us pictorially in chapter 12, the “woman clothed with the sun and the moon beneath her feet, who is crowned with twelve stars” – this will be seen as the key. It is the very picture of the revelation of Sophia in our time – giving birth to a “manchild.” Let us see what this picture can illustrate for us.

The Divine Sophia (Wisdom) comes to humanity through stages. In our age of the consciousness soul, *the first stage* is reached through earthly language. The light of the Christ Sun is invisible until it alights on something. That something is our moon-like intellect that reflects the Christ Sun through illuminated ideas. The reflection of the Christ light is found in the language of ideas presented in spiritual science. The preparatory work that precedes illumination, on the path of initiation, is study. Study of the language of spirit is the ground and foundation of the Christ light that appears in the glorious woman of Revelations chapter 12, as the “moon beneath her feet.” The moon reflects the sunlight. Likewise, language is only a reflection, a dimmed representation of the Christ Sun. Here Yahweh is active as the moon Elohim to guarantee a perfect reflection of Christ in thought.

However, only through earthly language that has been resurrected and thus enlivened to become living concepts are we able to know the Christ Sun. In the glorious woman of St. John's vision, we have *the second stage* of the technique of Wisdom in that she is "clothed with the sun." To correctly picture this we can envision the sun brilliantly raying out from her heart, covering her upper body like clothing. This cosmic image points to the heart as the "sun" of the human being, the etheric star within us that is porous like the sun—able to ray out spiritual warmth and light when we directly behold the Christ Sun. Only when the language of spirit unites itself with the Sun-fire of spirit wisdom is the heart filled with warmth and light such that it can ray forth like the celestial image of Sophia. When divine thoughts are charged with feeling they glow with sun-like radiance.

Speaking of earthly language being enlivened by the Sun-fire of spirit, we are pointing to the *Living Word*. This Word cannot be pictured in any earthly way, with letters, words, or such. The Living Word is transparent and infinitely mobile; it can be likened to a luminous burning coal or a piece of metal heated so hot that it has become transparent. And this transparency, when it lives in one's consciousness, bestows clairvoyant spiritual vision to its possessor. The very world becomes transparent to the Word, which is the sword of the spirit—showing what lies at the heart of things.¹⁷ Its mobility can only be compared to the movements of the grandest symphonic music—the music of the activity of the creation—what is called the music of the spheres. Adding these qualities to earthly language we imbue our thinking and our speech with spiritual light and warmth animating and enlivening it. In turn this shapes our perception of the etheric environment around us as described by St. Paul with the words: "In Him we live and move and have our being"—the revelation of Christ in the etheric.

This brings us to *the final stage* of the technique of Wisdom, to the crowning glory of Sophia. The Christ Sun that appears as the body of the great portent of Wisdom, in the picture that John gives us of Christ's appearing in the etheric—is a Sun amongst other Suns. Above, upon her head, is a crown of twelve stars. The twelve stars signify the Zodiac: the twelve living beings without which nothing on Earth would have form, being or consciousness. We know from the spiritual research of Rudolf Steiner and others that when Christ appeared on Earth in human form in Jesus of Nazareth, every step he took was a reflection of the Zodiacal influence: his life and activities were, as we say, *written in the stars*; or, as we should say, *he was the writing of the stars*. So we must grasp the fact that the luminous body of Sophia, the Christ Sun, in John's revelation of her, is an expression of the Zodiacal influence. This is the meaning of Christ, which translated means "the anointed one." Here we see Christ as a cosmic being, anointed by the entire cosmos! He is not just a being of planet Earth or the Solar System—around his head, as the anointed one, he also bears the crown of 12 stars, the blessing of the Zodiac. This indicates the presence of will forces streaming into and from the Christ.

What Sophia is revealing to us in her crown of twelve stars is our cosmic connections, the heavenly that has its expression on Earth. Through the Seraphim, Cherubim, and Thrones, at the level of the Zodiac, the mystery of our will-forces and karma is active. As the psalmist said: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork." The "parousia,"

¹⁷ Refer to St. Paul in his letter to the Hebrews, chapter 4 verse 12: "The Word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword dividing asunder the soul and the spirit, the joints and the marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

the appearance of Christ in the etheric is and will be a recognition and realization of the connection between heaven and earth, a revelation of “as above so below,” as the Hermetic saying of the Emerald Tablet declares. His appearance means that He is the Lord of Karma and will reveal to us from heaven our earthly karma. In these three stages of revelation of Divine Sophia, the Word is born in us: the spirit child, the *Living Word*, referred to in this vision as the “man-child.”¹⁸

With all this, how can we say other than that, finally, Sophia IS the “parousia” — the “appearance” of Christ in the etheric? Has John not shown us this? Does Sophia not perfectly describe the appearing of Christ in the etheric? *Her* appearance speaks of *His* appearing. Reflecting upon this, we will realize that John’s vision of Sophia is similar to Rudolf Steiner’s sculpture, the Representative of Humanity —but the reverse. Steiner said the sculpture of Christ was just a veil for the being of Isis/Sophia. I would maintain that John’s vision is of Isis/Sophia as a veil *for the being of Christ*. Clearly, her appearance is not to announce herself —but to proclaim her son, the Christ Sun. To provide further support for the idea of Sophia’s “appearing,” as *the* “parousia,” let us recall the historic moment when the great temple of Solomon was finally built. The nation of Israel had, up until the building of the temple, been a nomadic nation, consisting of twelve tribes that used a movable tabernacle that was carried about and set up periodically as occasion afforded. Before this time, the children of Israel had no permanent temple for the Lord their God. When, in the newly constructed temple, the Levites and then the priests brought and finally installed the Ark of the Covenant in the most holy place, the glory of the Lord appeared and filled the house with a cloud, a *Shekinah* —the divine feminine presence of God, as the feminine *Shekinah* indicates. And the priests could not conduct worship because of the cloud.¹⁹

To complete our reflections on the “technique of Wisdom,” and Sophia’s part in the Second Coming, let us recall also the New Testament teaching, in which it is declared that the parousia of Christ, the appearance of Christ, when he comes again, will occur in the same way as the ascension. “[H]e [Jesus Christ] was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight [and two angels who stood by, speaking said]: ‘This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.’”²⁰ May I suggest again that we acknowledge one of the most significant manifestations of Sophia? The Etheric Fire/Cloud, the *Shekinah*, the very atmospheric life-force into which Christ disappeared, is the same one transformed, out of which, in our time, the etheric Christ is appearing and will continue to appear in his Second Coming.²¹

¹⁸ For more on the “man-child” see my article entitled: *The Foundation Stone as the Being of Isis Sophia: Some Results from Working with the Foundation Stone Meditation*, <https://independent.academia.edu/BillTrusiewicz>

¹⁹ Holy Bible, KJV, Old Testament, *II Chronicles*, chapter 5.

²⁰ KJV, New Testament, Acts 1:9,11.

²¹ [Ed. For the Etheric Fire/Cloud see also *Exodus* 13:21-22: “By day the LORD went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night. Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people.”]

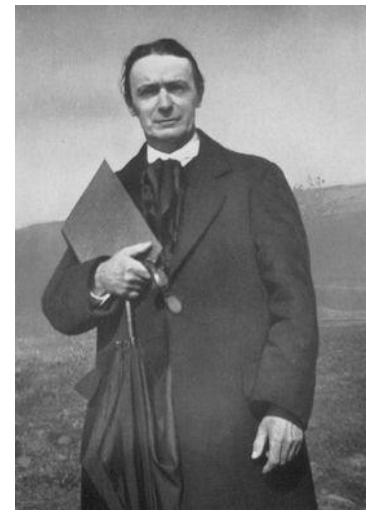
Russian Sophiology and Anthroposophy¹

N. K. Bonetskaya

(Natalya Konstantinovna Boneckaya)²

The theme of our present study is the bridge between the Russian religious culture of the late 19th and early 20th centuries developing under the sign of Sophia, and the newest German gnosis represented by anthroposophy. It is impossible to begin a discussion about Russian sophiology and anthroposophy with a figure other than Andrei Bely, an admirer of the mysticism of Vladimir Solovyov and the close friend of such Russian “Knights” of Sophia as Aleksander Blok and Pavel Florensky. Already living in the midst of ideas about Sophia, Bely in 1912 became a student of Rudolf Steiner and, despite various breakdowns over this connection as experienced later, remained an anthroposophist until the end of his life. In Bely were united both the sophiologist and the anthroposophist, and this brings us to the question of the possible spiritual kinship of Russian sophiology and anthroposophy. Now if our sophiologists had an interest in anthroposophy, then vice versa, Sophia, the Wisdom of God, was significant for Steiner. There should be nothing unexpected in this, given what we know of the Gnostic nature of anthroposophy. Nevertheless to meet in the lecture “The Being of Anthroposophy” Sophia as a spiritual Being, as an Angel, for the Russian consciousness accustomed to the meditations of sophiologists (from Solovyov to Daniel Andreev) on the angelic image of Sophia, as in the 15th century Novgorod icon—a kind of light flashes up because of the explicit parallel and correspondence.

Steiner’s understanding regarding Sophia is tightly-knit. Sophia, according to Steiner, is indeed a certain high Being (corresponding to divine Wisdom), which in different epochs appears in different forms of relationship with man. Sophia faced the ancient Greek “as a completely objective being,” as “Wisdom in oneself,” and “he contemplated, precisely contemplated [Her], with all the objectivity of Greek contemplation.” What we have in the writings of Greek thinkers is not “philosophy,” but the image of the living Sophia, which is visible to them. Steiner here is referring to the ancient clairvoyance, which was still preserved in the era of Plato, and which made direct contact with the spiritual world possible, as reflected in the works of the Greeks generally. Beyond this [point in time], for the changed human soul, there is no longer “the objective essence” of Sophia, but rather an “attitude” to Sophia of the “I” itself: a person is no longer able to contemplate Wisdom in itself—s/he experiences only her/his love of Wisdom. Thus Dante addresses “Lady Philosophy” with a “concrete, passionate, personal, direct emotional attitude”; he personally perceives—though in the form of a last remnant of the same ancient clairvoyance—no longer Sophia, but Love of



Rudolf Steiner

¹ Русская софиология и антропософия (title in Russian) from Вопросы философии (*Questions of Philosophy*), 1995, no.7. Translation from the Russian by Emily Michael and adapted by the Editor.

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Sophia, or in the Greek phrasing—Philo-sophy. So, the ancient Greek contemplated Divine Sophia directly; for a man of the Middle Ages, Wisdom appeared in the guise of Philosophy.

What next? Steiner shows how in the 19th century the philosophy of “ideas, concepts, objects,” turning into a “concept of itself” in Hegel’s highest development of this, completes the circle, so that it becomes clear that “[the] role [of Philo-sophia] in the spiritual development of mankind has been played out.” Now She is no longer the majestic Lady Philosophy; Steiner notes that it is unlikely that anyone would have fallen in love with Hegel’s “Science of Logic.” However, the development of humankind continues: it will have a new entrance into the spiritual world, and the renewed vision of Wisdom Steiner connects, of course, with his “spiritual science.” It is noteworthy that Steiner’s “sophianic” intuitions here are very close to those of the corresponding Russians, which go back to Solovyov’s idea of “God-manhood.”³ Now, says Steiner, there is a new “premonition of Sophia.” Once again Sophia is experienced in proximity to humankind, but as a Being that now directly embraces us. Sophia will again appear before humankind objectively, but not as Sophia, rather as Anthroposophia—as the Sophia who now bears the human being in Herself. In Anthroposophia humankind sees its own essence coming down to it as the “heavenly Goddess,” and Anthroposophy is the name Steiner adopted for his “spiritual science,” which is the spiritual path to Her. And about Anthroposophia, again as in the era of Dante, love poems can be written. And so Andrei Bely—who was present at Steiner’s lecture, “The Being of Anthroposophy,” given in 1913—wanted to be like Dante, when in the 20th century *he* sang of “sister Anthroposophy,” as “affectionate, sweet, good”:

*Your clear look, I catch myself in it:
In it is the inescapable volume:
Yourself displayed—I love;
Myself displayed—I accept.*

Isn’t even Bely’s quatrain here an illustration of Steiner’s sophiology? His lecture of 1913 continued to run through Bely’s memory (these verses were written five years later): in this lecture the Russian poet, as in a mirror, really saw himself—as a sophiologist and anthroposophist at the same time.⁴

In the books and lecture courses by Steiner one finds numerous references to “Wisdom”—in different contexts and with different meanings. In 1920, Bely read a special cycle of four lectures on this topic called “The Search for a New Isis, the Divine Sophia.” The cycle was timed to Christmas, and so the Christian aspect of Sophia is what is emphasized. Here Sophia is both a spiritual Being, an analogue of the Egyptian Isis, and a comprehensive world wisdom and special knowledge given by anthroposophy. Also, here Steiner hints that the secret of the Virgin Mary is connected with Sophia. Steiner begins with a complaint: modern Christians have lost the real inner feeling of Christ. However, spiritual science, anthroposophy, is able to point the way for the

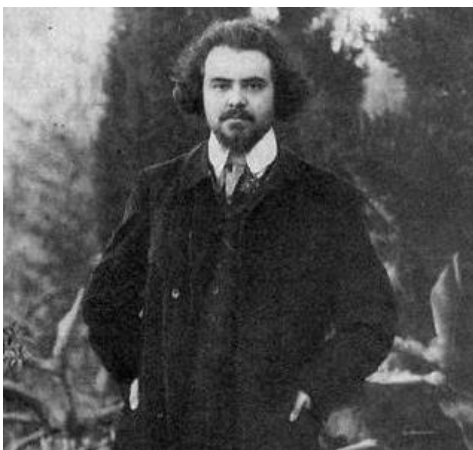
³ [Ed. See Vladimir Solovyov’s *Lectures on Divine Humanity*, Hudson, NY: Lindisfarne Press, 1995.]

⁴ Andrei Bely wrote four poems in 1918 under the same title “Anthroposophy.” These are love poems, and anthroposophy is represented in them as a living spiritual Being of feminine gender. The main feature of this creature is “a clear look” and “flickering eyes.” She is looking at the poet from lit-up spaces that are blue and from the midst of waves of scents and musical harmonies. These poems are clearly related to the poem “Three Encounters” by Vladimir Solovyov, the subject of which is the threefold vision of the one that Solovyov identified as the Sophia of the ancient Gnostics and of Jacob Boehme.

development in human beings of those hidden abilities that will rediscover Christ. If the mysteries of Egypt were built around the myth of Isis searching for the body of Osiris, then the modern mystery, Steiner says, on the contrary is a quest for Wisdom-Isis: “It is not Christ whom we lack ... what we lack is Sophia [Who brings us] the knowledge of Christ” —so he argues in the gnostic vein. At the heart of the cycle “The Search for a New Isis ...” is Steiner’s Christology (cf. “The Fifth Gospel”) and anthroposophical mystical practice.

So Steiner’s “spiritual science” is not just gnostic, but also Sophian. Sophia, Divine Wisdom —at the same time a certain high spiritual Being— is a subject of special attention in Steiner, and he identifies the comprehension of Sophia with the anthroposophical spiritual path. Russian thinkers were naturally drawn to anthroposophy, intuitively feeling, even before any reflection, a kind of spiritual closeness to it. The fact is that the phenomenon that they agreed to call “Russian religious philosophy” is still hardly a philosophy —at least in the sense in which this word is used in modern times. As a rule, Russian ‘philosophy’ is occupied not with categorically abstract constructions, but with the truths of spiritual reality. Vladimir Solovyov, the ancestor of such Russian religious thought, whose work belongs to the 19th century, is more of a philosopher proper than his followers. However, as himself the source of the “new religious consciousness” in 20th century Russia, the truth behind his speculative constructions turns out to be by no means of a philosophical order. It is rather the truth about Sophia, about the Soul of the World, about “God-Humanity.” Solovyov’s thought bloomed from the triple mystical vision described in the poem “Three Encounters.” Three times there was a meeting of Solovyov with a certain feminine Angel; this Angel Solovyov recognized as Sophia, the Wisdom of God, about which he had read in Boehme and other mystics in the West. If Solovyov had ignored the visions or interpreted them differently, bringing to the spiritual Being which appeared to him a different concept, the development of Russian religious thought in the 20th century may well have been very different! But it happened as it did; Solovyov’s experience developed into a Sophian theology—the unfolding of the spiritual impulse received by Solovyov at the time of his encounters. Referring his experience to a quest for “divine wisdom,” Solovyov, in essence, threw a bridge of tradition from the 18th to the 19th centuries: the immediate precedent of sophiology in the history of Russian culture is the ideology of freemasonry of the 18th century.

Russian sophiology is driven not by aloof rational interest: the goal of its aspirations is to comprehend being as an objective spiritual reality, and in some cases to develop hidden human abilities for the purpose of penetrating into the invisible world. Russian sophiology is not, on the other hand, a gnosis: it lacks the systematic character, the concreteness of spiritual knowledge, the elaboration of the “path” to it. It is rather to be described as a passionate rush to gnosis. In this regard, it is legitimate to consider some articles by Nikolai Berdyaev as programmatic. Thus, in the 1905 article “On the New Religious Consciousness,” Berdyaev declares the refusal of “new” religious thinkers (among whom he considers himself) of “historical-ascetic” Christianity, which denies cultural activities in the created world in the name of individual salvation. Berdyaev connects the religious and general cultural revival [of his time] with the “eternal” religion of the Holy Trinity, the



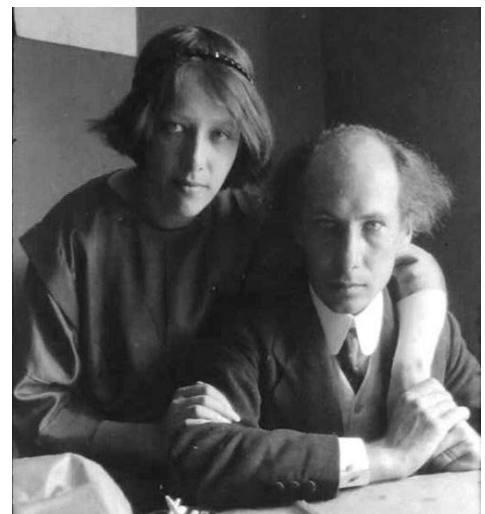
Nikolai Berdyaev

triumph of which is seen in the approach of the era of the Holy Spirit (the Third Testament). This revival, according to Berdyaev, is Christian and pagan at the same time: “We reverently bow down not only to the Cross, but also to the divinely beautiful body of Venus.” The “resurrection” of the pagan gods spells also the rehabilitation of earth, flesh, sex, culture—all the fullness of created being. At the same time, the “new religious consciousness” includes the longing for heaven. In short, Berdyaev talks about an incredible new religious intuition that involves along the way a somewhat incomprehensible synthesis of opposing spiritual principles, and a hitherto unknown syncretism. From this somewhat disorderly intuition should grow a religiously-justified culture of a new type.

A most important aspect of such a culture is knowledge, gnosis: “Gnosis is an organic part of religious life,” writes Berdyaev in 1916.⁵ Now, says Berdyaev, humanity enters into its own age, “when ignorance becomes dangerous,” and all attempts at religious simplification are reactionary. The future, according to Berdyaev, is “wise, sophianic knowledge”; weakness and self-deception “must be opposed to luminous religious thought, creative gnosis, revelation in Sophia’s representative—Divine Wisdom.” Generally, Russian sophiology goes beyond the limits of the New Testament Revelation. The *Revelations* of St. John, for Solovyov, was not enough: Russian Sophiologists awaited the revelations of the Holy Spirit, the Third Hypostasis of the Divine.⁶ In the meantime, Russian sophiology was looking for fundamentally new spiritual paths that would embody this new era of the “apocalyptic” mysteries (as in the correspondence between Andrei Bely and Florensky through 1904-1905). It was seeking also a new way to philosophize (as in Berdyaev’s existentialism). In this quest, Russian religious thought met with the anthroposophy of Rudolf Steiner.

In the literature on this, we do not come across a direct statement of the problems associated with this remarkable meeting. The history of this contact has a rather distinct beginning and end. It begins in 1909-1910, with the convergence of Andrei Bely in Vyacheslav Ivanov’s St. Petersburg salon with the emissary and Russian student of Steiner, A. R. Minzlova. It ends in 1935 with the appearance, in the emigration to Paris, of a collection of articles called *The Resettlement of Souls*, with the participation of Berdyaev and Sergei Bulgakov, which contain a deeply hostile criticism of anthroposophy. If, earlier, Berdyaev and Bulgakov had found some positive aspects in anthroposophy, now their attitude towards it appeared to be purely negative, so that one can speak about the complete break of Russian thought with “spiritual science” in 1935.

Of those who made up the glory of the Russian Silver Age, two people, Andrei Bely and Maximilian Voloshin, seriously linked their spiritual path with anthroposophy. Bely especially showed great loyalty as a student of Steiner. He meets Steiner in 1912; together with his wife Asya Turgeneva, Bely listens to a number of Steiner’s lecture courses in Cologne, Munich, Basel, and Stuttgart. Steiner not only fascinates Bely but is recognized



Andrei Bely and Asya Turgeneva
The Svetlana Geier Collection

⁵ In *Theosophy and Anthroposophy in Russia*.

⁶ Sophiologists showed great interest in the book, *The Third Testament*, by Anna Schmidt.

by him as the “native sage” who has been expected all of his life. The young couple is completely given up to the spiritual guidance of Steiner in 1912-1913. For Bely this was a time of incredible spiritual ascension associated with meditative practice, the acquisition of a completely new but at the same time infinitely kindred soul knowledge, and most importantly, communication with Steiner. After an inspiring period between 1914-1916, Bely’s participation in the construction of the first Goetheanum, the “Johannes Building,” stops; then there is his departure due to the war in Russia, followed by further activity in the Russian Anthroposophical Society. The critical turning point in his relationship to Steiner, which takes place in 1922 when he grows deeply troubled about Steiner, does not prevent him from preserving the anthroposophical world-view until the end of his life.

Other Russian thinkers were mainly readers of Steiner’s books and in part his lecture courses. *The Mysteries of Antiquity and Christianity* and *Theosophy* by Steiner are referenced in the bibliography to *The Pillar and Ground of the Truth* by Florensky. In addition to his books, Bulgakov knew Steiner’s Christological cycles well, though these two leading Russian sophiologists did not meet personally with the founder of anthroposophy. Berdyaev, in addition to his reading, according to Bely’s testimony attended Steiner’s lecture in Helsingfors in 1913, being, however, divided over his ideas.

The results of the meeting of the Russian sociological thought that came out of Solovyov with anthroposophy is not easy to assess: the picture is variegated and complex, and the situation not completely clear. Although Steiner gave the Slavs, and especially the Russians, an enormous role in the evolutionary future of mankind, it does not seem that he himself was particularly keenly interested in Russian culture. Of the Russian thinkers, he became acquainted only with Solovyov; the talent of even his most devoted student, Andrei Bely, as the latter himself writes with offense, was not supported at all. We do not have to consider that Steiner had a prophetic interest in the Russian revolution of 1917, which, given his theoretical Russophile vision (and his advanced clairvoyance), it would be more than natural for him to have. The death of Steiner in 1925 seems to have completely deprived anthroposophy of any further links in this direction.

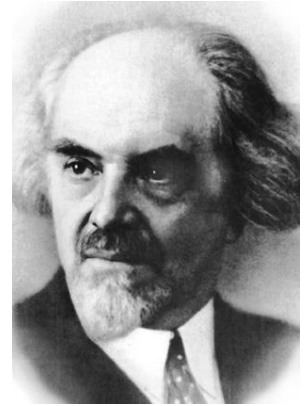
At the same time, despite all the openness of Russian Sophiologists to a new spirituality, a new gnosis, some very important key aspects of anthroposophy proved unacceptable for the Russian consciousness. Steiner’s Christology, along with the idea of reincarnation, which was quite alien to the Russian mind, became a stumbling block. The most important thing was the absence of a recognizable God in Steiner’s system. Looking back now, we see that, on the whole, the attitude of our Russian Sophiologists towards “spiritual science” was ambivalent, self-contradictory, and painful. Russian thinkers were attracted to some of Steiner’s intuitions and ideas: his insights into being especially were felt intimately and closely, and they explained a lot. But to prefer the authority of the “Doctor” of a decade-old faith, who deferred to Buddha, to Zarathustra, to two Jesuses, and to the Logos of an anthroposophical Christ—to prefer these over the Orthodox face of the Savior! The whole being of the then Russian, who had not fallen out of his own tradition, resisted this; in his depths he rebelled against these unheard-of things. Despite all the theological freedom of the Sophiologists, with Jacob Boehme (like the Russian Freemasons of the 18th century) also pointing to their own thinking (more so even than Saint Athanasius of Alexandria), they could not accept Steiner religiously. In Steiner and anthroposophy they did not find that special Orthodox love, sweet spirituality, and grace that they knew, forgetting that the

gifts of the Spirit are very different. In short, the meeting did not succeed. Berdyaev and Bulgakov could not become committed anthroposophists, and in the meantime Steiner did not write a study on the Russian Sophia. As a spiritual event, however, the meeting had taken place and borne fruit. There had been, indeed, a dialogue—meetings, on a common territory, related to a common subject—and not a purely hostile confrontation. To some extent, the contact of Berdyaev, Bely, Florensky, and Bulgakov with anthroposophy had been bright and significant.

Let us now try to catch the peculiarity of each of their “meetings” with “spiritual science.”⁷

N. A. Berdyaev

The final result of Berdyaev’s meeting with Steiner’s anthroposophy was disappointment. Berdyaev took anthroposophy very seriously and recognized certain aspects of “spiritual science” as unconditional: “only in occultism,” he wrote in 1916, referring mainly to anthroposophy, “can you find true knowledge that the material, solidified objective world is a temporary moment in cosmic evolution, and not something absolutely stable and unchanging.”⁸ He was very impressed by anthroposophical gnosis, with Steiner’s presentation of the spiritual cosmos and the complex spiritual and physical structure of man. Berdyaev saw the main merit and rightness of Steiner’s presentations in its gnostic setting, which put Berdyaev before the question: is not anthroposophy, precisely that wise, sophian knowledge that is sought by Russian thought? But with all the ambivalence (further noted by Bely) towards anthroposophy, the last word of Berdyaev was—“no,” to “spiritual science” and to its creator.



Berdyaev

In anthroposophy Berdyaev sees the continuation of the positivistic science of the 19th century, the application, according to Berdyaev, of its outdated principles to invisible planes of being. From the theological point of view, so to speak, anthroposophy, which excludes a direct discussion of God from its horizon, can be characterized as “cosmic seduction.” Although the subject of anthroposophy is the spiritual world, the books of Steiner speak only about its “objective” side, and in essence, about the evolution of the very same material world that we know. Steiner, like the positivistic scholars, according to Berdyaev, does not know the essence of spiritual existence; his clairvoyant world appears analytical, anatomical. Steiner’s works containing descriptions of spiritual hierarchies and evolutionary eras are like “textbooks of geography and mineralogy,” and as guides to the invisible worlds “spiritual Baedekers”; they are foolishly memorized by a mass of anthroposophists who do not have the spiritual experience that Steiner himself had. Anthroposophy, Berdyaev wrote, rules out creativity; genuinely creative personalities will not accept “spiritual science,” although possessing spiritual needs. Anthroposophy does not know God, and so does not know humankind as the image of God, as an integral entity: humankind for Steiner disintegrates, erodes, disappears in its many shells and endless reincarnations. There is no Christ or God-man in anthroposophy: this is replaced by a

⁷ We confine ourselves now to these figures. Being outside our study, we are forced to leave unattended other significant representatives of the Russian culture of the beginning of the 20th century, persons who, in one degree or another, joined anthroposophy, such as Dmitri Merezhkovsky, Zinaida Gippius, Emilii Medtner, Nicolay Lossky, Georges Florovsky, Boris Vysheslavtsev, Vasily Zenkovsky—and this is in addition to a host of other talented people.

⁸ See *Theosophy and Anthroposophy in Russia*.

“cosmic impulse” with reference to some complex Cosmic Being. This list of the shortcomings of anthroposophy could be continued, Berdyaev’s criticism of “spiritual science” being philosophically the most elaborate in comparison with the statements of other representatives of Russian thought on this subject.

It is not surprising that, reading such books by Steiner as *Theosophy*, *Occult Science*, *The Mysteries of Antiquity and Christianity*,⁹ Berdyaev saw in them the same “objectifying” mode of reasoning as that of the positivists: Steiner, according to Berdyaev, described the cosmic planes like any geological scientist. But Berdyaev himself admitted that he was criticizing “popular” anthroposophy—anthroposophy frozen in the enumerated information of reference books or textbooks. Meanwhile, if Berdyaev had dealt more not with the books but with Steiner’s lecture cycles—not with the “dogmatic Christological” matter but with those lectures given as if by chance, for innumerable circumstantial reasons, retaining the very process of mental creativity of the founder of anthroposophy, he would have met there no catalogs and lists, but a pulsation of living thought—moreover, thought that feeds on intuitions so unusual and, indeed, otherworldly, Berdyaev would have seen in this a lot that is very close to himself. Berdyaev’s critique of anthroposophy is philosophically and religiously weighty, but it comes from the outside, not from an experience immanent in its subject matter, but rather from another, Berdyaev’s own personal experience.

We will note here also the dispute between Berdyaev and Steiner’s student, Natalya Turgeneva. The dispute began with Turgeneva’s denial of a number of anti-anthroposophical statements expressed by Berdyaev in his book *The Philosophy of the Free Spirit*. Without going into the details of the dispute, we note that this was all rather futile, an ideological standoff between two different faiths, each disputing party concentrating on minor items and not responding to the adversary’s key arguments. Turgeneva doubted that Berdyaev himself, who criticized anthroposophy as non-religion, had any real experience of communion with God even in his own sense. Berdyaev, ignoring this weighty attack on his own experience, in turn exposes anthroposophy as a cultish faith—faith in Steiner, in teachers and their teachings. Here we are talking about matters that are intentionally made controversial, which cause painful hopelessness: “the debate about anthroposophy is as difficult as any dispute about faith,” wrote Berdyaev, who perfectly sensed the gist of the situation. These words can stand symbolically as the essence of the meeting of Russian philosophy with anthroposophy as a whole.

Andrei Bely

If Berdyaev addressed primarily the philosophical aspect of anthroposophy, then, in contrast, Bely, who found a spiritual path for himself, went inside the anthroposophical vision of the world and was able to evaluate the tenets of “spiritual science” in practice. Bely’s spiritual disposition was distinguished by a downright polar duality. Inherent in him was the strongest craving for mystical experience as such; that is why Bely, a “captive spirit” (according to M. Tsvetaeva), back in the early 1900s had a much greater interest in sectarian Russian mysticism than in the “sobriety” of Orthodox faith.¹⁰ This “mystical Slavophilism” was, on the other hand,

⁹ [Ed. Also translated as *Christianity as Mystical Fact*.]

¹⁰ Mystical sectarianism in Russia developed in two directions—ascetic and orgiastic. Bely’s novel, “The Silver Dove,” has a secret and obvious imaginative fascination with the dreadful orgy-like sect that is its subject: whipped-up sects

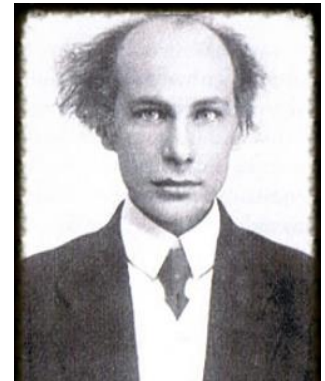
balanced in Bely by “Western” rationalism, an orientation towards “culture,” and a search for inner discipline. The appeal of anthroposophy for Bely was internally prepared for both by an excellent knowledge of the works of the old German mystics and by the impact on him of German philosophy, even the neo-Kantians. It seems, however, that these at once spontaneous and rational leanings did not come to harmony in Bely: the desired synthesis of East and West did not take place in his personality, and, in Berdyaev’s apt words, Bely was providentially doomed to remain at once “too Slavophile and too Western.”¹¹

In Steiner, Bely saw that “native sage”¹² who would point out to him personally the way to Christ. Ultimately, Bely sought Christ, but he was also in search of Sophia, after Solovyov: “I feel that the inspiration of Sophia is my destiny.”¹³ Bely, figuratively speaking, wanted to kill two birds with one stone—to preserve his spontaneous-mystical impulses with which his philosophical and artistic work was connected, while at the same time seeking Christ. According to Bely’s memoirs, his stay around Steiner was marked by constant feverish excitement. The symbolic character of his world-view sharpened to an extreme, as in all the trivia of life he saw the second plane: everywhere concealed hidden meanings addressed themselves to him personally.

Bely even imagined that he was Steiner’s favorite student and that he was entrusted with a global, universal mission. He was in a sort of spiritual mist preparing for initiation; in a dream, he took the Grail initiation, as if, from Steiner’s own hands...

But, according to Bely’s own testimony, in his strained inner life he remained completely alone, without the real support of the “Doctor.” The Doctor was by no means a kind of monastic elder for his students! Following his orientation toward the development of the “I”, Steiner left the anthroposophical practitioners alone with themselves. The anthroposophical community in Dornach, according to Bely’s descriptions, was also deprived of a conciliar spirit. No matter how strenuous Bely’s efforts were, he was deprived of even small, simply friendly support. And when a breakdown occurred, when Bely could no longer resist the onslaught of dark forces in him, when conditions that were no longer accounted for in terms of anthroposophy came up, then it is a remarkable fact! Bely was saved from madness not by the “Doctor,” not by meditation, but by a simple but desperately hot prayer in front of the icon of St. Seraphim of Sarov, brought from Russia. Bely was saved through one of Christ’s saints through the Church—saved, that is, by Orthodoxy.

But the breakdown had occurred, and the severity of the personal crisis, which led to his reappraisal of Steiner, was such that in 1922, according to M. Tsvetaeva (in “Captive Spirit”), Bely called the “Doctor” the devil. However, in his memoirs of Steiner, written in Soviet Russia in 1928-1929, Steiner appears as the one who first showed him Christ. This is quite a range: from the devil to the Christ-bearer, the seer of Calvary, the mysterious priest. This view of Steiner is much



The Young Bely

looking for encounters with the “Spirit” in Dionysian ecstasies, achieved during celebrations, which reflected on some dark abyss in himself.

¹¹ See *Russian Temptation/Russian Thought*, 1910.

¹² In his *Memoirs of Steiner*.

¹³ Letter to P. Florensky dated August 14, 1906.

more intensely ambivalent than in Berdyaev's arguments. The latter dealt primarily with Steiner's texts, while Bely dealt with the Doctor himself. Bely's meeting with anthroposophy was deeply personal: the main thing that was learned from it was the memory of the human Steiner. A highest and all-forgiving love, we note, is not very characteristic of the Bely of the 1920s, who cynically mocked his former idols and friends. This bitterness is also felt in the following confession, though it would seem that Bely cannot at the same time help his deepest admiration of Steiner after all that has happened and was said:

I don't know a more beautiful phenomenon. For four years I observed this man in all manner of states of mind of my own: in greatness, in simplicity, in balance and disequilibrium, with a feeling of justice and injustice, in love, in anger, in grief, in laughter, in jest; and—what? is he therefore darkened in me, just like a man? No—through everything that I understood and did not understand in him, the main [thrust of my experience] came up, slowly rising: admiration, love, trust, joy that fate allowed me to meet him, because he is [remains] the main "URGENT JOY" of my life.¹⁴

Had anthroposophy, then, been a temptation for Bely, and Steiner the tempter, or was he whom Bely found in the depths of his spirit not, in fact, really the "Friend of Christ"¹⁵ and close to Him from time immemorial?¹⁶

Berdyaev and Andrei Bely were free thinkers who were not tied either to religious ideology or to any stable belief system (except for beliefs coming from within). Their relation to anthroposophy was therefore unbiased by any other affiliation. Now we will try to make sense of the meeting with anthroposophy of the two most eminent Russian sophiologists who vitally connected themselves with Orthodoxy—the priests Pavel Florensky and Sergei Bulgakov. The duty to think in relation to Orthodoxy, voluntarily accepted by them, preceded all their judgments, in particular their philosophical-critical judgments. And yet Florensky and Bulgakov were not Orthodox thinkers in the strict patristic sense but themselves carriers of the "new religious consciousness" brought to life by Solovyov. Yet this "newness" in their approach in their case is what acts to create their deep ambivalent attitude to "secret knowledge" in general and anthroposophy in particular, when this is set in turn in relation to their profound commitment to the Orthodox Church which they earnestly served.

Pavel Florensky

There are no obvious traces of Florensky's familiarity with occultism in Steiner's precise variant of this in his works (even though there undoubtedly was some familiarity with Steiner's work more generally). There are practically no critical responses in Florensky to anthroposophy as such. In spite of this, it may be that Florensky was closer to Steiner than was any other Russian sophiologist, in the entire spiritual and mental makeup of his personality. One might even dare to say that no one else made an attempt to create a "spiritual science" (in a broad sense of the word) on the foundations of Russian and even Orthodox soil. Unlike even the gnostic Berdyaev (as well as other Russian figures of the spiritual "Renaissance" who were oriented towards Gnosticism,

¹⁴ See Bely's *Memoirs of Steiner*.

¹⁵ In 1914, Bely wrote that "the true name of Christ is with the German, Dr. Steiner." – Letter to P. Florensky dated February 17, 1914.

¹⁶ The reader will note further that Asya Turgeneva [Bely's first wife] herself left memoirs of Steiner and relations with him. Bely's second wife—also an anthroposophist, Claudia Vasilyeva—left memoirs of Bely.

including Solovyov), Florensky was a gnostic practitioner. His multifaceted scientific activity, from mystical theology to the study of electrical materials, from the chemistry of algae to the Eleusinian Mysteries, might be thought dilettantism by some, but, if it is, this is dilettantism of a special, higher order. Florensky, unlike Steiner, had no advanced interest in history or evolution (consider Steiner's concern with the Akasha Chronicle, the Fifth Gospel, etc.); he did not see the aura of objects (cf. *How to Achieve Knowledge of the Higher Worlds* by Steiner). However, like Steiner, Florensky was given to a decidedly cosmic world-view: behind all things natural, and cultural, Florensky sensed the presence of living beings, of spirits—or “gods,” as the ancients would say. Such a world-view, when judged externally, is spoken of as animism, pantheism, dismissed as



Pavel Florensky

mythology, etc. Florensky is certainly an Orthodox thinker, but his “mythological” direction is also important to him. The mind of Florensky—the ecclesiologist, creator of the philosophy of the cult of the Orthodox Church—is directed not so much to the Head of the Church, Christ, as to the cosmic-created aspect of the Church. Christ is not the main focus in Florensky's teaching on the Church, and therefore it can be said about his ecclesiology that there is more Orthodoxy than Christianity in it.¹⁷ The spiritual world was the actual subject of Florensky's contemplation,

being not so much religious in the Christian sense, though it is clearly also that, as it is more freely theosophical. This is where Florensky comes close to Steiner.

It is customary to talk about spiritual space and the invisible side of Orthodox worship in church literature extremely conditionally, carefully and evasively, and not with the intense realism that was characteristic of Florensky's vision. Unusually realistic is his description of those spiritual beings that are present in baptismal water and incense, of the metaphysics of the material side of the icon, not only the image and face, but also gold, paint, the icon board itself. The occult teaching of Names; the theory of the icon as a living symbol of the Prototype; the vision of the sunset sky as the revelation of Sophia (“Heavenly Signs”); the forest as a special being (“The Meaning of Idealism”); St. Sergius of Radonezh (Sergii Radonezhsky) as a guardian angel of Russia (“Trinity-Sergius Lavra and Russia”), etc.: what is this, if not Florensky living into the spiritual phenomena in the world around us? This world-view can be called a kind of Platonism (note that the “ideas” of Plato, according to Florensky, are living beings; we have the same view of them in Steiner); it is all for Florensky realistic concrete symbolism.

But now I would like to focus on the scientific and descriptive form of Florensky's testimony about the invisible plane. His “philosophy of the cult” is no philosophizing at all, but a statement of the truth of facts, the result of direct contemplation. We find here the same cognitive

¹⁷ [Ed. This must be read as a relative statement, for Christ was otherwise, of course, at the very center of Florensky's experience and undoubtedly the chief spiritual Figure in his life. This was even dramatically acknowledged in the large cross Florensky always wore over his priest's robe, even while working, as he was forced to, on behalf of the Bolshevik regime (this was until he was sent to Siberia where he was eventually executed).]

principle as in Steiner, and if Berdyaev had read the “Philosophy of the Cult,” he probably would have seen in Florensky’s own experience an “objectification” of spiritual reality. We want to call the principle of knowledge, which is demonstrated in almost all of Florensky’s works “spiritual and scientific.” If Florensky had followed through with the work *At the Watersheds of Thought* (of which we have only sections on language and on the icon), there would have been a new gnostic system produced on Russian soil that, in terms of breadth of reality, would have complemented anthroposophy.¹⁸ In fact, one can only speak about individual gnostic studies in Florensky. As for his sophiology, as in his Master’s thesis of 1914, *The Pillar and Ground of the Truth*, he speaks rather in a theological-metaphysical guise. In the 1920s he adopted a more practical method of describing the spiritual world associated with Orthodoxy; here is sophiology turned into an effective gnosis, a “spiritual science.”

Florensky’s ecclesiology is an unfolding of the intuition of the Church as a mystery. The Church for the Florensky of the 1920s is a mystery institution, and the sacraments sanctify a person together with inanimate nature as if automatically, thanks to a special complex system of mystery-performing actions. The orientation to a personal God, which is inherent in Christianity, in Florensky’s ecclesiology is not taken into account. For Florensky, the priest is a “theurgist”; prayer, in essence, is no different from magic spells. Florensky, it seems, wanted to see in Russian Orthodoxy a Christian analogue of the pagan mysteries. Steiner’s book, *The Mysteries of Antiquity and Christianity*, was published at the beginning of the 1900s. From it, or from the earlier writings of the theosophists, the idea of the connection of Christianity with esoteric paganism came to Florensky. Florensky’s disappointment with the Church, which he declared in the 1930s, is probably due to the fact that he did not find in Her the esotericism that he had dreamed of, together with Bely, as far back as the early 1900s. Ten years before the construction of the “Johannes Building” in Dornach, these two Russians were building projects of an esoteric “order” in enthusiastic correspondence one with the other; they were waiting for the coming of Christ in “the future,” were developing the ritual side of a new “apocalyptic” Christianity. It is not surprising that Orthodoxy began to be felt by them—one earlier, the other later—as itself “positivistic” and relatively mundane.



Florensky

Already in the 1910s, in the conversation between Florensky and Bely as friends, there had been an exchange of remarks about anthroposophy. In the two letters between them that survive, we have the only direct statement of Florensky about anthroposophical “spiritual science.” It is ambivalent and evasive. In 1914, at the height of his activity under Steiner, and after many years of separation from Florensky, Bely wrote a letter to the latter with a response to his book *The Pillar and Ground of the Truth*. Bely the anthroposophist informs his former comrade and interlocutor about his complete withdrawal from Orthodoxy and his fervent acceptance of Florensky’s work and its “living religious experience.” Then Bely tries to

¹⁸ In addition to Florensky, two other Russian spiritual writers possessed a special experience on the basis of which they created gnostic systems: Anna Schmidt in *The Third Testament* and, much later, Daniel Andreev, the author of *The Rose of the World*.

tell Florensky about anthroposophy as a spiritual path; he wants to rethink patristic asceticism in terms of anthroposophical meanings. In both Orthodoxy and anthroposophy, writes Bely, the human heart is recognized as the main center of life. But Orthodox mysticism is seen by Bely as a “drowning” of the mind in the heart¹⁹; contrastingly anthroposophy, according to Bely, is the “free life” of the mind in the heart, where “both the heart thinks and the mind feels.”²⁰ Criticizing the “monastic school” for “hypertrophy-ing [the mind]” as well as not knowing the “cosmic meaning of Christ,” Bely, between the lines rather than directly, asks Florensky not to condemn him for his withdrawal from Orthodoxy, and pleads to support him on his new-found path.

Florensky, as was his way, responds with subtlety and conviction. In his letter there is no trace of condemning rhetoric, befitting his “duty of service in the world,” his vow of priestly “obedience.” What is strange is that Florensky writes this letter as if he knew nothing about anthroposophy (this is after he had studied a number of Steiner’s works, referring to them in the bibliography of the *Pillar*). But it seems that Florensky is sincere when he writes to his old friend: “For me, your opposition to the experience of the Oriental [on the basis of] your experience of the Anthroposophical is premature: maybe I fully accept the experience of anthroposophy, maybe I completely reject it. For me, this is simply unknown.”²¹ And when Florensky rightly objects to Bely that the heart in Orthodox asceticism is not all “feeling” only, not sensitivity alone, but special spiritual vision, then the general sad situation of a loss of agreement among parties in the 20th century is revealed. It is not clear what “mind” and “heart” are, not to mention such a thing as their “connection”; the patristic experience itself remains ambiguous. Again, as in the case of the anthroposophy controversy between Berdyaev and Turgeneva, here are the interlocutors — Bely and Florensky — speaking each from his own different spiritual world; dialogue, in principle, could not take place. “The depth of the wealth of the Wisdom of God is inscrutable,” Florensky writes Bely finally in response to the latter’s appeal about anthroposophy.

Sergei Bulgakov

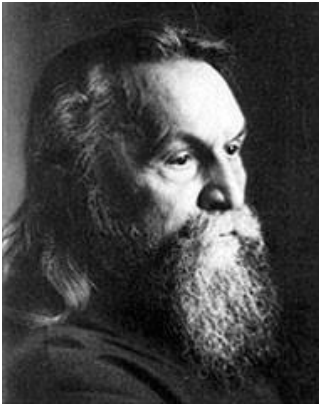
Among the Russian sophiologists, Bulgakov has a very special place: he made a grand attempt to reform the entire system of Orthodox theology, incorporating into it more fully the idea of Sophia as a creature and, especially, humanity-in-God as its basis. Bulgakov believed that the Sophiological idea was by no means foreign to Christianity but had always been present in church thought and in liturgical life as a truth, though it had not yet reached clear awareness in the ecclesiastical mind. In this context, Bulgakov developed to new lengths the doctrine of Christ (“The Lamb of God”), and the Church (“The Bride of the Lamb”), as well as the Virgin Mary (“The Burning Bush”), and the angelic world (“Jacob’s Ladder”). In addition, he raises a number of less global, but no less acute philosophical and theological problems in his sophiology. As a thinker, Bulgakov is close to the type of the metaphysician, the speculative theologian, the “pure” philosopher: he was by no means a visionary, like Solovyov, not a natural gnostic-seer, like Florensky, or an ecstatic mystic. Speaking roughly, we can say that Sophia for Bulgakov is rather a concept of platonic ontology than a subject of piercing personal significance. His deep insights into

¹⁹ One of the steps of the internal, silent prayer in Eastern Hesychasm is considered to be the “connection” of the mind with the heart (“smart-hearted prayer”). It is preceded by “smart” prayer, but the final goal of the practice is wordless “heartly” prayer.

²⁰ Letter from Andrei Bely to Florensky dated February 17, 1914.

²¹ Letter to Bely, 1914.

being, of which there are many in the works of Bulgakov, are more properly philosophical, and not of an occult character. The mental structure and style of Bulgakov are marked by a complete spiritual health that is sometimes beyond other figures of the Russian Silver Age.



Sergei Bulgakov

As a bearer himself of the “new religious consciousness,” Bulgakov wanted to combine Orthodoxy with the Sophiological basis of intuitions justifying the created world. In his works there are many gnostic notions—ascending to those of Solovyov and Florensky, and those of the ancient Gnostics. Such are the ideas about the incarnation in Mary of the “created” Sophia, about the angelic (together with the human) nature of John the Baptist (“The Friend of the Groom”), about the thousand-year kingdom of Christ (“the Apocalypse of John”), together with the “classical” Valentinian myth about the fallen and risen Sophia. Bulgakov’s thought is distinguished by its great inner freedom: in an effort to enrich Orthodox thought, he went beyond the limits of the Orthodox experience itself. His own meeting with anthroposophy was marked precisely by this desire to incorporate new gnostic intuitions into the church as a welcome additional asset, which, in the opinion of Bulgakov, only appeared to be foreign to Orthodoxy.

Otherwise, however, Bulgakov did not accept anthroposophy’s main thrust. No matter how great the freedom and breadth of his consciousness was, it was simply unthinkable to replace the native grace of small Russian churches with the Christ of “spiritual science.” The main object of his criticism of anthroposophy is Steiner’s Christology. It must be said that Bulgakov thoroughly studied the relevant lecture courses of Steiner, although he admitted that “this dance of reincarnations and co-incarnations is not easy to understand.”²² Steiner claims with his Christology to have managed to penetrate clairvoyantly into the mystery of that event which is traditionally called the Incarnation of God—the mystery of the connection of the Logos with human nature. Steiner analyzes separately the astral, etheric, and physical bodies of Christ, as well as His “I”, claiming that the fine-material bodily shells of the One Who died on the cross belonged to Buddha and Zarathustra earlier, that two Jesuses, two Marys, and two Josephs participated in the Incarnation (according to the different genealogies of the Gospels of Matthew and Luke), that the Logos who entered the body of Jesus at the baptism in Jordan, was the Solar Spirit, those whom the ancient Persians called Ahura Mazdao, Ormuzd, etc.

This picture was unacceptable for Bulgakov—and not even because of its fantastic nature and complexity: in the end, it would be fitting for a divine secret in a cataphatic mode to appear in a form that is absolutely incredible.²³ Otherwise as in the case with Berdyaev, for Bulgakov it was primarily the problem of believing in a “Doctor” declaring things that cannot be critically verified. Such faith can be nothing but superstition, and pursuing this line Bulgakov speaks about anthroposophy as “delusion,” having nothing in common with the development of Christianity, moreover asserting that Steiner must belong to the host of “false christs and false prophets.” Bulgakov does not find in anthroposophy those “treasures” of the Christian faith on which rests the life of an Orthodox person. Indeed, the Orthodox experience and the anthroposophic claim are

²² “See Christianity and Steinerianism,” in *The Resettlement of Souls*. Paris, 1935.

²³ [Ed. “Cataphatic”: having to do with knowledge of God obtained through defining God by positive statements, as opposed to “negative” terminology (i.e., “He is this”, rather than “He is not that”).]

fundamentally different. The main objection is from the point of view of the existential setting of consciousness, the appeal to the divine personal “You”. Is it at all possible to experience Christ as “You” in anthroposophy, Bulgakov objects?²⁴ Not only religious experience, but the experience of purely human communication will have it that Christ is experienced as “You”. However, in anthroposophy as a “science,” though not a “religion!”, this is not required: “internal doing” has a completely different character there. Fighting for the personal “Lord Jesus” against the anthroposophical assertion of a cosmic consciousness of “Christ Jesus,” Bulgakov fights, in essence, for the immediacy of church grace and for individual salvation in the Orthodox spiritual life.

All this, with reference to Orthodox consciousness, would be completely understandable, and there would have been no issue in connection with Bulgakov’s attitude to anthroposophy, if he had not also written a large article on “The Holy Grail,” published in the journal *The Way* (no.32) in 1932. This article is nothing but an acceptance of Steiner’s formulation of this central, sacred-mystical idea, showing the desire to incorporate it into the Orthodox consciousness! All of Steiner’s constructions—cosmological, anthropological, Christological—were undertaken for the sake of the Grail, the idea of the continued presence of Christ on Earth after the “Mystery of Golgotha,” which is to intensify in the 20th century, with His Second Coming. According to Steiner, Christ, through His blood, remained on Earth in the etheric body, in the subtle body in which he appeared to the apostle Paul, after His “ascension.” In full accordance with Steiner, Bulgakov writes:

The image of the Holy Grail, which preserves the Holy Blood, expresses the very idea that, although the Lord ascended to His heavenly abode, in the blood and water that flowed out of His side, the earth accepted His Holy relic, and the Grail is its ciborium, the whole world is this cup of the Grail ... [B]ecause of His holiness He is hidden in the world and from the world; however, he exists in it as an invisible force, and he becomes visible to a pure heart worthy of Him.

Might the idea of the Grail have come to Bulgakov from the same medieval sources as, say, to Wagner as the author of *Parsifal*? The answer is unequivocal: the “Grail” in Bulgakov’s article was adopted from Steiner’s own hands: there are two references to anthroposophy in Bulgakov’s “Holy Grail.” Bulgakov further connects his concept of the 1000-year Kingdom and the Second Coming with the meaning of the Grail. (Note also that he resolutely rejected the idea of a new manifestation of Christ on the physical plane, [i.e.] in the Euclidean world (“John’s Apocalypse”); Steiner’s influence can also be assumed here.)

Apparently, Bulgakov considered it possible to import Steiner’s idea of the Grail, a central element in what the former otherwise characterizes as Steiner’s “delusional” Christological system. For Bulgakov, not only is the image of the mysterious Grail acceptable but also its anthroposophical interpretation. But how and why did Steiner’s presentation of the Grail turn out to be so relevant to Bulgakov’s sophiology? What kind of sophiological intuitions and concepts did Bulgakov connect with this idea of the Grail? This idea was needed by Bulgakov in order to theoretically support the sophiological notion of the universal, cosmic Church embracing the whole of creation. The Savior influences the earth not only, as on the day of Pentecost, through the descent of the Holy Spirit, or in the Church through the treasure of the Eucharist: He is

²⁴ [Ed. Note that Bulgakov’s objection here conforms with Berdyaev’s, who himself could not accept the identification of Christ as a “cosmic impulse.” See above pp.30-31.]

immediately present in the whole world and, so to speak, naturally, through the divine blood and water poured out on Calvary into the earth, which thereby belong to the whole world and sanctify it. Into the earth as the Holy Grail, blood and water poured out of the Body of Christ as the real effective force and “impulse of Christ,” creating “in the visible ... the invisible Church.” Thus by accepting the idea of the Grail as extending the boundaries of the Church to all creation, the thought of the holy creature, the rising Sophia, receives additional justification. When Bulgakov writes that “The Grail is the sanctification of our human life, the fulfillment of our human history,” this relates the key thought of sophiology to the “Grail.” In spite of himself, then, Bulgakov sees a deep Sophianism in anthroposophy and, in the idea of the “Grail,” recognizes anthroposophy’s sophianic core. It is obvious that the attitude to anthroposophy of this most orthodox of the Russian sophiologists was finally dualistic. While not recognizing the doctrinal status of “spiritual science” and rejecting its form of gnostic dissection of spiritual reality, Bulgakov goes on nevertheless to expand Orthodox consciousness and Orthodox teaching by admitting distinctly anthroposophical ideas in them.

Conclusion

To conclude, let us clarify our understanding of the situation presented here. We do not in any way believe that Russian sophiology has its roots exclusively in the Gnostic tradition and that, accordingly, the only parallel for it in German culture of the 20th century was anthroposophy. This has not been our line of approach. We were rather taken with what may be described as the episode of the meeting of sophiology and anthroposophy, the intersection of two spiritual and intellectual currents that took place in history and would not have been possible without some spiritual community between them. In sophiology there is a strong gnostic principle; in anthroposophy the idea of Sophia is not alien. But anthroposophy is by no means reducible even to a special kind of sophiology, just as Russian sophiology has other spiritual sources and other western parallels. Undoubtedly, one must think, Catholicism was a powerful source. In Solovyov, according to one of the biographical accounts, there was, indeed, a transition to Catholicism, even if the next generation of sophiologists did not have this Catholic orientation.²⁵ The initial “sophianic” impulse, inaugurated in Russian thought by Solovyov, had a distinct mariological tinge, connected, it seems, with the emphasis on the mariological problem in nineteenth-century Catholic theology. For both Florensky and Bulgakov, the theme of Sophia is inseparable from the theme of Mary; if here there is gnosis, it is also mediated by the ideas of the newest Catholicism.

Russian sophiology may well be regarded as a parallel to that trend in Catholicism that was based in the ideas of Maria Immaculata, Maria Assumpta, Maria Ecclesia.²⁶ These ideas are modes of a more general idea of Maria-Sophia that was practically “legalized” by the modern Catholic Church.²⁷ Mary as a special Being, elevated above the human race and Who, together with Jesus Christ, mediates between God and man: this is how the Mother of God has been

²⁵ A supporter of universal Christianity (following Solovyov in this), Bulgakov, in his large study *At the Walls of Khersonis* (1923), sought to justify the view that the union of the Churches had already taken place, in the middle of the 15th century, at the Florence Cathedral. [However,] Bulgakov’s writings often criticize Catholic dogma—for example, the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, in the book *The Burning Dome*.

²⁶ See Monsignor Dr. Albert Rauch, “Veneration of the Mother of God in the East and in the West,” in *Millennium of the Veneration of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Russia and in Germany*, Munich/Zurich/Regensburg/Moscow, 1990.

²⁷ In the encyclical “Redemptoris Mater” of Pope John Paul II (1988), in particular, the Virgin Mary is described as “the embodiment of eternal Wisdom.”

understood both in Russian sophiology and in Catholic theology since the 19th century. In the meantime, the rejection by sophiologists of the Catholic dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin does not prevent Russian sophiology (if only in the versions of Florensky and Bulgakov) from being supplemented by contemporary Orthodox theological orientations. A striking paradox is that the Catholic theologians who discovered that a “sophiological” understanding of Mary took place already in the Middle Ages consider the Byzantine tradition to be the source of Sophian ideas!²⁸ The modern Russian theologians agree with this.²⁹ However, precisely from the sophiologists of the first half of the 20th century, the further thought came that the Orthodox liturgical veneration of the Virgin Mary contained the unspoken premise of the special mysterious community of Mary and Sophia.

So, we have named gnosis and Catholicism among the “sources” of Russian sophiology; it would be at least strange if we did not also include the Orthodox tradition in this connection. Russian sophiology is a very complicated spiritual phenomenon. The 20th century showed that one can see in it one of the trends of a new universal Christianity. “Mariology is the theology of the future” writes even an Orthodox theologian of our day.³⁰ How Orthodox forms of thought have also impeded a more fruitful intersection of Russian sophiology and anthroposophy on our common path to Sophia—this also has been a main concern of ours here.

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²⁸ Father Thomas Schipflinger believes that the famous Byzantine Akathist to the Theotokos in its artistry and theological content can be understood “only if we take Mary in the Old Testament light of Sofia as the Abode of Wisdom, the incarnation of Wisdom, as the epiphany (appearance) of Sofia.” See his *Sophia-Maria*, cited below.

²⁹ See, for example, the article by Archpriest Vladimir Ivanov, “Iconography of the Blessed Virgin Mary.”

³⁰ The Archpriest Vladimir Ivanov, “Iconography of the Blessed Virgin Mary.”

³¹ [Some of the details have been provided by Emily Michael, with thanks from the Editor.]

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Natalya Bonetskaya

The Prophetic *Bylina* and The Russian Mission

Harrie Salman

The Prophetic *Bylina*

At the beginning of the 20th century there were still men and women in the Russian North who sang *byliny*, songs of heroes from the time of Prince Vladimir of Kiev (980-1015). In 1925 a collector of traditional songs came to a village near Vologda where he found an old woman, mother Pelagea. With clairvoyant eyes, looking at the reality of the communist Soviet Union, she created a new *bylina* that was called "*How the holy mountains released from their rocky caves the mighty Russian heroes.*"¹ We will now look at its prophetic content.

After a battle against the Tatars [Tartars²] five Russian heroes were boasting of their victory. But suddenly two heavenly warriors appeared. When these were defeated by our heroes, four new warriors came. Their number doubled after every battle, so that the heroes at last fled into a mountain cave, which then closed. They could still see what happened outside: *Kriwda* (the Lie = communism) had started closing churches and killing people. The hero, Ilya of Murom³, asking forgiveness for their pride, prayed to Mary, the Mother of God, to intercede on their behalf. (In the past Russian peasants would lie down on the earth to ask Mother Earth for forgiveness.) Mary asks Christ, and He orders Michael and Jegori (the young folk spirit of Russia) and the heavenly host to go down to the holy Russian earth with Mary, its protectress:

¹ Sergej O. Prokofieff, *Die geistigen Quellen Osteuropas und die künftigen Mysterien des Heiligen Gral*, Verlag am Goetheanum, Dornach, 1989, pp.443-457.

² [Ed. "The form *Tartar* has its origins in either Latin or French, coming to Western European languages from Turkish and the Persian language." (Wikipedia)]

³ [Ed. A legendary Russian hero. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ilya_Muromets]

*And the Mother of God, Mother moist Earth, spoke:
 "O, you my mountains, my steep mountains, my high, stony, holy mountains!
 Divide, split up, burst, release my young sons, the powerful Russian heroes!
 Forgiven is their sinful boasting that they defeated the alien power.
 Wake up, my great mountains, from your deep eternal sleep!
 Liberate the ancient Russian heroes!
 The Holy Russian Earth is longing for them, the Holy Russian, my younger sister!"*

The five heroes are released and fight against *Kriwda*, a giant with one eye, crooked and lame (like the Baba Yaga) whose army is approaching like a gigantic dark cloud.⁴ They fight one month, then Jegori the Brave and the archangel Michael appear. The heroes ask them forgiveness for their sins and see them joining the battle. At one moment Jegori believes he sees Christ fighting at the side of *Kriwda*, but Michael cuts off the head of *Kriwda* and then [this presumed] "Christ" turns into a roaring lion, into the Antichrist. The battle is won, but the heroes and Jegori recognise that they cannot conquer him. Again they pray to Mary for the liberation of the holy Russian earth from the evil Antichrist. And Mary asks Christ:



Icon of Michael, the Horseman

*The Mother of God asks her beloved child:
 "O my child, my beloved, Saviour of humankind,
 Tell me, reveal to me, hasn't the time come to cut off the head of the Antichrist?
 Has the hour not arrived that he leaves the Holy Russian Earth,
 To deliver the orthodox Russian nation from all torments?
 Isn't it time for the Russian people to do its work, to recover through its labour?
 To purify itself from its sins, to build churches for God and to thank God, its Lord?"*

Christ replies that the time to kill the Antichrist has not come yet but that he will at least leave the holy Russian earth. The Antichrist turns into a huge dark raven, covering the whole land with his wings. The archangel Michael has to expel him, but he falls down on Michael. The Russian heroes begin to doubt, but Jegori admonishes them, saying that the Antichrist will indeed leave the holy Russian earth, that great joy will come to it, and mercy and consolation to the Russian orthodox people.

The Russian Double

With the prophetic vision of Pelagea we are no longer in the world of tales and stories of initiation from the past; rather we witness the spiritual war around the birth of the 6th post-Atlantean culture. We are at the threshold of the future, and we can see the dangers that threaten the Land of Holy Sophia. The first threat is connected with pride. The heroes fall victim to a luciferic temptation; then they repent and fight more consciously against *Kriwda* who is waging

⁴ [Ed. Baba Yaga: "a supernatural being (or one of a trio of sisters of the same name) who appears as a deformed or ferocious-looking woman." — Wikipedia]

war against humanity. Communism is just one stage in this war. The second threat is the [broader] satanic (ahrimanic) lie, the denial of the spirit, that is tempting [all of] humankind. The activities of *Kriwda* then go into the next, a third stage in Russia — this after 1991 (and not only in Russia!). Pelagea can look through this enemy and perceives the Antichrist, who wants to destroy the impulse of Love that Christ brought. Mary herself comes to our aid together with the Russian folk spirit, Michael, and a still greater heavenly host to protect Russia. The Antichrist will be driven out of Russia (in the future), but it is still too early to destroy him.

These three threats to humanity can only have their destructive effect when we allow them to enter into our souls. They enter through our weaknesses and imperfections, where our luciferic, ahrimanic, and karmic doubles find nourishment and ways to cut us off from our higher being. The rise of communism, but also of fascism, nazism, nationalism, *and then technocracy* in the 20th century, gives us a revealing insight into the national and global levels of the temptations to humanity.

In Russia a few hundred determined bolsheviks led by Lenin could seize power in 1917 by utilising the chaos caused by Russia's participation in the First World War. In fact the Russian czar Nikolai could have prevented the war, but he was too weak to resist his proud generals and the English interest groups who wanted this war. The group around Lenin was driven by materialistic ideas and, as Rudolf Steiner said, possessed by dark elementary beings of a decadent, shamanistic Siberian origin.⁵ The Russian Revolution was made by poor workers and soldiers, but above all by criminals, alcoholics, beggars, and others whose double was manipulated to produce hatred against the well-off, and by the envy of the misfits towards the successful. In Russia it was (and still is!) rather normal to burn the house of a neighbour who is more resourceful than others. But above all, the bolsheviks abused the ideals of brotherhood that live in the Russian soul to create a society of anti-brotherhood.

The present Russian government itself knows how to manipulate the souls of the masses with state propaganda. The state ideology serves this purpose by giving food to the luciferic double in the Russian soul. Its pillars are: 1. Coalition with the Russian Orthodox Church: only Orthodoxy is the true Christianity; 2. Russia has a unique civilisation that is threatened by the decadent Western culture; 3. Russia has always been a victim of outside forces (which means that it is not to blame for its own problems); 4. The future of Russia is not in Europe but in Asia. In this way Russia isolates itself from the rest of Europe, in order to protect its mission.

But does it really know its mission?

The Russian Soul and its Mission

Rudolf Steiner spoke very positively about the deeply Christian qualities of the Russians. In his view the Russian nation is to be the future “nation of Christ,” preparing a culture of love and brotherhood. He pointed out that Eastern Europeans have a direct relationship to the Christ impulse as it “drips” into their souls: “Christ is continuously present as an inner aura pervading this nation’s thinking and feeling,” Steiner said.⁶ He characterised the mood of the Russian soul as an “invincible Grail mood.”⁷ This can be understood in such a way that Russian Christianity

⁵ Rudolf Steiner, lecture of 15.7.1923, in *CW*, nr.225.

⁶ Rudolf Steiner, lecture of 2.11.1918, in *CW*, nr.185.

⁷ Rudolf Steiner, lecture of 3.11.1918, in *CW*, nr.185.

expresses itself in qualities like spiritual sensitivity, compassion, patience, willingness to sacrifice, and purity of heart. However, the Russian soul is not yet conscious of itself. It needs the aspect of the consciousness soul. For this soul-development a “spiritual marriage” has to take place between Central Europe and Russia, Steiner said.⁸ As a result of this connection, the 6th post-Atlantean culture, the culture of the Spirit-Self in which [hu]man[kind] will connect with [its] higher being, can unfold. That will be around the year 3574.

Russia has passed for centuries through dark times, and the end of the road is not visible yet. What it has experienced can be understood as trials on the path of development to being the Christ’s nation. Its national consciousness has a deeply religious character, as can be seen in the way Russian writers and philosophers have spoken about its mission, defined by Fyodor Dostoevsky (1821-1881) as the “Russian Idea.” He saw Russia as “the nation that carries God within.” Russia will reconcile the nations and unite humanity in brotherly love; it strives for the universal human and wants to serve humanity.

Vladimir Solovyov and Sophia

Dostoevsky’s vision of a worldwide brotherhood in the name of Christ inspired the philosopher Vladimir Solovyov (1853-1900) to define the Russian Idea as the transformation of society into a Church, in the sense of a community that realizes Christian ideals. The Russian nation, he said, carries within its soul an image of Christ. Moreover, what we note especially of the Russian nation is the further association of Christ with Sophia as Her own distinct Being. Solovyov had as a child during a church service a vision of a Being that he experienced as Sophia, the Wisdom of God. She is known from the Wisdom books in the Old Testament. In the theology of the Greek Orthodox Church and the other Churches, Sophia is considered a quality of Christ, but in Russia the Wisdom of God is seen in connection with Mary. The Russian Sophia churches are dedicated to Mary: here She is Mary-Sophia.⁹



The Novgorod Sophia, Russian Icon

⁸ Steiner, lecture of 12.3.1916, in CW, nr.174b.

⁹ In Russian and Ukrainian orthodox Christianity, “Holy Sophia the Wisdom of God” is associated with Mary. The Novgorod icon is an icon of Holy Sophia, the wisdom of God. Above Holy Sophia is an image of Christ and above Him God the Father. This is usual, but it does not mean that Sophia is a quality of Christ. [Ed. See, also, Thomas Schipflinger: “this particular icon has traditionally been interpreted Christologically ... Pavel Florensky, however, interprets the icon Mariologically and says the following: ‘We see here the wonderful icon of God’s Sophia, the icon of His most pure Mother ... This icon shows us the ineffable purity of the most Holy Mother of God’s virginity; above Her Christ sits on a throne, God’s Logos, who loved this Sophia and willed to be born of Her according to the flesh.’ Following Florensky, the icon is interpreted to reflect Sophia’s individual identity, which is separate from Christ, and her incarnational relationship to Mary. It can be said to depict both the pre-incarnational and incarnational appearances of Sophia and Christ. Sophia on the throne with Christ above Her depict them in their pre-incarnational forms ... and Mary with the Child depicts their incarnational existence. John the Baptist bears witness to them.” From *Sophia-Maria A Holistic Vision of Creation*, York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 1998, pp.281-282.]

At the age of 22 Solovyov was studying in the Library of the British Museum in London, when he had a second meeting with Sophia. She told him to go to Egypt where he had a third vision in the desert during a sunrise. Solovyov studied the early Christian traditions and works of later mystics about Sophia and developed his views into a Sophiology, a teaching on Holy Sophia. This new tradition was continued in Russia by the orthodox priests Pavel Florensky and Sergei Bulgakov, but also by the anthroposophist and hermetic philosopher Valentin Tomberg, who was born in Russia.

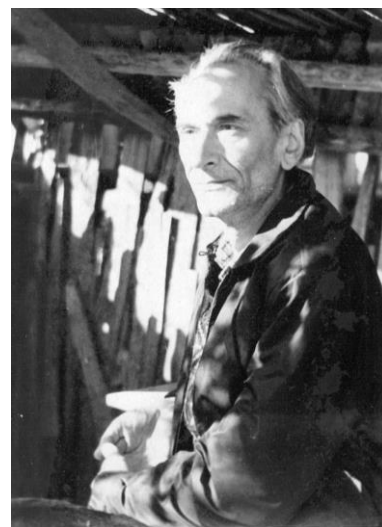
Florensky wrote about the *sofinost dushi*, the Sophia quality of the soul. In his view, saints had this quality that he defined as purity of heart or inner virginity. This can be achieved through inner work. In the tradition of Sophiology, Holy Sophia is seen as the female counterpart of God. She was incarnated in Mary, the mother of Jesus. Rudolf Steiner confirmed this view that we already find in the work of the German mystic Jakob Boehme. According to Steiner, this incarnation took place at Pentecost in the year 33. As a result of this, Mary-Sophia could in the circle of the apostles receive the Holy Spirit, which appeared then as tongues of fire over the heads of the individual apostles. In the tradition of Western esoteric Christianity the purified astral body that can (within the pure consciousness soul) receive the Holy Spirit (or Spirit-Self) was called "Virgin Sophia."¹⁰ Here we see that both Western and Russian esoteric traditions connect the purification of the soul with Sophia.

Valentin Tomberg further elaborated this tradition by placing the Divine Mother (the created world) next to God the Father (the Creator), Sophia (the Wisdom of creation, the Soul of the world) next to Christ (the fire of the Word/Logos) as the Bride and the Lamb of the *Book of the Apocalypse*, and the Holy Soul (the creator of community) next to the Holy Spirit (the Enlightener who leads humanity to higher consciousness).¹¹

Daniel Andreev on the Rose of the World

In a Soviet prison the writer and mystic Daniel Andreev (1906-1959) received an incredible revelation of spiritual wisdom that he wrote down in his book *The Rose of the World*. This is his name for the Christian Church of the future, which will unite all religions of Light under the inspiration of the spiritual being Zventa Sventana. Her name means *The Brightest of the Bright, the Holiest of the Holy*, and is another appellation for Holy Sophia. The principal task of the *Rose of the World* will be, according to Andreev, to save human souls from being spiritually enslaved by the coming Antichrist, and to bring them together in a united humanity.

Zventa Sventana is approaching the earth and will bring a culture of femininity, of feminine values that will bring the oneness of our masculine civilisation into balance. "She will never incarnate physically ..., but will be born in Heavenly Russia and assume human form. She will not be our queen or goddess, but she will be Light, divine grace and celestial beauty," wrote



Daniel Andreev, on leaving prison
Photo by Alla Andreev, 1958

¹⁰ Rudolf Steiner, lecture of 31.5.1908, in CW, nr.103.

¹¹ *Meditations on the Tarot*, New York: Tarcher Penguin, 2002.

Andreev.¹² Heavenly Russia is an etheric temple in the spiritual world (called a *zatomis*). It is the inspirational center of Russian culture, where its enlightened individuals are gathered to continue their spiritual work. Among the many *zatomis* is also Monsalvat, the heavenly land of Northwestern Europe. [Ed. Note the further comment on this below.]

According to Andreev, the preparation of the coming of Zventa Sventana began at the end of the 18th century, which is some 600 years before the beginning of the astrological age of Aquarius in 2375. Robert Powell, a specialist in astrosophy, situates the departure of Sophia from the Galactic Center towards the Earth in the year 1775. The culture of Aquarius, the new culture of Holy Sophia, will begin after two more cycles of 600 years, around 3574, when She will enter into the aura of the earth.¹³

Three Gates to the Future Culture

The culture of Holy Sophia that will unfold in Russia needs a preparation that will not only come from Russia itself. From three other directions spiritual forces are working towards the culture of Sophia—from Central Europe, Bulgaria, and Scandinavia/Finland. These are three other gates from the present 5th post-Atlantean epoch to the next, the 6th.

One of these spiritual forces can be identified as anthroposophy. This is the Central European stream that can lead to the spiritualisation of intelligence, connecting the intellect in the brain with the intelligence of the heart. This implies the development of higher forms of consciousness (imaginative, inspirative, and intuitive) that enable us to communicate with spiritual beings and cooperate with them in all fields of human life. The path of anthroposophy requires the development of the soul qualities of the consciousness soul, inner work of meditation, the transformation of our double and social consciousness, so that we can connect with our higher being in a conscious way. We may call this *the Knowledge aspect of the Spirit-Self* [the Higher Self]. The anthroposophy that has been developed until now is only a part of what is necessary for the preparation of the new culture. For many students anthroposophy remains on the level of the intellect. It is still far away from having created “mystery centers” where people can communicate with the spiritual world in full consciousness. We should bear in mind that for Rudolf Steiner “anthroposophy begins in every case at the scientific level, calls art to the enlivening of its concepts, and ends in a religious deepening.”¹⁴ Only then can we connect with the being Anthro-Sophia.

The second force comes from the School of the White Brotherhood, founded in Bulgaria by Peter Deunov a century ago. He worked together with the Folk Spirit of Bulgaria who, according to a message he received from Him in 1898, is also responsible for the preparation of the 6th post-Atlantean culture.¹⁵ The teaching that Deunov brought leads to the education of the heart and to the development of a higher consciousness. His lectures were Christ-centred and his approach was highly artistic and indeed *sophianic*, leading to the opening of the soul to Christ *and* Sophia.

¹² Daniel Andreev, *The Rose of the World*, Great Barrington, MA: Lindisfarne Books, 2014, p.178.

¹³ Robert Powell and Estelle Isaacson, *The Mystery of Sophia*, pp.116-131.

¹⁴ Rudolf Steiner, lecture of 30.1.1923, in *CW*, nr.257.

¹⁵ *Peter Deunov: Prophet of the New Age*, ed. Harrie Salman, Sofia: Bialo Bratstvo Publishers, 2014.



The Master Peter Deunov leading in prayer

Its methods nourish the etheric body and the soul, and support the purification of the soul. They include the sacred dance of paneurythmy, singing, playing music, staying in camps in the mountains, studying nature, praying, meditating on Bible texts, creating community. This approach speaks to the feminine, artistic and religious soul of the Slavic people. We may call it *the Love aspect of the Spirit-Self*.

The third force has to come out of Northern Europe. In the Middle Ages the Swedes brought the social order as well as the ego-consciousness that the Slavic and Finnic tribes needed in their social life and in their psychic life. Especially today a new ordering

of social and psychic life is necessary in a fundamentally pathological society with many forms of pathological inner life. The Finns should be playing a role in the preparation of the new culture, of which they will be a part. Finland owes the awakening of its national identity in the 19th century to the good will of Czar Alexander I, who conquered Finland from Sweden and gave it autonomy in 1809. This act made the development of their national consciousness possible. The Finns can do something in return. Valentin Tomberg described how the Russians have a subjective connection with the world around them, while the Finns have an objective connection with it.¹⁶ They will help to focus *the Will aspect of the Spirit-Self*. Many Russians do not stand with their feet on the ground of daily reality. They live in luciferic illusions. They could receive help from the Finns and Scandinavians to rebuild their agriculture, their education, their medical system. But above all they need a connection with Vidar, the archangel of the Nordic world, to overcome the influence of *Kriwda* (the ahrimanic lie), and to work with him to bring the germs of the new culture to fruition.

The New Balto-Finno-Slavic Culture of Holy Sophia

The Hyperborea of the Greek writers, the land of the sun god Apollo, could be found in the network of initiation centers in the North of Europe. This network existed until about 1000 years ago, until the arrival of Roman and Greek Christianity. The Hyperborea of today is in the etheric world. Its centers are the Grail temple Monsalvat; the home of Vidar; the land of Kalevala; and the *zatomis* of Heavenly Russia (also described as the Invisible City of Kitezh¹⁷). These centers inspire individuals and groups who search for the Holy Grail, who connect with Vidar in his mission on behalf of the Etheric Christ, who are building the new *sampo*, and who search for Heavenly Russia by preparing the new Sophianic culture. More generally we may call this the new Balto-Finno-Slavic culture of Holy Sophia. The Hyperborea of the future will be in the land of the 6th culture of Holy Sophia in the Northeast of Europe and, in fact, everywhere where groups of people are connected with her inspirations.

¹⁶ Valentin Tomberg, "Das Finnentum im russischen Geistesleben" (originally published in 1931), in Valentin Tomberg, *Gesammelte Aufsätze*, Taisersdorf: Achamoth Verlag, 2013; also "The Finnish impulse in Russian spiritual life" in Valentin Tomberg, *Russian Spirituality and Other Essays*, San Rafael, CA: LogoSophia, 2010.

¹⁷ [Ed. For more on the Invisible City of Kitezh, see Sergei O. Prokofieff *The Spiritual Origins of Eastern Europe and the Future Mysteries of the Holy Grail*, tr. Simon Blaxland-de-Lange. Forest Row, UK: Temple Lodge Publishing, 1993, rpt, 2016, pp.106-107 and 111-117. Note that the German edition of this book is cited above in footnote 1.]

Further Notes on Monsalvat, Vidar, and Kalevala

The Grail castle of Monsalvat appeared for the first time in the etheric world above Titurel's fortress in Galicia.

As for Vidar: this Nordic archangel works with the wisdom of the Germanic spiritual traditions that lives in the souls of people in Northern Europe, and he will connect this with modern spiritual science. He will especially bring to fruition, in the second half of the present epoch of the consciousness soul, the prophetic germs of the coming culture. Rudolf Steiner said about Vidar that he will drive away the remnants of old clairvoyance and awaken the forces of the new clairvoyance. He will provide the etheric form in which the etheric Christ will appear again. Even in the 20th century, Vidar, "who is common to us all in North and Central Europe," gave people the ability to see Christ.¹⁸

The great epic poem of the *Kalevala* contains the visions of Finnish seers, presented in a powerful, magical, and imaginative language, with a message that has an important educational value—not only for the Finns, but for European culture and humanity in general. In Steiner's view, this message has a similar value for the development of the consciousness soul as the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* had for the education of the intellectual soul in Greek and Roman culture. The publication of the *Kalevala* was very important for the formation of Finnish national consciousness in the 19th century, when Finland was no longer a part of Sweden, but an autonomous part of Russia. The central theme of the *Kalevala* is the forging and the loss of the *sampo*, a magical object made of the most subtle etheric energies (imagined as a swan's feather, milk, a barley grain, sheep wool in the summer). Rudolf Steiner saw in the *sampo* an image of the human etheric body.¹⁹ He explained why the *sampo* had to disappear for a while. When the etheric body had been made, it took time before it could work in human beings and bear fruit in the life of the soul. Steiner does not say why it had to break into pieces. But when we see the *sampo* as a collective etheric body, then obviously everybody had to receive a part. The forging of a new *sampo*, which is promised at the end of the *Kalevala*, will be the creation of a universal etheric body in humanity as a whole.

The Mission of Finland

Finland has a special etheric quality of purity that is connected with the powerful forces of nature and its geographical position near or within the Polar Circle. It is exposed to much sunlight in the long days of the summer and to the electro-magnetic field of the sun. In a magical way it carries the memory of the Hyperborean Age when the sun was still connected with the earth.

Until recently most Finnish people did not think intellectually; they thought with their heart and received imaginations, inspirations, and intuitions from the spiritual world. Far away from European intellectual life, they lived in a world where the Fall into sin, the separation from our spiritual origins, had not progressed so much. They experienced God in nature; they felt the closeness of spiritual beings and received their help. We may call this a life in the atmosphere of the Nathanic Soul of Jesus (the pure and innocent soul of the Jesus child of the gospel of St. Luke, that came from paradise). This atmosphere is still especially strong in Finland at Christmas time, although this atmosphere altered dramatically in the 20th century, especially after 1989 when

¹⁸ Rudolf Steiner, lecture of 17.10.1910.

¹⁹ Rudolf Steiner, lecture of 9.4.1912, in CW, nr.158.

Finland embraced modern technology more than before. People are losing their connection with the world of the *Kalevala*, but still their connection with nature is very strong.

Where this connection is still felt, the Finnish people are linked to the etheric land of Kalevala whence the inspirations for the forging of the new *sampo* come and where the contribution of Finnish culture to the future of humanity is guarded. For Rudolf Steiner the reason the Finns still exist as a nation is related to the preservation and the renewal of the spiritual culture that was achieved through the publication of the epic poem, the *Kalevala*, and the effects of its authentic language, which even today is ready to be in the service of European culture and humanity. It is still possible to keep the imaginations that are reflected in this work alive, by consciously relating to nature as a spiritual being, by speaking the Finnish language in all its richness, by being inspired by the artistic expressions of the Finnish folk soul. This can contribute to preserving the “living memory of the past” and the “conscience of the European East,” as Steiner said.

Yet another part of the Finnish culture that is rooted in the past but directed to the future, is connected with the *sampo*. One can surmise that it broke into pieces to give every Finn his/her own etheric body. In the future a new *sampo* has to be forged, not for a nation but for humanity, so that it can unite in a spiritual culture. The European North is a place of cultural memory but also the territory of the future. As we saw, Finland owes the awakening of its national identity to the good will of Czar Alexander I. We may expect that in the future Finland will return this blessing to Russia. During the Cold War Finland was a bridge between the West and the Soviet Union; in the future it can become a bridge to the 6th culture that should develop in the land of Holy Sophia, which we are moving towards now.

Building Bridges, East and West¹

Harrie Salman

In the people of the East but especially in Russia, Steiner said, lives a Grail “mood” of making connection with the spiritual world. There is a deep, “instinctive” religious disposition in the Eastern soul to connect with Christ that creates the conditions for a new culture of love and community. This disposition must be brought to consciousness, and precisely this is what Peter Deunov was striving to do. He did not speak openly about the Grail, but in his teaching he was helping his disciples to work on their human Grail, their “soul Grail.”

This Grail metaphor does not exhaust the qualifications we can attribute to the teachings of Peter Deunov. In his speech to Russian members of the Theosophical Society in 1912, Steiner spoke of their task to “ensoul the spiritual,” to “breathe soul into the spirit,” to connect heart and mind.² In Western culture the opposite takes place, we bring too much mind into the soul, so that it loses its liveliness. Thinking should be creative and imbued with heart forces, warmth, life, and morality before we can call it spiritual. Only then can we bring the Being Anthroposophia to life in us. Our thoughts should not only be Michaelic, but also Sophianic, connected with the being of

¹ [Ed. Reprinted from the Easter 2019 issue of *Starlight*, from pp.62-65.]

² Rudolf Steiner, lecture of 11.4.1912, in CW, nr.136.

Sophia. The rigid, intellectual thought forms of the West must be enlivened with the soul fire from the East, Steiner said. This we can learn from the Teacher Peter Deunov from the East. While the Grail stream connected with the Celtic folk soul in the West, the Sophia stream moved to the East. From Ephesus, where Maria Sophia, the mother of Jesus, lived with her new “son,” John, this stream entered into the lands of the Slavs, as far as the so-called “Land of Holy Sophia” in Northern Russia. This stream prepared the future culture, which we can also call the culture of Sophia. The heavenly Sophia, the consort of Christ, has her counterpart in man, in our purified soul. In the Western Grail tradition we may speak of the “soul Grail,” but in the Eastern Sophia tradition we may also speak of this purified astral body as our “Holy Sophia” that can receive the Holy Spirit.³

The soul needs to be nourished, enlivened, ennobled, elevated, and purified, and needs to develop love and wisdom. It also needs art and religion. A rather intellectual Anthroposophy does not offer such food to the soul. Steiner’s intention was different; in 1923 he remarked:

So we may say that anthroposophy begins in every case at the scientific level, calls art to the enlivening of its concepts, and ends in a religious deepening. It begins with what the head can grasp, takes on all the life and colour of which words are capable, and ends in warmth that suffuses and reassures the heart, so that man’s soul can at all times feel itself in the spirit, its true home. We must learn, on the anthroposophical path, to start with knowledge, then to lift ourselves to the level of artistry, and to end in the warmth of religious feeling.⁴

Many people feel that in Anthroposophy there is not enough art (even though there are mystery dramas, eurythmy, painting, and other artistic activities), and not enough religion (this field was relegated to the Christian Community). But we have to mention the Sophianic Movement developing out of the Sophia Foundation of North America in which science, art, and religion come together. In the school of Peter Deunov these three fields were never separated. Where they come together, the I awakens, the soul rejoices, the etheric body is harmonized, and the physical body rejuvenates. All the activities from his school are truly nourishing, ennobling, and purify the soul; they can all be called Sophianic, being in the service of the Divine and the human Sophia. Peter Deunov himself did not speak about Sophia as the All-Wisdom of God, as it was not part of Bulgarian spiritual tradition. But he spoke of “the Divine Mother as the essence of all living things in the world.”⁵ She is Nature, the feminine face of God.

Steiner and Deunov had different missions and were working in cultural settings in which different concepts were used and people had different needs of inner development. Nevertheless they were both preparing the new culture, from different angles. After a century, the cultural settings have changed, and a *renewal* of spiritual impulses is necessary. Anthroposophy has in many ways become rather dogmatic and intellectual. Valentin Tomberg and others have been victims of these tendencies. In a new orientation that is taking place now, the Grail roots of Western European spirituality and the Sophia roots of Eastern European spirituality are being rediscovered and *brought into a further relation to each other*. The methods of Peter Deunov greatly help to heal the one-sidedness of the Anthroposophical Movement. A good number of Bulgarians

³ Rudolf Steiner, lecture of 31.5.1908, in CW, nr.103.

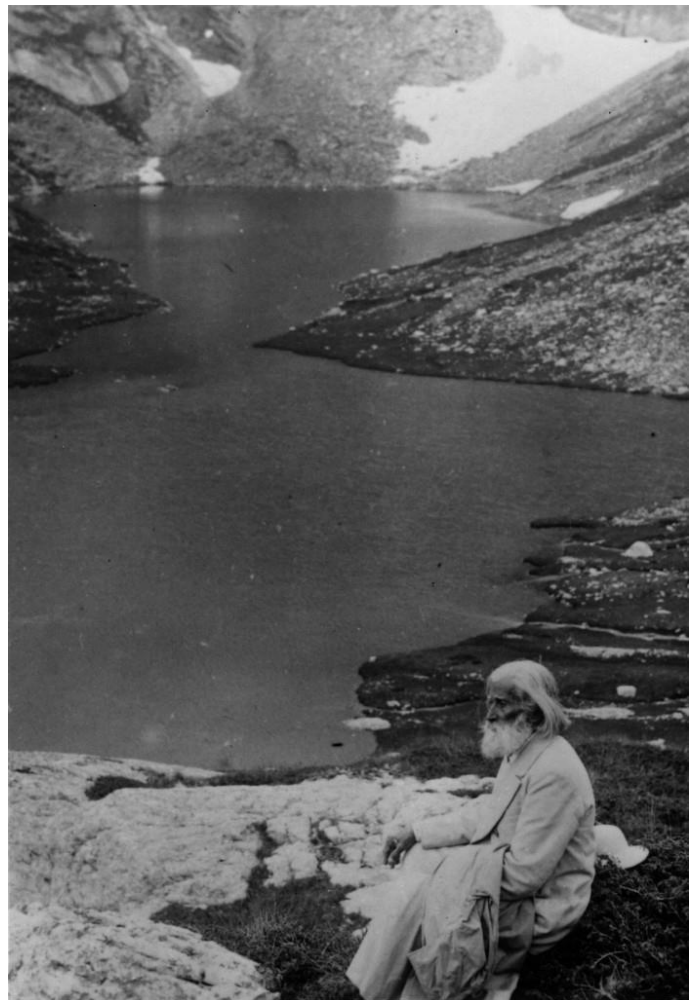
⁴ Rudolf Steiner, second lecture of 30.1.1923, in CW, nr.257.

⁵ Beinsa Douno, *The Woman – Source of Love and Life*, tr. Antoaneta Krushevskia and Ernestina Staleva, Sofia: Byalo Bratstvo Publishers, 2001, pp.18-19.

from Deunov's School emigrated to Western Europe and have spread his ideas, among them, perhaps most famously, Mikhaël Aïvanhov (1900-1986), who left Bulgaria in 1937 and founded the Universal White Brotherhood in France.⁶ As a result of Ivanov's activities affiliated associations or groups were founded in about 40 countries. After the fall of communism in 1989 Deunov became a well-known figure again; his books are today available in every bookshop in the country, and with time more and more of his basic texts are being translated into English. On the other side of this great meeting of East and West, also in the circles of the Bulgarian White Brotherhood the works of Rudolf Steiner are studied because many Bulgarians today have developed a more intellectual approach. Peter Deunov was already supporting the translation of lectures of Steiner into Bulgarian in his own day. Boyan Boev was involved in this. There also is an Anthroposophical Society in Bulgaria, with about a hundred members, that is taking care of the translation of Steiner's lectures today.

In the spiritual world Anthroposophy and the school of the White Brotherhood have the same source in the White Lodge.

Anthroposophy originates in the School of Michael within the White Lodge. The school of the White Brotherhood in Bulgaria does not represent the fullness of inspirations coming from Christ and his White Lodge. Its activities manifest a Sophianic aspect of these inspirations, as the Anthroposophical Movement expresses a Michaelic aspect. Both aspects belong together in the spiritual world as faces of the Christ impulse. The modern Sophianic Movement, as supported by the Sophia Foundation of North America, may well be a bridge between these two aspects that has been under construction ever since the work of Valentin Tomberg began to be championed again, thanks in large part to the efforts of Robert Powell...



Peter Deunov in the Rila Mountains

⁶ In his autobiographical reflections (see *A Living Book: Autobiographical Reflections I*, Fréjus: Prosveta, 2011), Mikhaël Aïvanhov wrote: "He asked me to go to France to preserve his teaching, which he suspected would be forbidden in Bulgaria" (p.164). And this indeed happened, in 1945.

The Grail of ChristoSophia¹

Cynthia Avens²

The Holy Grail, as a symbol which connects the ancient wisdom of the pagan past and the mysteries of Christianity, is a key to the new mythos that is emerging in our culture. In our current age, when many people no longer find spiritual vitality within the traditional symbols of Christianity, it is especially important to turn to the Grail for the numinous power that it retains. Historically the Grail has occupied a paradoxical position within Christianity, for although the Christian church never embraced the Grail in its formal doctrines, nevertheless this symbol has played a very significant role in the esoteric traditions of Christianity. As Carl Jung has pointed out, the orthodox Christian concept of deity in its Trinitarian form does not provide an image of wholeness because it excludes the feminine and the dark side of God.³ However, we now find ourselves in a time when our cultural myths and symbols are undergoing major transformation. It is the Grail which can provide the much needed symbol for a revitalized Christian mythos for it integrates the feminine aspect of God with the masculine, thereby including nature and also the dark side of existence in its image of the Divine.

The source of Christian versions of the Grail motif is found in earlier pagan Celtic mythology, which emphasizes the feminine aspect of the Grail. A primary image of the Grail in Celtic mythology is the magical cauldron of the Goddess. The cauldron is a deeply feminine image because all that it provides—nourishment, rebirth, intuition, and wisdom—are functions of the feminine. The guardians of the Grail in its form of cauldron or cup are also feminine in Celtic mythology, representing the Goddess of the Land who is called Sovereignty. She is often depicted in her role as the Black Goddess, and the quest of the Celtic hero results in marriage to her. This represents the Sacred Marriage, the union of the King and the Land as Sovereignty, and the integration of the masculine and the feminine which results in the fruitfulness of body and soul.⁴



Celtic Sovereignty Goddess

The tragedy which results from the disruption of this sacred union is recounted in "The Elucidation," a medieval tale which has particular significance for our modern day. The Realm of Logres (Britain) is depicted originally as a paradise in which the inner and outer worlds are in harmony. Sacred wells and

¹ See <http://www.christosophia.org/essaysthegrailofthechristosophia.html>

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³ Emma Jung and Marie-Louise Von Franz, *The Grail Legend* (Boston: Sigo Press, 1986), p.102.

⁴ Caitlin Matthews, *Sophia: Goddess of Wisdom* (London: Mandala, 1991), pp.208-211.

springs in the land are attended by maidens who offer a golden cup to all travelers which provides whatever food and drink are desired. The golden cup is a form of the Grail as a limitless source of sustenance, which parallels the plenitude of nature to be found in this paradisaical world. This condition of blessed abundance is disrupted, however, when the evil King Amangons rapes one of the well-maidens and steals her golden cup. The result of this abuse of patriarchal power is that the maidens of the wells, guardians of the Grail, go into hiding and are seen no more. The loss of the "voices of the wells"⁵ causes the Realm of Logres to become a barren wasteland where the waters dry up and all growth withers. The quest of the Grail hero is to seek the Court of Joy so that the waters will flow freely and the Earth will be made green again. It appears that this can only be accomplished by re-establishing the union between the King and the Goddess of the Land.

We find ourselves today in the land which has lost the maidens of the wells. When the golden cup of the Grail was stolen, the experience of wholeness was lost. The rape of the well-maidens caused a disruption of the harmony between the masculine and feminine, and consequently between the outer and the inner worlds. This theme reflects the development of patriarchal consciousness in Western culture, which is mirrored in the rise of organized Christianity. The suppression of the feminine voice in Western culture parallels the loss of the feminine dimension of the Divine in the orthodox Christian concept of God.

During the Middle Ages there was a brief reappearance of the feminine, as the "voices of the wells" were heard in the love songs of the troubadours and in the Grail tales of the poets. Because of the predominance of the Christian church in society at this time, many of the legends of the Grail which were written in the late 12th and early 13th centuries were strongly influenced by Christianity. However, much of this influence actually came from the traditions of Celtic Christianity through which percolated the earlier pagan Celtic images of the Grail, and Gnostic Christianity with its feminine representations of the Divine. As Emma Jung suggests, the rapid development of the Grail mythology during the Middle Ages and its immense popularity were due to the psychological need "to complete the Christ-image by the addition of features which had not been taken sufficiently into account by ecclesiastical tradition."⁶ Thus the symbol of the Grail as it reappeared to the Christian populace of the West in the Middle Ages was an attempt by the psyche to integrate the polarities of good and evil, masculine and feminine, spirit and nature that had been split apart in institutional Christianity. Under the influence of Christianity the Grail as Celtic cauldron was transformed into the cup which was used by Christ at the Last Supper and subsequently the chalice of the Eucharist. This new image of the Grail as a relic of



The Maidens of the Wells

⁵ *Ibid.*, p.216.

⁶ Jung and Von Franz, p.104.

Christ's blood appeared for the first time in the story "Joseph of Arimathea" which was part of the "Roman de L'Estoire dou Graal," a trilogy attributed to the Burgundian poet Robert de Boron.⁷

This tale begins with the story told in the apocryphal *Gospel of Nicodemus*. While Christ still hangs from the Cross, Joseph of Arimathea goes to Pontius Pilate and obtains rights over Christ's body as well as the cup that He had used during the Last Supper. With this cup Joseph catches the blood which flows from Christ's wounds and takes this cup to his home. Subsequently Joseph prepares Christ's body for burial in his own tomb. When the Jewish authorities discover that Christ's body has disappeared from the grave, they throw Joseph into prison. In de Boron's version, Christ appears to him while he is imprisoned and brings him the Grail cup, informing him that he is to be its guardian and instructing him in the symbolism of the Mass. Joseph remains there for forty-two years, during which time he is sustained physically and spiritually by the Grail. After his release the holy relic which contains the blood of Christ is brought to Britain, where legend says it remains hidden to this day.

Thus the representation of the Grail as the vessel of the Goddess was transformed into the primary Christian image of the Grail as the chalice containing the redemptive blood of Christ. The same symbolism is seen in Robert de Boron's "Joseph of Arimathea" as in the Celtic stories of death and rebirth from the cauldron of the Mother Goddess. Her Grail symbolizes both the womb and the tomb, for it is She who initiates the cycles of life, death, and rebirth. The Grail of Christ possesses a similar meaning, for it contains the blood which flowed from His wounds and thus represents His death on the cross. But the chalice that contains the sacrificial blood of Christ becomes the womb which gives new life to the faithful during the ritual of the Eucharist. The central sacrament of Christianity is based on this mystery of the Grail. From ancient times blood as the principle of life has been thought to possess magical qualities. It has often been identified with the soul, the essence of life. Thus the Eucharistic chalice which contains the blood of Christ has such numinous power because it in effect holds within it the "soul-substance" of Christ, the essence through which He mystically continues to live.⁸ The Christian who drinks from this chalice partakes of the essence of Christ and is therefore able to participate in the resurrected life. The meaning of the Grail of Christ as a vessel for salvation, however, lies much deeper than simply physical immortality. For ultimately the Grail is a "vessel of spiritual transformation."⁹ Drinking from the chalice of Christ's blood in the Eucharistic ritual brings about a spiritual renewal that has its analogue in the knights who succeed in their quest for the Grail.

The similarity of imagery associated with Christ and the pagan Celtic Goddess demonstrates that the feminine aspects of the Divine which were suppressed in the mainstream Christian Church re-emerged through the symbolism of the Grail. Also in the eastern traditions of Christianity there is a figure of the Divine Feminine which was lost to the Church over time. Her name is Sophia. She is the personification of divine Wisdom. A major task of the Grail seeker today who quests for the Grail of Christ is to bring Sophia forth from Her hiding places within Christian tradition.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p.315.

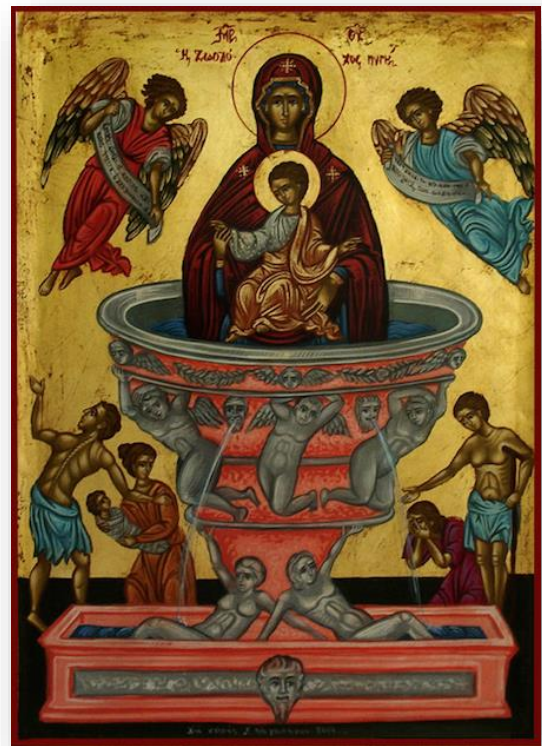
⁸ *Ibid.*, p.156.

⁹ Erich Neumann, *The Great Mother* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), p.326.

This quest must begin within Judaism, for this is where the roots of the Christian concept of the Deity are found. The role of Sophia is seen most clearly in the Wisdom literature of the Hebrew Bible and the Apocrypha, where She is variously recognized as the first creation of God, as co-creator and mediator between God and the world, and as the emanation of divine joy and goodness throughout all creation. This Sophianic theme was understood and further developed by those Jews who became Christians in the first centuries following Christ's resurrection. The concept of the Word (Logos) linked with Wisdom (Sophia) was a tradition in the Wisdom theology of Judaism prior to the birth of Jesus. The earliest Christians were profoundly influenced by the concept of the Logos held by their contemporaries, the Hellenistic Jews, as they sought to explain the person and purpose of Jesus Christ. Thus the Christology of the early Christians was based on the belief in Jesus Christ as Logos incarnate ("the Word made flesh"), to whom the attributes of Sophia were transferred.¹⁰

During the first few centuries of Christianity Jesus Christ was actually viewed as the incarnation of Sophia. The early Christian missionary movement preached the gospel of the resurrected Christ as the life-renewing Sophia-Spirit. As Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza says, "the proclamation of Jesus Christ as the Sophia of God and the cosmic Lord functions in the Christian community as the foundational myth."¹¹ However, as the role of Sophia became increasingly submerged in the figure of Christ during subsequent centuries, the Sophianic nature of Christ truly became a hidden secret to most Christians.

It has been primarily the Christian mystics, traveling their solitary paths through uncharted terrain in the same manner as the Grail seekers, who have discovered the hidden presence of Sophia in their inward journeys. One of these great spiritual seekers was the German shoemaker Jacob Boehme (1575-1624) who describes Sophia as a majestic figure of power and glory in a manner similar to the Jewish Wisdom literature. Through his visionary experiences he discovers Sophia's secret hiding place within Christ. His statement, "the noble Sophia hides herself in Christ's fountain"¹² expresses his mystical understanding of the association of Christ with the Goddess and the Grail. Boehme's statement that Sophia "has revealed Herself in the precious name JESUS as Christ"¹³ expresses the same understanding of the Sophianic nature of Christ that was held by many in the earliest Christian communities. Boehme also recognizes the central



Christosophia, Poros, Greece

¹⁰ Joan Engelsman, *The Feminine Nature of the Divine* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1979), p.95.

¹¹ Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her* (New York: Crossroad, 1992), p.190.

¹² Jacob Boehme, *The Way to Christ* (New York: Paulist Press, 1978), p.154.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p.45.

importance of the Divine Feminine to the entire Trinity for he says, "She is the seeing as Holy Spirit, the mirror as Son, and the eye as Father."¹⁴

This recognition of Sophia within the nature of the Godhead itself is echoed in our modern era by some Russian mystics such as Vladimir Soloviev and Sergei Bulgakov. Soloviev (1853-1900) was a philosopher-poet whose mystical experiences with Sophia inspired the philosophical and religious tradition of Sophiology in modern Russia. Soloviev describes Sophia as the "substance" of the Trinity, "the divine principle of all-in-oneness, which is the Wisdom of God."¹⁵ Sergei Bulgakov (1871-1944), a Russian Orthodox priest whose own conversion to Christianity occurred as a result of his own mystical encounter with Sophia, also viewed Sophia as the "ousia" or substance of the Godhead. He describes Sophia as "the nature of God ... a living ... loving substance, ground, and principle."¹⁶ The Russian Sophiologists' view of Sophia corresponds to that of the Jewish Wisdom literature in their understanding of Her role as both the creative power of the Divine and the emanation of God throughout all of creation. This understanding of Sophia's dual nature was described by Soloviev as the heavenly figure of Wisdom and the "World-Soul" that is the divine presence within creation. The mystics' understanding of the paradoxical unity of these two attributes of Sophia is the basis for recognizing the Divine as transcendent and at the same time immanent within nature.

The Grail questor today who follows the pathways of the Christian mystics will find that Sophia is hidden in the chalice of Christ, just as Jacob Boehme found her hidden in Christ's fountain. For the Grail which is the chalice of Christ is also the cup of Sophia. Recognizing the Grail as a symbol of Sophia continues its traditional representation as the feminine dimension of God. The chalice of Christ's blood which symbolizes the presence of God in the physical world points to the Divine Feminine which penetrates all of creation. Thus the Grail represents the spiritual essence of life which infuses nature. This is Sophia as divine immanence, the World-Soul. A major theme of the Grail stories is the loss of this Grail, the loss of the Soul of the World, and the devastation of the Land which ensues. As Caitlin Matthews points out, the maidens of the wells are the "voices of Sophia in her aspect of World-Soul."¹⁷ Their retreat from the outer world and withdrawal of the nourishing golden cup is symptomatic of our lack of recognition of the World-Soul. When we are once again able to hear Sophia's message through the voices of the well-maidens, we will realize that every created thing is seeded with the Divine. When we drink from her cup, we become aware of the sacredness of the natural world.

The paradoxical nature of Sophia's cup is that, while it provides limitless nourishment, it is at the same time an empty vessel. For the Grail is the receptive feminine ground from which all nature arises. The mystery of the Grail is that it contains all things and yet it contains no-thing. It contains all of creation within it; but if we gaze long enough into the Grail, following the meditative practice of the mystic, we will see the essential emptiness—the Void

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.10.

¹⁵ Samuel D. Cioran, *Vladimir Soloviev and the Knighthood of the Divine Sophia* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1979), p.21.

¹⁶ Sergei Bulgakov, *Sophia: The Wisdom of God* (New York: Lindisfarne Press, 1993), p.35.

¹⁷ Matthews, p.220.

which lies before creation and beyond mortality. When the Void becomes the vessel of our experience in the earthly realm, we experience the pain of life, but then also its joy. These polarities of existence are expressed in all of the images of the Grail: the cauldron of the Goddess which gives both death and life; the World-Soul which experiences both Wasteland and the Court of Joy; and the chalice of Christ's blood which represents the perfect suffering of Good Friday and the perfect triumph of Easter.



The Resurrection, by Perugino

The cup of Sophia contains the light, and also the dark aspect of existence that arises from the emptiness of the Void, thus symbolizing the wholeness of the Great Goddess. The dark side of the Grail, which corresponds to the fear and pain of mortal life, relates to the realm of the Black Goddess. Recognizing Sophia in this role helps us to accept the draught from the dark side of the cup of life, as we move towards realizing the ultimate unity of the light and the dark in Sophia's Grail. The Grail as chalice of Christ and cup of Sophia represents the union of the masculine and feminine divine images of Christ and Sophia. This unity may be expressed as "ChristoSophia," the differentiated wholeness consisting of a dynamic balance between "Word" and "Wisdom." Instead of disguising Sophia in the figure of Christ as the later Christians did, the term "ChristoSophia" assures that the attributes of both are clearly expressed. Thus the Grail of ChristoSophia reveals the secret of Jesus Christ as the incarnation of Sophia, as was once known. Since the chalice of Christ's blood contains the essence of Christ that is still alive in our world, we find for ourselves the early Christians' understanding of the resurrected Christ's presence in the world as Sophia-Spirit.

Another image of ChristoSophia contained within Grail symbolism can be derived from the statement by Emma Jung that "[t]he Grail really forms a quaternity in which the blood contained within it signifies the Three Persons of one Godhead, and the vessel can be compared to the Mother of God."¹⁸ The Mother of God, while usually designating Mary in Christian terminology, can also be seen as Sophia in her role of archetypal Mother Goddess. In this sense the vessel representing the Divine Feminine is the container for the Trinity. The

¹⁸ Jung and Von Franz, p.339.

Grail can be compared to Sophia as the ousia, or divine substance, of the Russian Sophiologists. It is in Sophia, as the vessel of the Grail, that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit have their Being.

This is the great mystery of the Christian Grail: that the blood of Christ is Sophia's essence of life. The chalice of ChristoSophia is the mystical container for the divine elixir of life. This is the mystery which lies at the heart of Christian tradition: the wine-blood which is received in the Eucharist is Sophia's gift of life—the immortal life of the spirit which is already present in the material world. This is the meaning of Christ's statement in the *Gospel of Thomas*, "The kingdom of the father is spread out upon the earth, and men do not see it."¹⁹ When we drink from the Grail of ChristoSophia our eyes are opened and we perceive the mystery; then we realize that we are already living in this kingdom for we discover that it exists within us and in all of creation.

Recognizing the Grail as a symbol of ChristoSophia satisfies the need to further develop the Christ symbol by incorporating the natural world and the dark side of the Divine. Christ as the crucified Savior can be associated with the Wounded King who is prominent in many of the Grail stories. The Wounded King symbolizes the image of Christ that is dominant in the collective consciousness, for the repression of the feminine has rendered Christ incomplete and lacking the wholeness of the archetypal divinity. Here the meaning of the King's sickness is that the image of Christ has consequently lost much of its numinous power to attract and transform the soul of the believer. The masculine image of God that has dominated Western culture for the past two millennia is no longer viable in our modern world or in the psyche of modern humans. The new form for the God-image must include the feminine if the wasteland of modern life and spirituality is to be renewed. But since the major theme of the Grail myth is the reuniting of the Goddess and the King, the new myth must be based upon a true synthesis of the masculine and the feminine. The age-old union of the King and the Queen, the Hero and the Goddess, can be translated into Christian tradition in the form of ChristoSophia.

It is the Grail as the symbol of ChristoSophia which will bring healing to the Wounded King by providing the feminine complement that he so desperately needs. This is the Grail which can complete the image of Christ by uniting the world of the feminine, nature, and darkness with the world of the masculine, spirit, and light. It is the Grail which will bring wholeness by uniting the opposites within the Western psyche's image of the Divine. The unfinished nature of the quest in the medieval Grail stories indicates that this quest continues in our time. The quest to bring wholeness to the Christ symbol and the related quest to bring Sophia forth from her hiding places remain unfinished today. Both of these quests, which are really mirror images of the one quest of the Grail stories, have been left for our modern age to complete.

For more discussion of this subject refer to *Walking the Path of ChristoSophia: Discovering the Hidden Tradition in Christian Spirituality*, Chapter X "The Holy Grail."

¹⁹ James M. Robinson, ed., "The Gospel of Thomas," *The Nag Hammadi Library* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1988), p.138.

The Eucharist and the Mass of the Lamb and His Bride

Robert Powell

As background to the theme under discussion in this article, it is helpful if we first consider the introduction of a new Mass into the Catholic Church in 1969/1970. This is generally not referred to as a new Mass but as the New Order Mass, which came into existence in the wake of the Second Vatican Council that opened in October 1962 under the pontificate of Pope John XXIII and closed in December 1965 under Pope Paul VI. However, as we shall see, it really is effectively a *new Mass* that was introduced by Pope Paul VI into the Catholic Church in April 1969—sometimes referred to as the Mass of Paul VI.

The primary focus of Vatican II was to look at the relationship between the Catholic Church and the modern world. To the present time, it is much disputed whether or not the liturgical changes (together with the other changes in the Church that followed the Second Vatican Council) have caused the loss of faith among Catholics that has occurred in Western countries. According to Valentin Tomberg in his book *Lazarus, Come Forth*, there were “overly hasty changes in the liturgy instituted after the Second Vatican Council.”¹ The question is: What was the nature of these changes? Here it suffices to say that it is now known that Freemasonry—a Masonic kind of spirituality—played a role in the institution of the New Order of the Mass:

The liturgical revolution concerning Holy Mass was spearheaded by Archbishop Annibale Bugnini, who was later found to have been a Freemason. The Novus Ordo worship service [New Order Mass] was written in the 1960s by a Freemason (Archbishop Annibale Bugnini) and six Protestant ministers. In 1970 a photograph was published showing Paul VI posing with the Protestant ministers that had worked with Annibale Bugnini, head of the Consilium ad Exsequendam Constitutionem de Sacra Liturgia [Council to Carry out the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy], to draft the Novus Ordo worship service.²

A major consequence of the reform to the Holy Mass was articulated in an article published on July 24, 1996, in *L'Osservatore Romano*, an article highly critical of the *Novus Ordo*, including the statement that “the great problem of contemporary liturgical life (apathy towards worship, boredom, lack of vitality and participation) stems from the fact that the celebration has sometimes lost its character as mystery, which fosters the spirit of adoration.”

As indicated in this 1996 article quoted here, it is the loss of the earlier character of the Latin Mass “as mystery” that perhaps is one reason (among others) as to why so many Catholics, based on their experience of the New Order Mass—which now is no longer so new, since it is now (2020) fifty years old—are turning away from the Catholic Church in such large numbers. It would appear that with the introduction of the *Novus Ordo* Mass a silencing was indeed effected against the liturgy of the Holy Eucharist itself, which—since St. Pope Pius V (1570) until Pope Paul VI (1969)—had enjoyed four hundred years of unbroken tradition in the form of the Latin

¹ Valentin Tomberg, *Lazarus, Come Forth!* (Great Barrington, MA: SteinerBooks, 2006), p.49; see also pp.122-129 for a general overview of Valentin Tomberg’s perspective regarding the changes introduced by Vatican II.

² <http://www.catholicapologetics.info/modernproblems/newmass/fmass.htm> Note that the term “*Novus Ordo* worship service” is used here rather than the official term, “New Order Mass.”

(Tridentine) Mass. The fact that Valentin Tomberg refers to “the overly hasty changes in the liturgy instituted after the Second Vatican Council,” would seem to confirm that there was some kind of tampering with the liturgy of the Eucharist arising from the reform advocated by Vatican II.

The reason put forward by the Vatican for advocating a reform of the Mass was that fewer and fewer Catholics could understand Latin, and therefore in the modern world the Mass should be celebrated in the vernacular languages of the countries in which it is celebrated. This sounds very reasonable, as indeed it is to intellectual reasoning. However, what was not initially realized on the level of the intellect was that the traditional Latin Mass bore (and continues to bear) a profound spirituality in the very form of its celebration. Moreover, unbeknownst to most in the Church, this form—the very essence—of the Latin liturgy of the Mass *was changed* in the process of translation, owing to the intervention of the Masonic Archbishop Annibale Bugnini in charge of the creation of the New Order Mass. In other words, it was not simply a matter of translation from the sacred language of Latin into the vernacular of the various modern languages; it was simultaneously an interference with the very essence of the Mass according to *Masonic*³—and, so it would seem, also *Protestant*—teaching, given these words of Archbishop Bugnini: “We must strip from our Catholic prayers and from the Catholic liturgy everything which can be the shadow of a stumbling block for our separated brethren—that is, for the Protestants.”⁴

*The Novus Ordo, by design, strips away the ethos of sacrifice from the liturgy, and turns its attention inwards, towards man. Towards community and meal sharing. Towards turning an altar of sacrifice into a supper table. Towards the placation of theological differences between religions. Towards inclusivity, and other human concerns ... banal contemporary music instead of sacred [music] ... It essentially—as its architect Annibale Bugnini said it should—strips away the stumbling blocks for non-Catholics to find the liturgy approachable.*⁵

Without going into too many further details concerning the changes made to the essence of the Mass,⁶ it is also important to know that many Catholics have recently returned to the

³ “The Permanent Instruction of the Alta Vendita—an Italian group closely associated with freemasonry in the 1800s—made clear their intentions in 1859, when they spoke of their aims in infiltrating the Catholic Church: *In a few years the young clergy will have, by force of events, invaded all the functions. They will govern, administer, and judge. They will form the council of the Sovereign. They will be called upon to choose the Pontiff who will reign; and that Pontiff, like the greater part of his contemporaries, will be necessarily imbued with the ... humanitarian principles which we are about to put into circulation ... Let the clergy march under your banner in the belief always that they march under the banner of the Apostolic Keys. You wish to cause the last vestige of tyranny and of oppression to disappear? Lay your nets like Simon Barjona. Lay them in the depths of sacristies, seminaries, and convents, rather than in the depth of the sea... You will bring yourselves as friends around the Apostolic Chair. You will have fished up a Revolution in Tiara and Cope, marching with Cross and banner—a Revolution which needs only to be spurred on a little to put the four corners of the world on fire.*” [emphasis added]—<https://onepeterfive.com/why-do-people-have-a-problem-with-the-novus-ordo/>

⁴ Yves Chiron, *Annibale Bugnini: Reformer of the Liturgy* (Brooklyn, NY: Angelico Press, 2018).

⁵ <https://onepeterfive.com/why-do-people-have-a-problem-with-the-novus-ordo/>

⁶ To reiterate: the New Order Mass is focused more on the institution of the Eucharist by Jesus Christ at the Last Supper instead of focusing upon Christ’s sacrifice on behalf of humanity through the Mystery of Golgotha as in the Tridentine (Latin) Mass. (See image below, p.63.) This is a major spiritual shift in Church liturgy. Moreover, rather than the priest (as representative of the congregation) having his primary orientation facing East together with the congregation, Bugnini’s new Mass has the priest face the congregation, implicitly signifying a new “cult of man” in

traditional form of the Mass in Latin, known as the Tridentine Mass. The Order of the Tridentine Mass appeared in Roman Missals from 1570, until it was replaced four hundred years later by the New Order Mass as published in the Roman Missal of 1970. Since the traditional Mass was celebrated in Latin for so many centuries and in so many places around the world, as something unifying all believers within the entire Catholic Church in the sacred Latin language, a great spiritual power lay—and still lies—within the Latin Mass, the roots of which can be traced back to the time of St. Justin Martyr (second century AD).

Against this background it is understandable why the initiative was taken by a French Archbishop, Marcel Lefebvre (1905-1991), to obtain permission for a new training of seminarians as part of an international priestly fraternity, to celebrate the traditional Tridentine Latin Mass. With the permission of the Bishop of Fribourg, Switzerland, Archbishop Lefebvre began a seminary within the context of his newly founded International Priestly Society of Saint Pius X, the focus of which was—and still is—the celebration of the traditional Latin Mass. This marked explicitly a “coming out” of a traditionalist movement within the Catholic Church, focused on the celebration of the Tridentine Mass—a movement which has grown significantly since the death of Archbishop Lefebvre in 1991. Thus, in 2009 Pope Benedict XVI expressed a new attitude of the Holy See toward the Society of Saint Pius X (SSPX)—demonstrating a certain level of papal approval of the SSPX—and thereby forming a new relationship between the Holy See and the SSPX. And in 2016 and 2017 the SSPX saw a growing recognition of its sacramental and pastoral activities by the Holy See.⁷

Clearly the Latin Mass—spiritually powerful and potentially unifying those aligned with it—is in the process of becoming, or has already become, the heart of the present-day, emerging traditionalist movement in the Catholic Church, as opposed to the alignment of the “liberals” who support the reforms of Vatican II and are attached to the celebration of the *Novus Ordo* Mass.⁸

turning away from “facing God” —this, of course, being an over-simplification of the issue concerning the direction which the priest faces during the celebration of the Mass. Furthermore, all that was spiritually profound and sublime in the traditional Latin Mass, such as, for example, Gregorian chant, was discarded from the New Order Mass. This has led to the perception that the Latin Mass is more mystical, awe-inspiring, and beautiful. See also “What is Wrong with the Novus Ordo Missae?” — <https://sspx.org/en/faq-page/what-is-wrong-with-the-novus-or-do-missae-faq5>

⁷ It has to be mentioned that since the time of Archbishop Lefebvre the SSPX has changed its orientation considerably and now seems to be heading for a full merger with the Modernist Rome of Vatican II. See, for example, Sean Johnson, Fr. Edward MacDonald, and Bishop Richard Williamson, *As We Are? 101 Compromises, Changes, and Contradictions of an SSPX: in Pursuit of a Practical Accord with Modernist Rome* (Sean Johnson, 2019).

⁸ At this juncture it has to be made clear that this article is focused solely upon the *liturgical* situation of the modern Catholic Church. Otherwise, the author is conscious of the scandalous behavior of some priests in the Church who have intentionally or unintentionally served to bring down the Church from within—something that has contributed greatly to the turning away from the Church of many Catholics. This article is not the place to go into the background and root causes of this decadent and diabolical anti-Christian behavior on the part of a significant number of priests and their “higher ups” in the Church. Let us not forget, on the other hand, the remaining good and deeply Christ-oriented priests in the Catholic Church, who are dismayed at the immoral behavior of their fellow priests within the Church. See Marshall Taylor, *Infiltration: The Plot to Destroy the Church from Within* (Bedford, NH: Sophia Institute Press, 2019).

II

Having sketched this historical background to the current liturgical situation in the Catholic Church, we shall now endeavor to gain a spiritual overview of the current situation of the Christ Impulse in terms of spiritual evolution. The most important factor to consider in this context is that of the Second Coming of Christ, the onset of which began in 1933. As I have expressed this elsewhere:

If the “New Age” meant anything for Rudolf Steiner, it meant the approaching Second Coming of Christ, which he referred to as “the return of Christ in the etheric realm of the earth,” and which his research at that time (1910) pinpointed would take place in 1933.⁹ The emerging Cosmic Christianity [which has a long preparation over centuries], the new “gospel in the stars,” demonstrates decisively that the deeds of Christ two thousand years ago reverberate down through time, and are effective and alive today, having become renewed since Christ’s return in the etheric—beginning in 1933.¹⁰ This renewed presence of Christ—the parousia—is the process by which the etheric body of Christ (which incorporates all the events through which Christ lived) is newly membered into the Earth’s etheric aura. Since the images of the events in Christ’s etheric body are related to the cosmic world, they are activated at each recurrence of the cosmic configurations from Christ’s life. For example, the crucifixion took place at Full Moon; today, at every Full Moon, there is a “cosmic echo” of this event, and one may thus, at each Full Moon, live meditatively into the Crucifixion. Christ’s greatest miracle, the raising of Lazarus from the dead, having taken place at New Moon, is “remembered” in our own time at each New Moon.¹¹

The focusing of consciousness toward the “signs in the heavens” through Christ’s return in the etheric aura of the Earth since 1933 is not only in relation to the “new heaven” but also with regard to the “new earth.” “Behold a new heaven and a new earth” are the words of Christ from the beginning of chapter 21 of the *Book of Revelation*. The new heaven is that which is being borne down from cosmic heights by Sophia, the Bride of the Lamb.¹² Christ’s coming in the etheric realm thus signifies a preparation for the advent of Sophia in the coming Age of Aquarius. At the same time Christ is also now descending, currently undertaking a descent to the

⁹ Robert Powell and Kevin Dann, *The Astrological Revolution* (Great Barrington, MA: SteinerBooks, 2010), p.27. In this connection, see also Rudolf Steiner, “The Reappearance of Christ in the Etheric: The Event of the Appearance of Christ in the Etheric World,” lecture, January 25, 1910. The proclamation of Christ’s Second Coming was given by Rudolf Steiner, who thus can be identified as the *prophet* of Christ’s Second Coming, just as John the Baptist was the prophet of his first coming (approximately) two thousand years ago.

¹⁰ Robert Powell, *The Christ Mystery: Reflections on the Second Coming* (Fair Oaks, CA: Rudolf Steiner College Press, 2000) discusses the dating of Christ’s Second Coming to the year 1933. The rhythm of Christ’s life confirms this date and thus supports Rudolf Steiner’s prophecy that the Second Coming of Christ would commence in the year 1933.

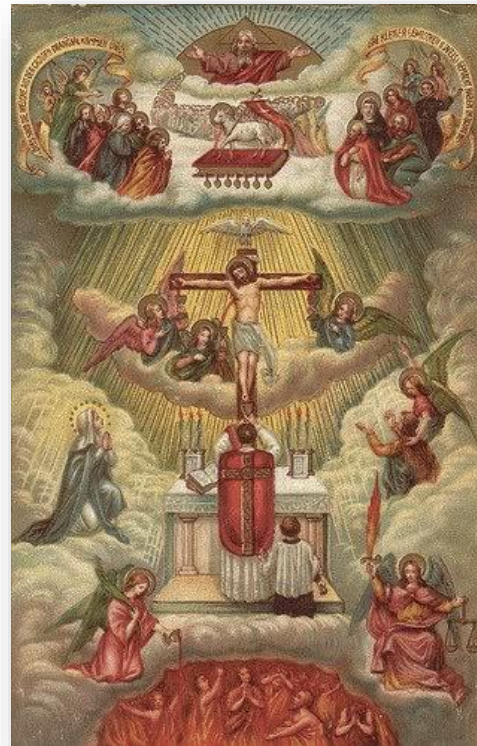
¹¹ Robert Powell and Kevin Dann, *The Astrological Revolution* pp.131-132. Note that Robert Powell, *Chronicle of the Living Christ* (Great Barrington, MA: SteinerBooks, 1996) gives an exact dating of the events in the life of Christ and presents the horoscopes of the corresponding planetary configurations on those dates.

¹² See Robert Powell, “Sophia and the Rose of the World” (article) under *Articles* on the Sophia Foundation website: www.sophiafoundation.org This article gives a historical background regarding Sophia, the Bride of the Lamb, and her descent from cosmic heights as the bearer of the new world culture of the Rose of the World in the approaching Aquarian Age.

center of the Earth, to the realm known as Shambhala, the kingdom of the Earth Mother.¹³ Through his descent Christ is creating the new earth as the transformed and spiritualized Earth referred to in *Revelation* 21:1. This descent, pertaining to the present time of Christ's Second Coming, is referred to explicitly in what is being celebrated today as the Mass of the Lamb and His Bride, while at the same time the orientation towards Christ's sacrifice on Golgotha—his coming two thousand years ago—remains the central focus.

This orientation toward the “new heaven and the new earth” is central to understanding why the *Christ and Sophia* Mass, the Mass of the Lamb and His Bride, that over the course of many years has come to birth organically within the evolving activities of the Sophia Foundation, is of such importance. Let us remember that the Mass IS the center and core of that which was instituted as the Eucharist by Jesus Christ at the Last Supper, where He spoke the words: “Do this in remembrance of me.”

Here it is important to underscore that the Mass of the Lamb and His Bride is focused on Christ's sacrifice on Golgotha, while at the same time being in relation to Christ's Second Coming. It has arisen in this New Age of Christ's Second Coming. Moreover, it is not intended to *replace* any existing form of the Mass, but rather to *complement* these existing forms. The first part of the Mass of the Lamb and His Bride draws from the life of Christ, above all in looking back to the Mystery of Golgotha, which is also what the Tridentine Mass does. This first part of the Mass of the Lamb and His Bride culminates with the communion with the substances of bread and wine sacred to Christ. The second part of the Mass of the Lamb and His Bride is focused upon Sophia and culminates with the communion with the substances of milk and honey sacred to Sophia.



The Tridentine Mass

In the space of an article such as this, it is hardly possible to enter into the depth, complexity, and profundity of the Mass of the Lamb and His Bride—which has arisen in an organic way within the Sophia Grail Circle of the Sophia Foundation. Instead, in the following, certain special aspects of the Mass of the Lamb and His Bride are highlighted. For the priestly circle of the Sophia Grail Circle (SGC), the *Mass of the Lamb and His Bride* (MLB) is central, as becomes clear from the following considerations.

(i) As some people know, Valentin Tomberg was an incarnation in the twentieth century of the great teacher of humanity who will be the next Buddha, the Maitreya (the M), the “bearer of the Good.”¹⁴

¹³ Robert Powell, and Estelle Isaacson, *The Mystery of Sophia: Bearer of the New Culture, the Rose of the World* (Great Barrington, MA: SteinerBooks, 2014).

¹⁴ See, for example, Claudia McLaren Lainson, *The Circle of Twelve and the Legacy of Valentin Tomberg* (Boulder, CO: Windrose Academy Press, 2016)—www.windroseacademy.com

(ii) As prophesied by Rudolf Steiner, the M came at the appointed time (born in 1900) and was there and ready, from 1933 onward, to serve increasingly as a spiritual teacher to bring forward to humanity a path leading to a living experience of the Etheric Christ.

(iii) As Rudolf Steiner indicated on several occasions:

*We are now able to grasp quite a different aspect of spiritual science. We realise that it is a preparation for the actual event of the new appearance of Christ. Christ will appear again inasmuch as with their etheric sight human beings will raise themselves to Him. When this is understood, spiritual science is disclosed as the means of preparing human beings to recognise the return of Christ.*¹⁵

Rudolf Steiner was careful to use the expression “prepare,” because although he (Steiner) was able to behold and connect with Christ on His path of descent through the ranks of the spiritual hierarchies to His Second Coming, it was only from 1933 onward that the *Etheric Christ*—Christ in the realm of the Earth’s etheric aura—could be spoken of in the true sense of the expression *Etheric Christ*, since it was not until 1933 that Christ’s entry into the Earth’s etheric realm was fulfilled in a more complete sense.

(iv) This date 1933 signifies the natural point in time for a “handing over,” for a “transition” from Rudolf Steiner’s *preparing mission* to the mission of his successor, the M, *the actual proclaimer* (Steiner’s words) of Christ in the etheric realm, as indicated in the article “The Transition” written by Keith Harris and myself.¹⁶

(v) Beginning in 1933 with his *Studies of the Old Testament*, followed by further esoteric biblical studies published in the book *Christ and Sophia*,¹⁷ Valentin Tomberg sought to introduce readers to the moral dimension and spiritual perspectives to which he was privy through his intimate relationship with Christ in the etheric realm.

(vi) The highest level of this Christological approach to the Bible—his biblical (and related) studies, almost all published prior to World War II in the original German in which they were written—culminated with the *Lord’s Prayer Course* (1940-1943) held during World War II.¹⁸ The *Lord’s Prayer Course* represents a culmination of this great teacher’s intimate relationship with Christ at that time of great darkness for humanity.¹⁹



Valentin Tomberg

¹⁵ Rudolf Steiner, *The True Nature of the Second Coming* (London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1972).

¹⁶ This article was originally published in *Starlight*, vol.14, no.1 (Easter 2014), available as a PDF from <http://www.sophiafoundation.org>. It also comprises the content of Appendix 8 in the book on Valentin Tomberg by Claudia McLaren Lainson referenced in footnote 14.

¹⁷ Valentin Tomberg, *Christ and Sophia* (Great Barrington, MA: SteinerBooks, 2006).

¹⁸ My translation of the *Lord’s Prayer Course* from the German is available as study material through the Sophia Foundation.

¹⁹ Valentin Tomberg, *The Course on the Lord’s Prayer* (4 vols; Taisersdorf, Germany: Valentin Tomberg Books, Achamoth: 2015-2016). This is a different English translation than the one I have made available as study material through the Sophia Foundation: www.sophiafoundation.org

(vii) In giving the content of this course under difficult and dangerous circumstances to a small circle of people in Nazi-occupied Amsterdam, where he was living at that time, the M was acting in the highest capacity as a *direct spokesperson* for the Etheric Christ. In the *Lord's Prayer Course* we find a *direct transmission*, so to say, of the words and impulses of Christ in his Second Coming in the etheric realm.

The content of this course thus deserves our special attention. It is in this course that we find the spiritual background to the *four* levels of communion in the Mass of the Lamb and His Bride (MLB), together with a description of the working together of Christ and Sophia in connection with these four levels.

(1) The following outline of these four levels is drawn from the description given by Valentin Tomberg in the *Lord's Prayer Course* from the section concerning the fourth petition, "Give us this day our daily bread." Complete communion comprises four stages, which together correspond to the complete process of communion of the human being with Christ and Sophia. The four stages are: wine—at the level of the "I"; honey—at the level of the astral body; milk—at the level of the etheric body; bread—at the level of the physical body. In the Holy Eucharist the communion of bread and wine relate to the two outermost members: the physical body and the "I". The Old Testament speaks of Canaan as "the land where milk and honey flows," thus referring to the other two forms of communion. The four streams of nourishment: wine, honey, milk, and bread are a remembrance of the four streams of paradise. In the communion of wine, honey, milk, and bread, four concentric circles, ascending ever higher, can be thought of as circulating: within the "I" and the blood, in the wine communion; within *manas*, the purified astral body, and the nervous system, in the honey communion; within *buddhi*, the love-permeated etheric body, and the glandular system, in the milk communion; and within *atma*, the spiritualized physical body, and the digestive system, in the bread communion.

It is clear that in the prevailing circumstances at that time of the Nazi occupation of Holland during World War II, something like the MLB could not come into being in the world as an actual liturgy. This had to wait until decades later when a few people—through the founding of the Sophia Foundation in California in 1994/1995—came together and were able to take up this important new *communion impulse* relating to Sophia and the Etheric Christ that is described on a spiritual level in Valentin Tomberg's *Lord's Prayer Course*. However, in the space of an article it is not possible to discuss a great many details concerning the history and development of the MLB. For now, it suffices to say that the MLB *represents a Eucharistic vessel for a Mass that includes Sophia and at the same time celebrates the age of the Second Coming*—spiritually outlined by Christ Himself and transmitted through the content of the *Lord's Prayer Course* by the M during World War II.

Here are some further considerations regarding the MLB:

(2) As described above, the four levels of communion intrinsic to the MLB are those of the bread and wine (Christ's sacred substances, when consecrated) and the milk and the honey (Sophia's sacred substances, when consecrated). Knowledge concerning these four levels transmitted by Valentin Tomberg in the *Lord's Prayer Course*, helps to raise consciousness concerning the significance of the MLB for our time, which is both the time of Christ's Second Coming, to which we can attune particularly in Part 1 of the MLB, and the time of preparation for the coming advent of Sophia as bearer of the future culture known as the *Rose of the World*, to which we may attune especially in Part 2 of the MLB. Given the importance of this knowledge—ultimately

stemming from the Etheric Christ—concerning the background to the four levels of communion within the MLB, it is important that this knowledge also be transmitted in the spirit of awakening consciousness regarding the deeper significance of the four levels of communion belonging to the MLB. And for this there is now an appropriate adjunct to the MLB. This is the new Grail Knights Mass (GKM), which was celebrated with a larger group of people for the first time on May 14, 2018, in the one-day Grail Knights Training held in California on that day. The GKM includes passages from the *Lord's Prayer Course* concerning the “four circulations” set in motion within the human being through the four levels of communion in the MLB—referred to briefly in (1) above.

(3) In the closing part of the GKM, these words are spoken:

Christ speaks: *My kingdom shall come and shall reign on Earth in human hearts. And I come to claim hearts to be the building stones of My great city, which is the union of My mystical body and the mystical body of Mary Sophia. Together we are the Heavenly Jerusalem. And whoever partakes of My body and blood, and the mystical milk and the nectar [honey] of My Bride, becomes our body. We are the body of the church and the church is in you. You are the foundation of the church of Christ and Sophia.*²⁰

These words of Christ draw our attention to the Heavenly Jerusalem, and also to the four streams of spiritual sustenance of the Heavenly Jerusalem mirrored upon Earth as the substances sacred to Christ (bread and wine) and the substances sacred to Sophia (milk and honey).

There is much in Paul's *Letter to the Hebrews* that is also helpful in penetrating further into the deeper background of the MLB. For example, in *Hebrews 8:5* we read: *They [Christ's priests] serve at a sanctuary that is a copy and shadow of what is in heaven.* These words of Paul are of significance in relation to the MLB in light of the ancient saying “as above, so below.” What is celebrated in an earthly sanctuary “below,” can be understood and experienced as spiritually also taking place “above” and is thus “a copy and shadow of what is in heaven.”

For Christ and Sophia, however, who serve in the heavenly sanctuary, the Holy Grail is a divine reality in spiritual form in heaven, in the sanctuary of the Grail temple at the heart of the Heavenly Jerusalem, the holy city of the Lamb and His Bride. Christ and Sophia are high priest and high priestess in the Grail sanctuary centered in the Heavenly Jerusalem. Christ is the heavenly Grail King and Sophia is the heavenly Grail Queen.

This is central to understanding the meaning and significance of the *Sophia Grail Circle* that has given birth to the Mass of the Lamb and His Bride.

In a certain respect we can think of Christ and Sophia holding the space for us to enter



By Fra Angelico

²⁰ Robert Powell and Estelle Isaacson, *The Mystery of Sophia* (Great Barrington, MA: SteinerBooks, 2014), p.97.

through the MLB into something of an experience of the Grail sanctuary at the heart of the Heavenly Jerusalem. Thereby, through the four levels of communion of the MLB, the possibility arises that we may come into something of a relationship with the four streams of the *new paradise*, which we not only experience as a *memory* or *metamorphosis* of the four streams of paradise that nourished us in the garden of Eden, but also may be experienced as a *presentiment* of the spiritual sustenance of the *new paradise*, Heavenly Jerusalem, the holy city of the Lamb and His Bride. Just as human beings in paradise were nourished by four streams—the warmth, light, tone, and life ethers—flowing through the ethereal paradise of the garden of Eden, so in the future human beings in the new paradise of the Heavenly Jerusalem will be nourished by four ethereal streams—now partly represented on Earth (“as above, so below”) by the four levels of communion in the celebration of the MLB. These four ethereal streams transmit to us something of an experience of the metamorphosis in the new paradise of the four streams of nourishment that sustained us in the Garden of Eden. Against this background, we can begin to understand the profound significance of celebrating the MLB as a path of preparation in relation to the spiritual sustenance of the four streams of divine nourishment of the new paradise of the Heavenly Jerusalem.

(4) Let us look now at the importance of confession, the sacrament of penance, which prepares a person beforehand to humbly receive the holy sacrament of communion. Here is a translation of Rudolf Steiner’s formulation of the sacrament of penance, which he called *The Sacrament of the Vista of Life*, by which he meant looking back over one’s life and acknowledging one’s errors and misdeeds. The words below are spoken at the end of a deep conversation of this kind resulting from a life review, where the priest listens attentively to the person’s account. These are the concluding words spoken by the priest:

*Learn to sacrifice your thoughts to the Divine,
And to receive your will through the grace of God.
Then your soul will feel peace.
You will lovingly revere the revelation of God,
And lovingly marvel over human beings,
Who lovingly prove their worth.
Love of God will hold sway in your whole being,
And love of human beings
Will enter into your heart.*

(5) The book *The Mystery of Sophia*, particularly the content of Estelle Isaacson’s fourteen visions in Part 1, may serve as an expression of the new Gospel for our time in support of the impulse of the MLB. As referred to above, now is both the time of Christ’s Second Coming and the time of preparation for the coming advent of Sophia as bearer of the future culture known as the *Rose of the World*. For example, let us consider these words from the fifth of Estelle Isaacson’s visions in *The Mystery of Sophia*:

[T]his came forth from my soul: I wanted to receive Her [Sophia] completely ... and I asked that this may be. Her response was immediate, withholding nothing. From Her breast outpoured the divine milk of Her Grace, bathing my entire soul. From Her Heart poured the sweet honey of Her Love. In this act of purification of heart and soul, She utterly gave Herself to me. The milk and honey penetrated me fully, and nourished my soul. I was astounded to receive such a bequest!

After this, She spoke, Her words resonating throughout my entire being, Her voice like soft, tinkling chimes: 'I give the Milk of Divine Grace and the Honey of Eternal Love to all those who seek My face. I bless you with My Grace and the sweetness of My Love. I hold you to My breast and nurture you with My Love. I have heard your entreaties; you have cried out to be held by your Mother; and I have heard your cries through ages and lifetimes. How I have ached to hold you and to bring you out from the desolate places in which you have been wandering; for I have watched you wander in the fallen world amongst thorns and thistles!'

Sophia continues:

'Christ is your bridegroom and He comes for you. He goes to the depths for you, and He guards you in your depths. He beholds the star that you are, which you have not been able to know in your depths.

Awake and arise! Go out and find Him, for He waits for you in the bridal chamber; and the door is open, and all that you are is holy to Him.

And you also shall be transfigured, that your soul may receive Sophia's light and love; and you shall become a beacon of light to others.

Through Sophia and the Holy Soul you shall go out and lighten the darkness of others, that they may also awaken and arise and see their darkness and say: "This is not I."

Then shall they know their own I AM presence. And they shall be pierced with the I AM presence; and profound peace shall then be their discourse.

It is Sophia who brings the children of humanity to Christ, the great Healer, the great Redeemer. And Heaven and Earth can then come together in human hearts—through the union of Christ and Sophia within.

To achieve union with Christ: this is Sophia's gift and promise to humanity. Do not fear the opposition, for it is providing the way for you to evolve. It is what your soul needs at this time. After much tribulation comes the gift. Sophia is with you in your times of trial, watching over you.

And when the refining fires have done their work and you are born anew, she presents you to Christ as the gift. He has bought you with His sacrifice. You are an extraordinary gift. And through your own sacrifices, you are able to meet Him in His sacrifice and you may then experience union with Him. This union shall bring about the new Heaven and the new Earth, which is the marriage of Christ and Sophia, which is eternal, having no end.'²¹

In conclusion, let us also contemplate these words from the first vision:

²¹ Robert Powell and Estelle Isaacson, *The Mystery of Sophia: Bearer of the New Culture, the Rose of the World* (Great Barrington, MA: Steiner Books, 2014), chapter 5.

The Second Coming of Christ and the Descent of Sophia

In the beginning of the vision²² I saw a ray of beautiful blue-violet light. I entered into the light and saw a sphere moving towards me. I felt enveloped by the love and peace of the Divine Mother. Soon I came to realize that I was experiencing this love through the essence of the individuality of John the Baptist. The living energy of Shambhala was within his being as a stream of radiant blue light that was constantly flowing through and raying out to the world. I experienced the silence of Divine Love at the very core of his spirit. I beheld the stars of his being and could see the power of creation that is in him—the seed forces. I entered into the “world that he is,” where everything was imbued with blue-violet light, and silence pervaded the atmosphere.

In mystical communion with him, I received the following vision and message:

‘This is the time of the Second Coming of Christ. And the Second Coming of Christ is announced from Shambhala, which has been issuing forth this great announcement for almost a century. The beings that serve the Mother bear this message from the mineral kingdom to the plant kingdom, the animal kingdom, and humankind—to all who can hear the news: that He comes again in clouds of glory! He is here! His body is the Earth. His breath is the wind. He is holding the Earth in His loving embrace.

Shambhala is awakening. Beings that have had to hold their silence may now speak and act. There is a great stirring and awakening in Shambhala. Shambhala has been in a time of winter, as it were, a time of holding in, a time of withdrawal. But because more human beings are awakening to the Divine Mother, the beings at the center of the Earth are stirring and are beginning to rise up and prepare for the descent of Holy Sophia—the Heavenly Daughter; and Christ is preparing the way for Her in his Second Coming.

*His **First** Coming was to prepare hearts to attune to the Father. His **Second** Coming is to prepare hearts to receive Sophia. He will bring Mother and Daughter together on Earth, thereby reuniting the Earth Mother and the Divine Daughter.*

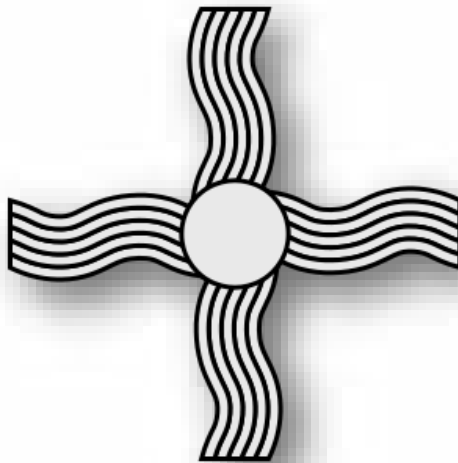
*A great awakening is on the horizon for humanity as Sophia draws ever nearer to the spiritual sphere of the Sun. And through our Sun, She will ray out to the world a **new sustaining life force**. This is a life force that has been present in this world mostly within a very small number of mystics, prophets, and seers who have been able to find Sophia in the heavens; they have embodied this life force energy and rayed it out to others. With the descent of Sophia and Her entrance into the Sun sphere, this life force energy will ray out to the whole world. A great healing will occur; just as mystics ray out healing, so shall Sophia emanate healing to the **entire world**—even through the rays of the Sun.’²³*

* * * * *

²² This vision occurred on December 9, 2011.

²³ This is clearly a reference to the “woman clothed with the Sun” in *Revelations* 12:1 — “Behold a great sign appears in heaven: a woman clothed with the Sun, with the Moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars.”

As indicated in the above words from *The Mystery of Sophia*, we “may know the Love that I am by knowing My Bride, Holy Sophia, who is Wisdom.” These words remind us of the central message of the great Russian Orthodox priest and theologian Sergius Bulgakov (1871-1944), who wrote many works on Holy Sophia and who, having been expelled from Russia by the Bolshevik government at the end of 1922, subsequently, some years later, became head of the St. Sergius Orthodox Theological Institute in Paris. Father Bulgakov’s central message was that *the future of Christianity depends upon the inclusion of Holy Sophia in the Christian religion*.²⁴ Through his writings Father Bulgakov attempted this on a *theological level*. And now this aim is accomplished in a modest way in seed form on a *practical level* in the MLB, the essence of which was transmitted by Christ Himself through the *Lord’s Prayer Course* given by Valentin Tomberg in Amsterdam during World War II. *This is of key significance*—and is something that we can hold in consciousness in relation to the MLB.



*The Cross Rivers of
Paradise*

²⁴ Sergius Bulgakov, *Sophia, the Wisdom of God: An Outline of Sophiology* (Hudson, NY: Lindisfarne Press, 1993). See also: Sergius Bulgakov, *The Holy Grail and the Eucharist* (Hudson, NY: Lindisfarne Press, 1997), which is of significance in relation to the celebration of the MLB in connection with the Holy Grail.

The Mystery of Golgotha, Heaven, and Earth¹

Nikolai Belotsvetov²

We must now ask what significance this holy Mystery of Golgotha has for that being whose destiny is to become the connecting link between Heaven and Earth, namely the significance of this Mystery for humankind.

It is important to proceed from humankind's central position in the universe. For it is this humankind to whom the Earth aspires from below and on which Heaven depends from above. Humankind acts as a mediator between Heaven and Earth. Our mission in the Universe is to penetrate Heaven by changing the Earth and to change the Earth by knowing Heaven. We can do this because in our being we are akin to both worlds. The superconscious spirit of humankind is rooted in the Heavenly world. Through self-awareness of this spirit, the soul can do good. On the other hand, the subconscious of a person is rooted in the inner Earth. A person wants to manifest through earthly physicality, and following his/her subconscious, that person does evil. So the human soul is the scene of the struggle between good and evil. At the same time, however, it is a place where God experiences His Crucifixion and must rise again. And it is to the fact that this happens that humankind owes its earthly *fate*.

The Mystery of Golgotha was to be prepared in the course of the whole development of humankind, which included the Fall. It could only happen through what was introduced by both the positive and the negative karma of humanity. The positive karma of humankind made possible the conception of the Savior on the Jordan River and His birth on Golgotha. It was the basis of the entire genealogical line of Jesus, as well as the entire path of fate that led Jesus to the Jordan. Thanks to this positive karma of humankind, thanks to this current of the human race that continually revived, made possible by prophets and initiates, humankind was made worthy of the power of the spiritual world to generate from its bosom the Savior. However, another, negative course of this karma of humankind led to the death of the Savior. Thus was humankind condemned to kill the most sacred thing that it itself gave rise to. Humankind received the power to give birth to Jesus from Heaven. This was the result of the capacity humankind retained to unite with the spiritual world. But humankind also received the power to kill Christ from the depths of the Earth, and this power was a consequence of its sin.

And where both of these karmic currents crossed, the Cross of Golgotha was erected. On this Cross the World-*I*, born through humanity, was to experience death through the medium of this same humanity, and so was able to defeat death by death.

This wonderful relationship of humankind to the Mystery of Golgotha makes us look at this Mystery as something that should be recognized as the image of our greatest guilt and, at the same

¹ Translated from the Russian by Emily Michael and adapted by the Editor. This is the fourth section from a larger essay on the Mystery of Golgotha written in June-July, 1939 in Riga, Latvia. See <http://bdn-steiner.ru/modules.php?name=Books&go=page&pid=6201>

² Poet, philosopher, and translator, Nikolai Nikolaevich Belotsvetov (1892-1950) emigrated to Berlin from Russia in the 1920s, and at one point met Rudolf Steiner. He was in the anthroposophical movement from 1912. The lectures he gave in the Russian Anthroposophical Society were published as a separate book in St. Petersburg in 1915. In 1918, he delivered a series of lectures at the Moscow branch of the Anthroposophical Society, later revised into the *Book of the Russian Grail*. In 1933 he came to Riga, becoming chairman of the Anthroposophical Society in Latvia. [Details provided by Emily Michael.]

time, our only salvation. We are guilty of the fact that the God-man was crucified—so we should say to ourselves, but in spite of our guilt we will be saved. And when we plunge into this one-of-a-kind feeling, which is both a sense of infinite guilt and a feeling of infinite gratitude, something happens in us that reveals our true attitude to the Savior: we learn to love Christ. For while Christ is the discoverer of the Father as for Heaven, and the victor over evil as for the Earth, for humankind he is the giver of Love.

By our contemplating the Cross, the Cross of Golgotha, by empathizing with the Crucifixion, Love is born in us. What happens when we do so? For the soul that goes deeper into the symbol of the Cross, there is a repetition of what actually happened in Palestine. As the Crucified at that time descended into the subconscious of the Earth and rose there as a conqueror of evil, so does He do the same now in the subconscious spiritual depths of a person who contemplates the Cross of Golgotha out of a feeling of infinite guilt and gratitude. The Crucified descends into the subconscious spiritual depths of such a person and, having prevailed there over a dark Ahrimanic double of ourselves, resurrects in the human soul as Love.

Whereas the rest of the Hierarchical beings, when descending into the depths, would lose touch with the Father, Christ is the one Being who keeps this connection below.³ He remains connected to the Father *also* below, opening up to the Father *through* death. At the same time, while all other Hierarchical beings, when descending into the depths, would turn good into evil, Christ is the One Who entirely maintains the good.

Thus, by empathizing with the Crucifixion, through the Christ power of the Cross, the dark double of humankind as a carrier of negative karma is overcome, and Love is born as the power of positive karma. In order to understand for ourselves what this empathy with the Crucifixion consists of, let us turn our eyes to the one who experienced this most deeply of all and can serve as an example to us—the beloved disciple of Christ, John.

John, who was present to all the passions of Christ, had to empathize with Him also at the Crucifixion. It was in this moment that the inexpressible tragedy of the Word of God became a historical fact, when the Word of God, which created everything, became numb on the Cross. But John had to empathize not only with the tragedy of God, who had entered humankind, but also with the tragedy of humankind in whom God had become numb. And so John was himself able to become the founder of the seven-step Christian Way of the Cross and to embody this great experience in his Gospel. So his empathy at the Crucifixion crowned his model of the seven-step Christian Way of the Cross, which since then must be carried out in the destiny of every single person and all of humanity.

In order to further understand the significance of this Christian Way of the Cross, for both the Heavenly and the Earthly worlds, we must learn the modes of action of negative and of positive karma in the course of world history.

We ask ourselves, then, first: how does the negative karma of humanity work?

As we have already mentioned⁴, the Earth is a creature that depends on the state of morality of humankind. The Earth “worsens” when a person acts immorally, since it retains in its depths all the dark and evil that humankind does, and in certain rhythms in fact further influences

³ [Ed. See Week 277 of the “Our Mother Course,” available from the Sophia Foundation: “Thus Christ was able to descend into hell, because He knew that He was united with that which is above, with the Father.”]

⁴ [Ed. In a previous section of Belotsvetov’s larger essay.]

human existence with this retained darkness. Thus from the depths of the Earth vague questions constantly arise in humankind, bitter reproaches, dark threats directed towards Heaven. But these questions, the reproaches and threats of the Earth, which sound from the abyss of the Earth with the rude voice of Ahriman the killer, are not abstract, like human questions, but are manifested in the facts of historical formation, in social upheavals and crises. These are, what's more, vague recrudescences from distant cultures. Everything negative that once happened in ancient Egypt, in the ancient times of Persia and India, and was then perceived by the Earth, gradually rises to the surface again as the negative karma of humankind.

So we live today in a time when the negative karma of Egypt and Babylon rises from the depths of the Earth. In the sixth post-Atlantean cultural era the negative karma of Persia will also rise. In the seventh post-Atlantean culture, the same thing will happen with the negative karma of India. And the farther in time we go, the worse will these vague questions, the bitter rebukes, and the dark threats of the Earth, be.

The problem is who can give a proper answer to these questions of the Earth? And if we ask this, we will find that only Heaven can answer the Earth's questions. Only Heaven can solve the dark upheavals of time. Humankind's true wisdom consists thus in delving into what Heaven has to say in each historical moment. Moreover, only Heaven can answer the problems arising in connection with distant times, the questions of the Earth arising from those times ...

And where should the Earth questions meet the answer of Heaven? — In the human soul.

It is for this reason that humankind itself must settle the affairs of world history, actively reconcile Heaven with the Earth by finding the correct answers to the problems of time. It is in humankind that a dialogue of facts is conducted between the Earth and Heaven in the course of the great powerful action of world history.

Humankind helps Heaven settle Earthly affairs by embarking on the Christian path of the Cross. This New Testament path constitutes redemption from the Old Testament path of destruction. In the New Testament future, humankind must correct what it has done in the Old Testament. It must again awaken the great world truth that it extinguished in the Old Testament in pre-Christian times through the debilitating processes of labor, suffering, and death. In order to know more precisely the goals of this future development, we must first look to the past and take into account the development that still clogs us in the post-Atlantean period. If you ask yourself what this past development means not only for humankind, but also for the great Self of humankind, for Christ, you will come to see that for Christ this pre-Christian path was a path of gradual dying.

Consider the culture of ancient India. At the beginning of this sacred culture, will, feeling, and thinking were still completely impersonal. It is through an impersonal will that the First Hierarchy could manifest itself; through an impersonal feeling — the Second Hierarchy; through an impersonal representation (or thinking) — the Third Hierarchy. At the core of this triune revelation was Christ. Therefore, we can say that at the beginning of ancient Indian culture, the power of knowledge of humankind still reached to the sphere of the First Hierarchy. The First Hierarchy are the bearers of stellar wisdom; figuratively speaking, we can therefore say that, at the beginning of the ancient Indian culture, Christ revealed himself to mankind in the stars. However, in the course of time, the world will was replaced in cognition by an independent human will. The wisdom of the First Hierarchy was thus erased from the consciousness of earthly

humanity. And in this way, we see that at the end of the ancient Indian culture, Christ experienced his first earthly death, in the stars.

In the second post-Atlantean culture, the culture of Persia, even during the time of the great Zarathustra, humankind could still perceive with an impersonal feeling the revelations of the Second Hierarchy, the solar Hierarchy. Christ then lived in the Sun, in a great solar aura. But after this, human feeling became independent; after Turan defeated Iran, this great solar wisdom of Zarathustra faded. And therefore, we can say that at the end of the Persian culture, Christ experienced his second earthly death, in the Sun.

Now if we look back at the Egyptian and Babylonian cultures, we find that during the heyday of these cultures, when the life of representation or thinking of humankind was still impersonal, the revelations of the Third Hierarchy were still available to humanity. The third Hierarchy open up through planetary wisdom. And since the subject of their revelations was Christ, we can say that Christ lived then on the planets. But when the life of representation or thinking in humankind became independent, when the wisdom of the Third Hierarchy was also erased by independent human thinking at the end of the Egyptian and Babylonian period, then Christ for the third time had to die in his earthly being, on the planets.

And when He then, and for the fourth time, now on Earth, was to die, through this earthly death it was fully revealed how humanity relates to Him. It was revealed that it was He Who had bestowed His life on humankind and that He had at last given Himself to us.

Thus He brought to humanity His fullest life, and this is by His death.

And when He was resurrected, it was revealed to this same humankind how it should, *in the future* also, relate to Him. For just as before his earthly death Christ died three times in the higher worlds, so in the future, after His earthly Sunday of Resurrection, He is destined to rise three more times in the higher worlds: first on the planets, then on the Sun, and finally in the stars. The immediate correspondence here is with the fifth post-Atlantean culture, the sixth, and the seventh. In this way will the resurrected Christianized *wisdom* of Egypt, Persia, and India make it possible for the Earth to answer all of its returning vague questions, reproaches, and threats coming from the past.

For the negative karma of Egypt and Babylon, which today shakes us in our *social* life, will be redeemed only by the resurrected wisdom of the planets, the resurrected wisdom of the third cultural era. In the same way, the negative karma of Persia will, in the sixth cultural era, affect the *earth*, and will only be redeemed by the resurrected wisdom of the great Zarathustra. As for the karma of *the fall itself*, the negative karma of India, this will be repeated in the seventh cultural era, and will have to be redeemed by the positive, resurrected wisdom of the seven Rishis.

But what is the basis for the resurrection of the treasures of ancient wisdom that will be accomplished due to the fact that Christ will be able to resurrect first on the planets, then on the sun, and finally in the stars?

Christ can accomplish this because He left something on the Earth that should be recognized by us as a precondition for this three-step resurrection, namely the great example of the Way of the Cross that He walked.

There must be people and human groups who want to consciously follow this path of the Savior, who want to stop the action of negative karma in the same way Christ did, who want to stand steadfastly under the blows of the scourge of negative karma, so that by enduring these blows they may turn evil into good.

Paradoxically, this path of true Christianity, the path of positive karma, could arise only under the blows of the scourge of negative karma. It is, in fact, thanks to the labor, suffering, and crucifixion caused by this negative karma that the human soul will be able to mediate the resurrected wisdom of ancient times.

Labor, suffering, and death are the means that lead to the resurrection of this wisdom, which should give the right answers to the Earth's questions. Thus it is through the spiritual labor of *imaginative* knowledge, through the suffering of *inspiration*, and through the experience of spiritual death in *intuition*, that the great Christ Self can enter human souls ...

For as the human Self experiences itself between its own body and its own spirit, so does the great Christ Self after His Death and His Resurrection reside between the body of all humankind and the heavenly world, connecting them with each other.

Christ Jesus, during His earthly life, worked on the shells of his own corporeality, turning this, through labor, suffering, and death, into a resurrection body. In this process, Christ together with Jesus defeated cosmic oblivion in Jesus' astral body, cosmic sleep in his etheric body and cosmic death in his physical body. Through this process, which necessarily involved Jesus, Christ abides now within the shells of all humankind, also in the dimensions of labor, suffering, and death.

And each person can help Christ in this work on the shells of humankind, by recognizing Him and consciously embarking on His path.

Cosmic oblivion, or shamelessness, is a most characteristic feature of our time. Only spiritual *imaginative* labor can overcome this cosmic oblivion in modern humanity. If humanity is destined to perform this spiritual work, then it will be able to work with Christ, who will be resurrected in angelic form on the planets. For this, however, people must experience Christ as if He had been crucified only yesterday and would be resurrected tomorrow. They must be able to experience great guilt before the Crucified, in order to be able to work with the Risen One on the planets.

In the sixth cultural era, when the negative karma of Turan rises from the depths of the Earth, spiritual imaginative labor will no longer be enough to be able to mediate the Resurrected Person in the sun. For then, not only cosmic oblivion will threaten humanity, but also cosmic sleep. In order to overcome cosmic dreaming and the further inherent danger of cosmic sleep at this time, people will have to go not only along the path of labor but also along the path of suffering, spiritual suffering, which leads through to an *inspiratory*, solar consciousness.⁵ Only through further spiritual suffering will a person be able to expand today's objective consciousness into the solar sphere. Finally, in the even more distant future, when the law of reincarnation is



Christ with the Cross in Tow
by Sebastiano del Piombo

⁵ [Ed. And this because imaginative labor is itself but a cosmic dreaming.]

abolished, a final cosmic impasse will also threaten us, which we can only avoid by experiencing the Crucifixion. By experiencing this Crucifixion, in the way we described at the beginning of this lecture, a person will then also take in the *intuitive* stellar consciousness, in order to be with Christ also when He abides with the Father.⁶

For only through this experience of Crucifixion, consisting in the opening of stellar consciousness in the physical body, will a further cosmic impasse be overcome. In this distant future, a person will be confronted with the need to either fall under the law of reincarnation or rise above this law.⁷ Under reincarnation is an area of cosmic death. Above reincarnation is the region of eternal life.

To be with Christ, when He is resurrected on the planets, one must go through spiritual labor. To be with Christ when He is resurrected in the Sun, one must be prepared to endure spiritual suffering. To be with Christ, when He is resurrected in the stars and abides with the Father, one must undergo death on the Cross.

For it is through death on the Cross, at the end of world history, that humankind must be saved from the Ahrimanic abyss. Only through universal crucifixion can cosmic death be overcome.

This will then be followed by the resurrection of humankind and its ascension. For the Ascension of the Resurrected One is precisely a sign that Christ after His resurrection lives in a body that He does not need to compose, in order that He may be able to return to the Father through the threshold of death. He lives in a body that has eliminated the law of reincarnation and can thus be accepted by the Heavenly world.

Knowing this, one can correctly assess the infinite significance of Christ's sacrifice for humanity. For Christ gives humankind the power to remain in the future a connecting link between Heaven and Earth. If Christ had not come, if He had not died on the Cross and not been resurrected after this, then what would have happened to humanity? Humankind would not have remained a connecting link between the Earth and Heaven. Then cosmic oblivion, cosmic sleep, and cosmic death would have prevailed over humanity.

Humankind would have descended towards the realm of cosmic oblivion. All human souls without Christ would then have fallen asleep and would no longer have been able to reconcile the Heavenly spirit with the Earthly body. The spirit would then have fallen victim to Lucifer. Finally the body of a fully dispossessed soul would have to become the prey of Ahriman; it would have descended into the area of cosmic death.

Cosmic oblivion would become the fate of the spirit, cosmic sleep the fate of the soul, cosmic death the fate of the body.

Thanks to Christ, however, humanity is saved from these three dangers.



Nikolai Belotsvetov

⁶ [Ed. The account in this last paragraph is given from the point of view of those who will have made continual *progress* through the epochs, through imaginative labor, inspiritive suffering, and finally their own crucifixion at the level of intuition. But this account assumes at the same time a course of destiny for that portion of humankind who might/will be hopelessly *regressing* through the epochs, subject to cosmic oblivion, sleep, and death.]

⁷ [Ed. For, given over to cosmic dreaming and then to cosmic sleep, the human soul would have to continue to reincarnate, to be given over eventually to cosmic death.]

Novalis's Vision of a New History, a New Humanity¹

John O'Meara

The main focus of Novalis's vision in his *Hymns to the Night* is the revelation of the Mother through the mediation of his beloved Sophie with whom in her death he had at last united. (Novalis launched into the *Hymns* around March of 1799, two years after Sophie's death.) Embedded in his vision of Sophie and the Mother, however, is the further vision of the Christ-Child in the arms of the Mother, as the Virgin Mary embodies Her historically. Novalis notes how this Child's "heavenly heart unfolded ... to a flower-like chalice of almighty love ... resting on the bliss-boding bosom of the sweetly solemn Mother."² All now becomes focused in this Christ-Child, Who is at the centre of all that has become possible for Novalis, Himself the fruit of that "embrace" of the Mother that had so occupied Novalis as the essential working of Nature's higher influence in us.³ Later on, this Child, by then a grown Man, gave Himself up to Death and at last "in everlasting life death found its goal," since which time "thousands have, out of pangs and tortures, followed thee." Displaced though he was from this original scene, in his own latter-day experience Novalis might yet be counted among those who have been witness to the resurrection from death that followed:

They see thee rise again, and themselves with thee; behold thee weep with soft fervour on the blessed bosom of thy mother, walk in thoughtful communion with thy friends, uttering words plucked from the tree of life ...

Christ's action, as expressed at this time, one might say lived again in Novalis's own experience, which now saw *him* in his triumph over death "weeping" with Christ on "the blessed bosom of the Mother," "walking in thoughtful communion with his friends [all fellow-believers], uttering words plucked from the tree of life." Beyond this point, the resurrected Christ is described as "hastening" back "to his father's arms" but "bearing ... youthful Humanity" with Him, a sign that the revelations of the higher world are now upon us. In the meantime, a mysterious "singer" is said to have appeared at the time of Christ's intervention, as a witness to it, and he is described proclaiming Christ's story to the far ends of the earth. This singer has been seen as an embodiment of the poetic genius of the Greeks, representing "the whole body of poetry which,



The Risen Christ Appearing to His Mother
by Daniele Monteleone

¹ Excerpted from *The Way of Novalis* by John O'Meara, Ottawa: HcP Ottawa, 2014, pp.116-119; 122-123. The present article is the last in a series of three articles on Novalis that have appeared in the *Starlight* pages. The first of these: "Novalis on the Enigma of Nature" appeared in the Advent 2018 issue, the second "Novalis on Illness and the Eucharistic Embrace" in the Easter 2019 issue.

² See *Hymn 5*. All references to the Crescent Moon edition of the *Hymns to the Night*, translated by George MacDonald, Maidstone, Kent UK, 2010.

³ See *Starlight* Easter 2019 pp.49-53 for more on Novalis's treasured theme of Nature's "embrace."

having its origin in Greek antiquity, then embraced the imagery and the mythology of Christianity, to bring religious understanding to the world.”⁴ This mysterious Greco-Christian “singer” who made himself consistently present through earlier centuries has again made himself present to Novalis in *his* time, as evidenced also in the two sections of “Christendom and Europe” that suddenly grow ecstatic with intimations of a “a new history, a new humanity” now in the making.⁵

In “Christendom” Novalis speaks inspiredly of what has now become spiritually and culturally possible clearly on the basis of the revelation *he* has had and is having. Turning his focus to the Day world [as distinguished from the Night world of his inspiration], Novalis sees the prospect of a new religious order for Europe beyond all sectarian commitments. This order will arise from a new inspirational revelation, and *along with* innumerable other members of a new church, Novalis sees *himself* in the role of the Mother embracing the Christ, having in the meantime *incorporated* Her inspiration:

All these things are still only hints, disjointed and rough, but to the historical eye they betray a universal individuality, a new history, a new humanity, the sweetest embrace of a surprised, young church and a loving God, and the ardent conception of a new messiah in all its thousand members at once.

Who does not feel the sweet shame of being with child?

This Messiah Who is to be born is the re-appearance of Christ in Novalis’s own time, and He is to be known along the way Novalis has travelled:

consumed as bread and wine, embraced like a beloved woman, breathed as air, heard as word and song, and with heavenly delight, amid the sharpest pangs of love, taken up in the form of death into the innermost part of the body whose turbulence ceases at last.

Working out of His own transcendent sphere in association with the Mother, the Messiah reveals Himself further through the higher mystery of social communion (the lesson Novalis had learned while in Teplitz). One’s beloved has in the meantime merged into the way the new Messiah reveals Himself



Mother Mary

See <http://www.goddess.ws/mother-mary.html>

⁴ See Margaret Mahoney Stoljar, *Athenaeum: A Critical Commentary*. Bern/Frankfurt: Herbert Lang and Company, 1973, p.139. One finds an extraordinary analogy for Stoljar’s account in the sequence of paintings by Raphael to be found in the Stanza della Segnatura, if one focuses on the figure in each of these paintings who seems to link one painting to the other, from the *Parnassus* through the *School of Athens* to the *Disputa*. (See images of these three figures below, p.81.) By this I mean in the case of the first of these paintings the figure at the bottom right who extends his left hand outward as if beyond that painting, in the case of the second painting the figure who passes through in white, and in the case of the third a similarly accentuated figure who stands in the foreground left and who seems to be acting as the scene’s presenter, pointing with his right hand directly to the Blessed Sacrament. Physically, the *Disputa* stands opposite the *School* in the Stanza, on the other side of the *Parnassus*, but the three paintings were clearly conceived as a historical continuum, and, in each, one and the same outstanding figure (in different guises) seems to be highlighted in a way that supports the view taken of a continuum in Novalis’s own figure of the “singer.”

⁵ References are to “Christendom and Europe” as this appears in Novalis’s *Philosophical Writings*, tr., Margaret Mahoney Stoljar, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1997.

in these terms, also through the word and song by which Nature's air is transformed and He is proclaimed, as Novalis himself was in the process of doing. This higher life lies, what's more, in a necessary intrinsic relation to death, for only by the identification of life with death is the perfection of our destiny assured until such time as we will merge more deeply with Christ *in* death.

All the terms of Novalis's long and involved progress in vision are enumerated here, and it is with a sense of all that has come together in his own experience that Novalis invites the readers of "Christendom" to give themselves to the same vision:

So come then you too ... brush the gray net aside and gaze with young love at the wondrous splendor of nature, history, and humanity ...

In the forging of this new time, the "singer" who passes through in the *Hymns* has *his* crucial role now as "brother":

I want to conduct you to a brother who will talk with you so that your hearts rejoice and you [may] gird your beloved, expired sensation with a new body ...

In what became numbered as the fourth song in his *Spiritual Songs*, Novalis makes reference to "Whom I saw" in his vision at Sophie's grave at the time of her death, which in context leaves no doubt that this was the Christ "Who for us did die," but He Himself is accompanied by another who would appear to be, as our translator has it⁶, this same "friend or brother." In "Christendom" Novalis announces that:

This brother is the heartbeat of the new age

Of him it is said that

He has made a new veil for the Holy Virgin ...

This new veil is none other than the new "song" of creation that this "brother" would inspire in Novalis's time. This brother's inspiration would extend beyond a "singing" that is merely its own activity to a new "musical" organization of the whole creation (a "music of numbers") inclusive of the "spiritual physics" Novalis hoped to see developed as a universal science, a "science of the whole" (as in his *Notes for an Encyclopedia*). Of this "Virgin," Who has re-appeared in Novalis's time in the form of his vision, it is said that "her lips open only to sing" — "singing" having here become a figure for all expressions of the new creation:

For me her singing is nothing but the ceremonial call to a new foundation-gathering, the mighty beating of the wings of an angelic herald who is passing.

This "angelic herald," who is associated with the Virgin's singing, would appear himself to be that same "singer," or "friend" from antiquity become "brother," who has passed through Christian history before, transformed at the time by the event of Christ's coming.⁷

⁶ George MacDonald, in the Crescent Moon edition cited in n.2, which also contains the *Songs*.

⁷ Some critics have taken the "angelic herald" in Novalis's "Christendom" to be Novalis's theologian-friend Friedrich Schleiermacher, largely on the basis of what his name literally denotes: i.e., "veil-maker," and also because Novalis in "Christendom" was in part building on Schleiermacher's recent example in his *Sermons on Religion*, a work Novalis thought highly of. But it is impossible to think that Schleiermacher, for all his well-deserved distinction, could ever fit the tremendous image of inspiration associated with Novalis's "angelic herald," and it is additionally ironic that some

The fifth Hymn from Novalis's *Hymns* ends with a long poem that apostrophizes what had indeed become the main figures of Novalis's vision by this point: the resurrected Christ, and the Mother Who has mediated Novalis's vision of Him. Like the poem that ends the *Hymns* as a whole, this poem is apocalyptic in orientation: already at the end of the fifth Hymn Novalis points to the end-goal of our earthly work with Christ: our return, in time, from the Day world that we continue to inhabit at present back to the everlasting realm of Night as our true home. Death Novalis envisages ideally as our conscious immersion once again in that realm. This will be the reward of our union with Christ while we have been here, union with Whom has already come to Novalis in an extraordinarily complete way. His breaking through the confines of his own tragic condition has been in Christ's own terms: "Free from the tomb emerges/Love," and his own experience of this love is now Novalis's firm possession: "[t]he sense in love abiding/Grows clearer and more strong." From here Novalis can intuit all the rest: how there will come a time when this Day world, by the transformations such Love will accomplish, will be finally re-integrated into the otherworldly realm of Night where the source of Love resides. The end of this poem, and this Hymn, is written as if Novalis could already project himself into that end-world, could see himself coming into it again, as a consequence of the force of his recent vision. Thus we are projected back into that original "sea" of motherly waters out of which our Day world was thrown out; we are projected/projected back into that all-illuminating "sun" that once radiated out from the midst of those waters as the one eternal object of human adoration in that Paradisal time of old:

*To the marriage Death doth call;
No virgin holdeth back;
The lamps burn lustrous all;
Of oil there is no lack.
Would thy far feet were walking
The echoes of our street!
And that the stars were making
Signal with voices sweet.*

*To thee, O Mother maiden
Ten thousand hearts aspire;
In this life, sorrow-laden,
Thee only they desire.
In thee they hope for healing;
In thee expect true rest.
When thou, their safety sealing,
Shall clasp them to thy breast.*

should emphasize that identification when one considers that Schleiermacher was among those who rejected Novalis's essay for publication. Soon after this rejection, the whole Jena circle began to fall apart: "it was not long afterward that their whole covenant was shattered and the flock was dispersed. Within three years not a single one of them was left at Jena." (Friedrich Hiebel, *Novalis*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1954, p.98.)

*Courage! For life is striding
To endless life along;
The sense in love abiding,
Grows clearer and more strong.
One day the stars down dripping,
Shall flow in golden wine:
We of that nectar sipping,
As living stars will shine.*

*Free, from the tomb emerges
Love, to die never more;
Fulfilled, life heaves and surges
A sea without a shore.
All night! All blissful leisure!
One jubilating ode!
And the sun of all our pleasure
The countenance of God.*



From the *Parnassus*, the *School of Athens*, and the *Disputa*, all by Raphael.
Was Novalis extending this picture of a historical continuum with his portrayal of
the "brother" as the "heartbeat" of a new age? See above p.79.

The Master Peter Deunov (Beinsa Douno) on the Great Wave of Love¹

from *The Teacher*, Volume One "The Dawning Epoch,"
translated and adapted by Maria Mitovska and Harry Carr.
London: Shining Word Press, 2015.

² We are crossing the boundary between two epochs, leaving the Kali Yuga and entering the new epoch. All people will pass through the divine fire, to purify themselves in preparation for the new epoch. Humanity will be uplifted to a higher level than the one we are at now. It is the only way that we may enter the new life. This is called the new birth. It will not be long before the fire arrives, it will change the world and bring a new morality. A great wave is coming at great speed from Cosmic Space. It will flood the whole world.

Our Solar System is leaving the Thirteenth Sphere, which has condensed matter.³ When the Earth has completely left this sphere the Sixth Race will come. The Solar System is entering a new field of the Spirit. This entering began in 1914. This zone contains virgin matter. Which is why we can expect resurrection. Those who are ready will be able to accept the new wave.

⁴ The Earth is still passing through a dark zone, but the future will be bright. We may call the new epoch the epoch of resurrection, because during this time divine love will vitalise and enliven human consciousness. (p.119 n.1)

⁵ Be sure that something very beautiful is coming into the world, something that humankind has never seen before.⁶ People all over the world, of all nations and races, are now forming the nucleus of a new race, with a new understanding. In the future there will be many more people of the Sixth Race on the earth than there are at present. (pp.204-205)

⁷ The entire physical world is entering a new phase, even though all beings are not at the same level of development. The new wave that is coming will not leave you in the same old condition. This transformation will not only take place on Earth, but throughout the entire Cosmos. Those who do not accept the divine wave will experience a great sorrow similar to hell. The more you consciously or unconsciously resist this wave, the more you will suffer. If you experience this suffering, you will know that you are opposing this wave and need to harmonize yourself with it. To do so, say to yourself, "I should be in agreement with the great divine love and act as the divine world is acting." (p.364 n.11)

¹ Compiled by the Editor.

² Delivered some time between 1929 and 1940.

³ "A broader spiritual meaning is intended in the case of 'matter,' one that is not only from the point of view of physics." (Comment provided by Emily Michael.)

⁴ 17 January 1940.

⁵ Between 1929 and 1940.

⁶ 1944.

⁷ 3 February 1924.

from *The Wellspring of Good The Last Words of the Master Beinsa Douno*,
compiled and translated by Antoaneta Krushevskaja,
Walnut Creek, CA: Evera Books, 2013.

⁸ The whole world, the whole Solar System, the whole Universe, everything is moving in a new direction. Human consciousness is expanding. You will be witnesses to that great Expansion; you will be witnesses to that Great Transformation for which God now prepares the whole of humankind.

Some will say, "Once the world is set to order, all other things will fall into place on their own." This is not so. You cannot wait for the world to improve, but should enter into the New Life this very moment.

Those in whom the Divine is made manifest, these are the ones who belong to that great New Culture, which is now in preparation. When we enter it, we will be as free as those who are our Advanced Brothers: the Angels, the Archangels, the Cherubim, the Seraphim. All will have such freedom as they did when God first gave it to them. You are a part of the humankind that errs, but at one time you belonged to the humankind that knew no error ... (pp.176-177)

At present we are just beginning to be born again in Love. You tell me: "Our hearts are full of sacred anticipation." But your Beloved Ones have not yet come. Only now are they descending to Earth. What you now perceive is merely their reflection; and for this reason you are feeling disappointed.

Love is coming and will unite all beings into one as servants of God. Thousands of beings have worked in the material world, and in the Invisible World as well, to bring about the favorable conditions that the Great One may come in the name of Love. The Great Day is coming into the world. The Manifestation of the Great One is anticipated by all good and advanced Beings. Those whose consciousness has awakened will perceive the Great Divine Origin and be transformed. If you miss the Great Wave of Love, which is now coming, you will need to wait millions of years for the next one. This Wave of Love will transform the adversity of the past into fertile soil ... Through Love all accounts between people will be reconciled. (pp.119-120)

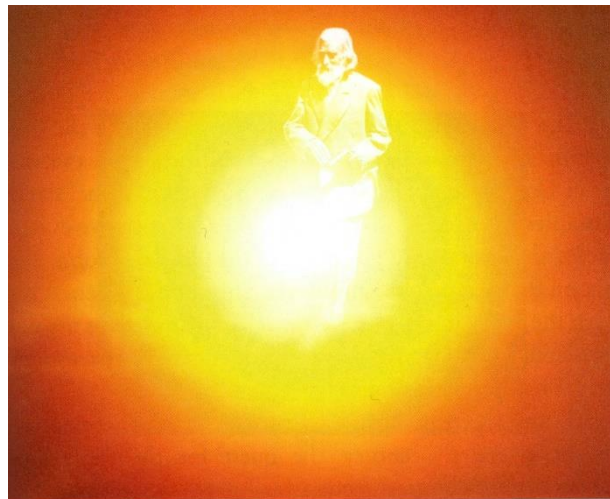
So follow your Great Mother: Love. Do not obstruct Love from manifesting through you. The one who errs against Love will find it difficult to establish balance and harmony within. Now is the time you should begin to love—in the present moment, not in the future. Do not deny the least loving feeling that arises in your soul. Whenever someone attempts to express their love, let them be. Do not concern yourselves with the question of who loves whom.

That Wave of Love that descends from on High and manifests within you, permeates and washes over all the Earth and all of Creation ... (pp.151-153)

⁸ After January 1944.

The whole world is created by Love alone. The Origin of all things is Love. It is the Primordial Eternal Substance in which we all live. The valuable fruit that awakens the human soul, the human heart, is Love. All living beings, from the least to the greatest, move in God's Love, This is the way in which the whole Universe moves. I know Who moves the Universe.⁹

The silent Voice of Nature represents the Manifestation of Love. The Light speaks softly because it carries Love within itself. Can you sharpen your hearing in such a way as to be capable of hearing what the Light is saying? [Love] does not enter, nor does it exit. Love cannot be lost, nor can it be gained. How can you gain what abides within you? How can you lose that which you are immersed in? Whether you believe it or not, you are immersed in the Great Eternal Substance: within Love, within God. (pp.92-93)



*The Master Peter Deunov
by Emily Michael*

⁹ Cf. Dante's final reference in the *Paradiso* to "the Love that moves the Sun and the other stars."

The True Passover and its Harbinger and Initiator – Beinsa Douno¹, The Universal Master and Herald of the New Epoch²

Emily Michael

The LORD's Passover begins at twilight on the fourteenth day of the first month. (Leviticus 23:5) The Passover of the Lord represents the departure of the Israelites from Egypt. And so far they are still celebrating their departure from Egypt, i.e. liberation from Egyptian slavery. What is new in the world today? What is new is the Light! What is new is Freedom! What is new is Eternal Life³, which is to come among [us], to show [us] that not only the Jews but all people came out of Egypt through the Passover of the Lord.⁴

Beinsa Douno, the Master

Lit candles are an integral part of the traditions of Eastern Orthodoxy and other Christian denominations when celebrating the central festivals of Christendom. In one of his lectures in Berlin, in 1909, Rudolf Steiner inserted into the context of the lecture several words on the role of lit candles during holy festivities and then related the picture of the candle-fires burning and shimmering in the dark to an inner imagination:

We allow the lights that burn here before us to manifest in us in all its fullness the impulse that comes to us from the spiritual world, to take the Gospel literally! And we understand these outwardly shining lights as sense images of the fires that are to be ignited in our souls, and that, if ignited by anthroposophical knowledge of Christ, will reignite in the Sixth Cultural Age of the post-Atlantean period.⁵

Steiner made an important distinction between the Fifth and Sixth cultural epochs and their direct connection to the two most significant macrocosmic Christian Feasts for humankind—Christmas and Passover. He views these from a microcosmic angle, outlining their meaning individually for each person:

[A]nd if we celebrate the true Christmas in the Fifth Culture, thanks to this, in the Sixth Culture, we will celebrate the true Passover. Just as the wonderful Christmas song sounds to us on the night before Christmas: "Today is born our Saviour Christ the Lord!" so we, remembering Christ's birth in our soul, will perceive in ourselves the

¹ Generally known as the Master Peter Deunov.

² This article translated by Emily from the Bulgarian in which she originally wrote it, and adapted by the Editor.

³ Eternal Life is *knowing Christ*. "Now this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only True God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent," (John 17:3) "that everyone who believes in Him may have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that everyone who believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:15,16)

⁴ Deunov, Peter, 1937. "The LORD'S Passover," in *The Thief and the Shepherd*. Sofia: White Brotherhood Publishing, p.288. Delivered on December 1, 1929 in Sofia (as part of his Sunday Lectures series).

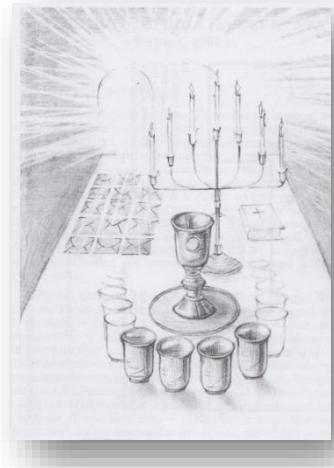
⁵ Steiner, Rudolf. "The Christmas Mood," in *Secrets of Human Development, GA 117*. Dornach: Rudolf Steiner Nachsverwaltung, 1986, p.205. Delivered on December 26, 1909 in Berlin. See <http://fyn-archiv.net/PDF/GA/GA117.pdf>

message of this true higher Self.⁶ We will remember this and this memory will be reborn in us as Passover; and then we will hear within us the majestic, wonderful sound of the Paschal organ: Christ Risen in us, igniting and enlightening our own Divine individuality!⁷

Thus, the Sixth cultural epoch, also referred to by Steiner as the Slavic epoch, can be called the “Epoch of the true Passover,” during which the higher essence of the individuality of each human being will be immersed in the light of Christ’s Self living in it. The World Master Beinsa Douno came among humankind to prepare for this Sixth Cultural Epoch—to prepare for the true Passover feast, from which the seed for the Sixth Root Race will emerge. He brought a broader explanation of Passover and the nature of self-sacrifice⁸ seen through the prism of Love.⁹ In one of his talks, he discusses the link between Passover and self-sacrifice:

Now I will read you verse 18 on page 378 of the Bible: “No such Passover had been observed in Israel since the days of Samuel the prophet. None of the kings of Israel ever observed a Passover like the one that Josiah observed with the priests, the Levites, all Judah, the Israelites who were present, and the people of Jerusalem.” (2 Chronicles 35:18)

The Passover is a remembrance of deliverance from the age of slavery. With the Passover, the Israelites commemorated their deliverance from slavery in Egypt. When a person loves, he/she must celebrate the Passover—it is a remembrance of deliverance from slavery. When a person wants to be freed from any kind of bondage, he/she must make the Passover [sacrifice].¹⁰ The Passover [sacrifice] can only be made under the Law of Love. If you do not love, you can never make the Passover [sacrifice]. Why? —Because in Love there is always a sacrifice. Who will you sacrifice? —Yourself. Whoever loves will sacrifice him/herself first. If you do not know how to make the Passover [sacrifice] within you, if you do not know how to sacrifice yourself, you have not understood the law of Love; so first, one must know how to celebrate one’s own Passover ... know how to sacrifice. We all speak about self-sacrifice, but we need to know how to make that self-sacrifice. Sacrifice is a common law for all ... One is sacrificed first, then the second, etc. The law of sacrifice is inevitable. There will be no one left in the world who does not sacrifice him/herself.¹¹



⁶ The Higher Self, I, or “ICH” in German.

⁷ Steiner, “The Christmas Mood,” see n.5.

⁸ Sacrifice here has the sense of sacrificing the lower nature to a higher one, sacrificing the merely human ego and letting it dwell in the higher one, the Christ Ego within.

⁹ Divine Love.

¹⁰ “And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and they made the Passover sacrifice on the fourteenth day of the month at evening in the plains of Jericho.” (Joshua 5:10)

¹¹ Deunov, 1930. “Binding and Loosing,” in *Youth Gathering of the Disciples of the Universal White Brotherhood*. Sofia: White Brotherhood Publishing, p.24. Delivered on July 13, 1930. See <https://bit.ly/2PAdVO8>

These words testify that the Passover is synonymous with the Freedom of the human being, and that when one is released through Love, one sacrifices oneself. Returning to Steiner's words, the following interpretation can be formulated: in the Sixth Post-Christian culture, the Christ born in our I (our Higher Ego) will rise *again* in us as the Feast of Freedom—the true Passover. Then from Love will be born the self-sacrificing action of each human being, and the people of the New Culture will have a new philosophy and a new understanding of Love. Through Beinsa Douno the Master, the Divine Word was delivered to Humankind—the new Teaching of Love. This Teaching should be embraced and applied by all of Slavdom, which is assigned to ignite this Love in all peoples in order that the New Culture of Humanity may come.

The Lord Himself, and the Spirit of the new LORD'S Covenant, was manifested through the Master, through an announcement: *A Call to My People*, delivered on October 8, 1898.¹² To the Bulgarian people was given the task of Heaven—to transmit to Russia, to all of Slavdom,¹³ and to all peoples the New Divine Teaching of Love, the New Michaelic Sun¹⁴ Teaching—and to become thus a vehicle of the Sixth Culture on Earth.

In the mystical text “Hyo-Eli-Mel(h)i-Messael”¹⁵, the title of which is in Aramaic—the language spoken by Christ—one can observe a clear distinction between the individual manifestations of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. This individual manifestation of the members of the Holy Trinity is a new event for humanity and in its essence is an experience intrinsic to the Universal Master, a collective Spirit that includes the Angels, Archangels and others from the Higher Spiritual Hierarchies.¹⁶ The brochure “Hyo-Eli-Mel(h)i-Messael” appeared in 1897, the year of the Sun Spirit's inception and interpenetration into Peter Deunov. Thus, the Master shed light on the future Sixth Race and said that people of different races did not have the same concept of love, that the five races have five different concepts of love, but that the Sixth Race, which will come in the future, will have a whole new unitary understanding of Love:

When the Sixth Race comes to earth, the situation of Christians will improve. They [the Sixth Race] carry a large supply of energy to create new forms, and some of the people today are called upon to participate in this. These are the people who will create something great in the world. These are the people who will implement the ideas of

¹² See <http://prizvanie.bg/English/> and <http://petardanov.info/Knigi/Prizvanie.pdf> (Translated by Harrie Salman and Mariana Radoulova).

¹³ Slavdom as a bearer of the Sixth Post-Atlantean Epoch.

¹⁴ The Spirit who penetrated and manifested through the Master Peter Deunov originates from the Sun, according to the Master's testimony. His origin is the Central (or Universal) Sun of Christ. This is one of the reasons why the Master Deunov bears the name of the Universal or World Master. [Ed. It is a matter in everything of a Being, or set of Beings, existing one inside the other.]

¹⁵ HYO=ELI=MEL(H)I=MESAEL has the meaning YEHOUAH=GOD=KING=GOD-SAVIOUR. I translate this “noun-equation,” or appellation, perhaps spoken by Jesus Christ, from an ancient form of Aramaic language that no longer exists. There is an alternative translation: YEHOUAH=MY GOD=MY KING=GOD-SAVIOUR. I suggest that **these Words might be the Words of Jesus on the Cross**, which are not mentioned by the Bible, but are archived in the Akashic Records, which were an open book for the Universal Master.

¹⁶ It is “a collection of different souls that have come out of [the bosom] of God.” – “The Holy Spirit will teach you everything.” – “By the words *Holy Spirit* we mean **all** the luminous, lofty Spirits that make one Spirit with Christ. In this sense, **Christ is a collective Being.**” (The Master)

*Brotherhood among humans. These are the people who will bring Truth and Freedom to the world. These are the people of Eternal Peace and Order in the world.*¹⁷

Regarding the next Coming of Christ, the Master also prophesized:

*Christ will [fully] come to earth only when His wounds disappear/are completely healed. This will happen in the time of the Sixth Race. So until people change their sinful lives, Christ will not [fully] come to earth.*¹⁸ *As Christ [fully and finally] comes to earth, the earth will be set ablaze, illuminated and burned. Fire will come down to earth, to burn away all impurities. All the bad and impure thoughts and feelings of people will burn out and only the idea-full, the beautiful in them will remain. They will begin a new life of Love and Knowledge, and of true Freedom*¹⁹. *This applies to those who will be ready. They will understand Life*²⁰ *and apply Love. Those who are not ready will wait for new conditions.*²¹

At the fraternal gathering of the *Chain*²² of *Divine Love* in Turnovo in 1914, the Master presented a special figuration of the Pentagram²³ and he established the motto for the selected present Chain members—future disciples of the White Brotherhood School: “In the fulfilment of the Will of God through Love is the power of the human soul.” The same words are inlaid on the marble pentagram placed on the Master’s Grave²⁴ in Sofia. The Master underlined the importance of understanding God’s Will: “*The great question that sits on the agenda of all humanity today is the question of the Will of God.*”²⁵ Love is the Key to the fulfilment of the Will of God, and this Key will be acquired by the people of the Sixth Race. The Master gave an assurance to all of us: “*The Sixth Race, namely, will be able to fulfil the Will of God.*”²⁶ To shed light as an imagination upon the human being of the Sixth race is to bring hope that one day we will be part of this new race: “*To think of God and fulfil His Will means to be a spring that constantly gushes and carries its waters far; to be constantly moving air; to be the Sun that illuminates the whole Universe.*”²⁷

At the Easter festivity, which is called in Bulgaria *Възкресение Христово* (the Resurrection of Christ feast), from 1922 onwards, the disciples of the School of the White Brotherhood celebrated with songs, prayers, and talks by the Master, through whom the Spirit of Truth spoke.²⁸ On the

¹⁷ Deunov, 1940, “As the world gives,” in *The Works of God, (Power and Life), Volume 3, Thirteenth Series (1929–1930)*. Sofia: White Brotherhood, p.27. Delivered on March 2, 1930 in Sofia. See <https://bit.ly/34A9bfY>

¹⁸ Christ will not appear again in His physical body.

¹⁹ I.e., they will celebrate the *True* Passover.

²⁰ They will understand Christ. See n.3.

²¹ Deunov, 2012, “Genesis and Revelation,” in *The Key of Life*. Sofia: White Brotherhood Publishing, p.537. Delivered on May 22, 1929 in Sofia (as part of the General Occult Class).

²² The Chain was founded in 1899 in Varna.

²³ See <https://bit.ly/34xvB1s>

²⁴ The most popular of the modern Bulgarian clairvoyant women, Vanga (1911-1996) said that if the grave of the Master were to open now, it would be completely empty, without any remains of Peter Deunov’s body. With this statement, she hinted that the Master resurrected in a way that is similar to Christ.

²⁵ Deunov, “Lord’s Passover,” see n.4.

²⁶ Delivered on August 27, 1929. See <https://bit.ly/2EvB5ir>

²⁷ Deunov, “Lord’s Passover,” see n.4.

²⁸ The traditional Easter Greeting in Bulgaria, Russia, and other countries is “Christ Resurrected!” Among other things, the disciples were advised by the Master to do the following exercise: “For, the [feast of the] **Resurrection of Christ**

day after Easter the Master usually led the students on an excursion into Nature, for example, the mountains next to Sofia. At the end of the Easter talk, he would sometimes give them a painted coloured egg, with a Bible verse written on it—a desk verse for each disciple.

The Gatherings of the Chain were sanctified by the Spirit of God Himself through a sacred ritual, a re-enactment of the Last Supper. This ritual was called the “LORD’s Supper.” The Master never spoke before the disciples the words “Holy Grail” or “the stream of the Holy Grail” because he himself directed that stream, and he carried the Love that is the New Grail for Humanity. Besides, upon coming to Earth, the Master was accompanied by a group of souls, a group of individualities who had participated in the Last Supper and witnessed the Mystery of Golgotha. These individualities quietly and humbly came on earth in the flesh as disciples of Beinsa Douno—the Universal Master—who resided in constant communion with Christ and the Holy Trinity.

As instructed by the Master, Passover Vessels of pure silver were made.



The Chalice, a symbol of the Holy Grail, was made with the image of Christ. In the box made for the Passover Vessels the Master placed a knife, engraved with symbols,²⁹ below, and a Stick at the top, above the Passover Vessels.³⁰ This Stick resembles a Sceptre³¹, a Royal insignia, i.e. Pastoral Authority. The arrangement of the Passover Vessels in the box is as follows.

At the top, the Chalice with the image of Jesus Christ. Beneath it, symmetrically to the left and right, two more Vessels,³² with which the Chalice builds a triangle—symbolizing the Christian *Holy Trinity*. To the left and right of the Chalice are situated 6 other Vessels, or a total of 12 Vessels, with inlaid pentagrams,³³ signs, and Hebrew letters. These 12 Vessels symbolize the cups of the 12 Apostles³⁴ of Christ during the Passover celebrated by them.

Under the Chalice is a paten,³⁵ a small bread plate, with three engraved concentric equilateral triangles³⁶ with the outermost triangle inscribed in a Zodiacal Circle (see image

that is coming, **give up these two words** [“Christ Resurrected”], which are smooth on the outside [but] do not carry Peace on the inside, but put the words ‘Father’ and ‘Son’ into you.” This exercise was intended to facilitate the descent of the Holy Spirit upon them.

²⁹ The sharp part of the knife pointing to the left, a symbol of Power: “This knife is also an emblem representing the Sword of God and therefore we see it in a Cross shape.” (B.D.)

³⁰ This Stick was one of the emblems of the Chain. It was made from the juniper tree brought from the Rila Monastery—the place where in the 9th century the highly evolved individuality, known as the hermit from the St. John of Rila, was living. He was not born but rather appeared, penetrated by a lofty Spirit, and he was able to heal in a way similar to Christ.

³¹ It has a similarity with a flute.

³² Separately from the 12 Vessels.

³³ The Pentagram and its symbols were seen by the Master in a vision in heaven on August 20, 1899.

³⁴ Also the 12 Zodiacal Universal Beings, as the paten, the silver bread plate, indicates (see next paragraph).

³⁵ See <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paten>

³⁶ See https://etc.usf.edu/clipart/42900/42971/con3-3_42971.htm

below). The triangle is a symbol of the Holy Trinity. The three triangles are the three worlds— Divine, Spiritual, and Physical.³⁷ Under the base of the largest triangle is engraved the verse, *Sanctify³⁸ us³⁹ by the Truth; Your Word is Truth.* (John 17:17) Beneath the Bible verse the Master’s Signature is engraved.



During the LORD’s Supper, the Passover Vessels were taken out and placed on a table⁴⁰ towards the East in a U-shape, symbolizing the Chalice⁴¹ of the Lord—the Chalice of Salvation (see Image 1 above).

The uppermost Vessels in the U-shape (probably) were the symbols for the Father— Jehovah Elohim, and the Holy Spirit— Adonai. Under them were the Vessels of the 12 Apostles. This was the U-shape. The Vessels, besides the Chalice, were 14 in number—representing the 14 days of the first month⁴²—the Passover Time: 14+1=15. The total Vessels were 15, along with 15 envelopes for the Word of God.⁴³

The Eucharist or the Last Supper, which was re-enacted by the Master and the chosen disciples as a priesthood, differs from many other similar rituals in that it has always been led by the Spirit of God. This LORD’s Supper was blessed and sanctified by the presence of Christ Himself, indeed by the Holy Trinity. In the Vessels that were shared among the Master and his disciples, symbolically Christ, the Father, the Holy Spirit, and the 12 Apostles of Christ participated in this re-enacted LORD’s Supper.

Right from the very beginning of the establishment of the Chain,⁴⁴ which was also called the Synarchy Chain,⁴⁵ led by the Spirit of Christ, communal lunches and dinners began to be

³⁷ The Master later gave in his lectures also a deeper understanding of the three concentric equilateral triangles: *In the innermost [triangle] you will write: Love, Wisdom, Truth; in the second: Soul, Spirit, [Physical] Body; and in the third: Heart, Mind, Will.* (B.D.)

³⁸ In the Bulgarian language the word “sanctify” also means “illuminate,” i.e. is connected to the Light.

³⁹ The Master changed “them” to “us” in this verse.

⁴⁰ The table also plays a role in the LORD’S Supper.

⁴¹ The U-form symbolizing a cup, i.e. cUp, or Chalice.

⁴² The Chalice represents the First Month.

⁴³ This explanation of the 14+1 Passover Vessels is my own.

⁴⁴ In 1897/1899. This reference contains two years because of the name changes: 1897 marked the foundation of the “Society for the Uplifting of the Religious Spirit”; in 1899 the Master used the “Chain” for the Society. The Chain was also called the “Synarchy Chain.”

⁴⁵ *Those of you who have understood my words have to form among each other a Divine Chain of Harmony and Unity: unity in thoughts, in feelings, in actions and aspirations in all directions. Some prominent occultists give it the name “Synarchy,” and in*

served, thus repeating the tradition of the first Christians. An important and mysterious element in each Chain Gathering was the Eucharist, which restores and repeats the LORD's Supper from the time of the greatest event of humanity – the Mystery of Golgotha.

During the Chain Gatherings, a new impulse came into the LORD's Supper – from the Invisible Presence of Christ, Who, inviting us to the LORD's Supper, blessed humankind with a Third Testament, *the Testament of Divine Love*, and the New Passover.⁴⁶ The Master delicately used the word "Friends" to suggest the presence also of high-ranking and sublime Spirits. Another name, which he used on other occasions, is the "Big White Brothers of Humankind" – who include the highly advanced lofty Beings from the Spiritual Hierarchy. The modern human mind can hardly embrace the Cosmic Scale of God's Plan and the great historical and cosmic events that were being enacted during the Gatherings initiated by the Master Deunov. In the official Protocols of the Chain Gathering, the Third, on August 14, 1906 in Varna, in shorthand there is the following:

Three Invisible Friends, patrons of the Slavs and in particular the Bulgarian people, were present. These Three Friends also carry the name "All".⁴⁷ For these Three Heavenly Visitors, Three Chairs were arranged in front of the icons in the room where our meetings took place. As we entered the room, each of us bowed before them and then sat in our chair in a row. "All" means Immanuel, i.e. "The Lord is with us" and among us Who teaches us – He is the Great Master and Saviour.⁴⁸

Another of the contemporary Mysteries, connected with the LORD's Supper of the Chain Gathering held on August 15th 1907, is the call and the presence of the Holy Trinity:

There was a table set with Passover Vessels and next to it Three Chairs for the Invisible Visitors: Lord Jesus Christ; Jehovah Elohim; and Adonai, the Holy Spirit. The [participants] prayed to the Holy Spirit-Adonai to come and fill them all with Wisdom.⁴⁹ They made three bows to the Three Invisible Visitors and read from the Bible. They stood before the table and [the Master] broke the bread, and passed the Vessel with the letter⁵⁰ bearing the name of the one for whom the cup was intended. Master Deunov spoke to them. [...] The next day [August 16th] they formed the Chain in

the Gospel it is called the "Kingdom of God." By "Synarchy" [joint rule] we mean [an association of] the most intelligent people in the world who have touched the mysteries of life, who have passed a series of exams, have completed their evolution, and can really be called [the true] "people" [of God]. (B.D.)

⁴⁶ After the Old and New Testaments a New one follows: "The New Covenant with God will be 'The Testament of God's Love.' This Love will unite all people into **one common Brotherhood.**" (B.D)

⁴⁷ "All" as in "Pan-" and "Eu-."

⁴⁸ Peter Deunov, D.G.P.G., "Annual Gatherings," in *The Chain of Divine Love*. Sofia: White Brotherhood Publishing & Zahari Stoyanov Publishing, 2017. See <https://petardanov.info/Knigi/Verigata.pdf>

⁴⁹ Cf. Rudolf Steiner: *Love is the result of new-born Wisdom in the Self (I, Ego). What has been prepared as Wisdom through Saturn, the Sun and the Moon, works in the physical, etheric and astral bodies of man; it appears as the 'Cosmic (Universal) Wisdom'; however, in the Self (I, Ego), it becomes an inner essence. And when that is already a fact, the inner wisdom becomes the germ of Love. Wisdom is the prerequisite of Love; Love comes as a result of new-born Wisdom in the Self.*

⁵⁰ Hebrew letter.

*the Astral World.*⁵¹ *The Master's words were: "Today we will form the Chain in the Astral World."*⁵²

The following were the Master's words, and he again points to the presence of the Three Friends: "Look out to the Three Friends who have been appointed to you as Teachers." That same year the Master made an extremely important statement:

This year we are going to proceed in this way: if anyone is in need, you should send a letter to [inform] me, then I will set a time for you to pray [for the one in need]. There will be a specific form⁵³ of these letters, so that when you receive [this form], you will know who to pray for. In these cases, you should always call upon the Three Friends and pronounce their names. Call on the Friends with the words: "Lord Jesus Christ! Jehovah – Elohim! Comforter, Holy Spirit-Adonai!"⁵⁴



Holy Trinity Icon by Andrey Rublev.
See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trinity_\(Andrei_Rublev\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trinity_(Andrei_Rublev))

Today we can hardly comprehend the scale of such a presence—the presence of the Holy Trinity! With open senses for the entire Universe and for everything visible and invisible, the Master announced at the end of the Gathering, on August 19th:

The Friends have left. On their departure, the Friends told us: "May My Blessing be on you all year long."⁵⁵

During the Gathering the following year, in 1908, the Master said that only one of the Friends—Christ, was present and would lead the meetings:

This year, only the Lord Christ, who is the Leader of the Chain, will be present. One of our Friends who attended last year is now present in Russia and England, the second in Turkey, and the third, Christ, Who is also the Leader of the Chain, is here.⁵⁶

The Master Deunov reassured the brothers and sisters:

This year, Christ, the Head of the Chain, will be with it all year and will not leave it.⁵⁷

Not, of course, that Christ was bound only to the Chain. On the last Gathering day, the Master explained something more regarding the Three Friends:

⁵¹ Krastev, V., 1999. I.02.16. "Master Peter Deunov and the Passover of the Third Testament," in *Izgrevo*, vol.11, Sofia, p.66.

⁵² See n.51.

⁵³ Template.

⁵⁴ See n.48.

⁵⁵ See n.48.

⁵⁶ See n.48.

⁵⁷ See n.48.

By the time the Gathering is over and you leave and go, those three Spirits Who were [present] in the Chain will already be engaged to work and no longer be among you.⁵⁸

The next year, in 1909, the LORD's Supper was held at the Chain Gathering in Varna, at which Christ was again invisibly present. There were fruits and bread on the table. Just as at the LORD's Supper, Jesus Christ broke bread and gave his disciples wine, commanding them to do so when they commemorated him, so the Master broke bread and gave a cup of wine to each of the called ones. Then three people stood before the Throne,⁵⁹ taking the three ribbons in different colours and putting them on their heads, after which the Master placed his right hand on their heads, pronouncing "Peace be with you!"

The town of Veliko Tarnovo hosted the next meeting of the Chain in 1910:

At this Gathering were given the three laws of the Synarchy Chain, the Testimonies of the Chain, the Promise of God. At the LORD's Supper, the Lord manifested to those in attendance. [The Master said:] "Today, our Friends are present. They are here. And they are the ones who help the Chain." When breaking the bread, those present heard the words of Christ Himself, who spoke through the Master Deunov: "I am the One who led you in the past. I am the One who leads you in the future ... Be blessed by My Father. This bread is a symbol of My Love, and this is how I want your life to stand for our brethren."⁶⁰

When passing the wine, the meeting attendees in the room heard the following words spoken through the Master:

"This is the Chalice of Salvation, this Chalice is the Eternal Love and My Spirit⁶¹ Who works in you, and Who raises you; and Who enlightens your minds; and sanctifies your hearts. Drink from it, and be blessed!"

And as he gave bread, there sounded out of the Master's mouth:

"This is Divine Love for your Salvation. God bless all the suffering who need this bread!"

Three days later, the Master encouraged the members of the Gathering: "Turn to the Lord called Immanuel!" The next day, participants were invited to remember something extremely important that will guide them in their spiritual journey: "And remember that what you read from the books will be understood in one way, and what is given to you by the [Holy] Spirit will be understood in another way."

At the LORD's Supper in Veliko Tarnovo in 1911, the Master Deunov read Bible verses, which were prepared by the Holy Spirit, and he passed bread and wine to each one with the words:

⁵⁸ See n.48.

⁵⁹ The description of The Throne is missing in the text of the protocols. Most probably the three chairs, prepared for the Three Friends constituted symbolically the Throne, i.e. the Throne of God.

⁶⁰ See n.51.

⁶¹ The Holy Spirit.

This is the body of Christ given to you and for your Salvation [when passing the bread].

This is the Chalice that is drunk for your Salvation [when passing the wine].

At the close of the Gathering, the Spirit of Christ spoke through the Master:

“If you love me, you will keep the law, and I will ask the Father to give you the Comforter.”

This is Christ’s Promise, to send upon us the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, who will descend on everyone who is able to love, just as Christ loves us.

In 1912 the town of Veliko Tarnovo again welcomed the Chain. Wine, bread, and fruits were on the table for the LORD’s Supper:

Bread means the Life that the Lord sends—Christ had to come to establish the Living Bread. Wine, this is the Divine Spirit—it is receiving a gift from the Spirit, and when you receive it in your hearts, you will receive the Fruits of the Spirit.⁶²

The Master again said:

This is the Living Bread of Life, which came down from Heaven for the Salvation of your soul.

This is the Chalice of the Lord, the [Holy] Spirit of the Lord, which is given for your Salvation.

At the end of the Gathering, the Master Deunov conveyed the Words of the Lord—the Words of Christ:

The Words of the Lord that I speak to you are these: “Believe in My Words! I will be with each of you. My Peace I give you! My Peace I leave to you. Work in the harvest in which you are placed⁶³, and My Father will affirm you in every good work! Walk in the Path of Truth and Life in which I abide! My Father will do everything for your souls. He will give you according to the abundance of His generosity. The obstacles in your life I will smooth out and turn everything around into good. Believe in Me and you will be given everything!”

In 1913, again in the town of Veliko Tarnovo, before the LORD’s Supper, the Master washed the feet of 12 people in a basin. They read different Bible verses. Bread and wine were passed by the Master, and He gave an extremely important explanation regarding the Passover:

This custom of the Supper is the custom of the White Brotherhood and has existed for 10,000 years. Bread represents Virtue, and wine represents Righteousness. Washing the feet is also an old custom. The left foot, as you know, represents also Virtue, and your right foot—Righteousness.⁶⁴

The Master Deunov also gave advice:

⁶² The Fruits of the Spirit are all of Christ’s Virtues.

⁶³ “Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest.” (Matthew 9:38)

⁶⁴ See the Pentagram explanation given by the Master.

Therefore, stick to the Law of Love, because for whoever does not want to forgive people Moses and the Law of Karma come. The Lord is among us! He listens to us, has joy with us, and loves us. Christ this year will testify in your soul and give you as much evidence as you want, just open your eyes and ears. People who serve God, they are luminous, and people who do not serve are dark.⁶⁵

According to the Brotherhood Archive, there is a statement that after the year 1912, after bringing forth *The Testament of the Color Rays of Light* under the instructions of Christ Himself, for a second time a mighty Being overlighted the Master⁶⁶ and he became Universal (World) Master. In the language of spiritual science this Being mediates a Collective Spirit of All Hierarchies and the Holy Spirit of Christ. A majestic event in the Cosmos!

Two years after that, in Veliko Tarnovo, the LORD's Supper was preceded by a night vigil, from 12 o'clock at night until 12 o'clock noon, and began at 7 p.m. The Master said:

Bread means the Teaching of Christ, and wine is His Love, through which we rise and become one with Him. The grain of wheat, this is Christ. The grain of wheat is the emblem of Christ. The grain of wheat is His body.

The Master broke the bread, and passed to each one the bread and the wine:

May the Lord my God bless you, and your mind, your heart and your soul become luminous. For your obedience, may the Lord bless you!

and the invisible presence of Christ in the Chain was again announced by him. 1914 is the year in which, during the Gathering, the Master also proclaimed the "New Age":

I greet you and welcome you on behalf of all our Friends. I salute you on behalf of the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is the first meeting of its kind in the New Age. You are in the New Testament, in the New Age. You should know that you make the first step, because this year is the first year of the coming New Age in the development of mankind. And if you are able to adapt to the Knowledge that Heaven gives you, then you will benefit [from this coming]. Inwardly, you need to unite with Christ, and your purpose is to find out how.⁶⁷

The Master witnessed the turning point in the Spiritual World and heralded this new phase in which Humanity was entering a spiritual plane marked by the presence of Christ:

The majority do not understand the importance of today, but for some it will remain memorable because today is the end of one epoch, and another begins—a new one. This is the Salvation that the Spirit of God accomplishes in the souls of all people—a Salvation leading to creative uplift and mindful exchange with the forces of Living

⁶⁵ See n.51.

⁶⁶ The Individuality of the Bodhisattva, who had formerly penetrated Peter Deunov during his 33rd year.

⁶⁷ Deunov, P. "Greetings to the New Year to all," in 1914 – *Proclaiming the New Age*. Sofia: White Brotherhood Publishing, 2014. Delivered January 6, 1914. See <https://petardanov.com/PDF/1914-Novata-epoha-2013.pdf>

*Nature, for it is today that a new era in the Spiritual World is beginning. The great sign of the New Epoch is Freedom.*⁶⁸

Also the Master clarified that Christ would not appear in a physical body:

*Christ's Coming has come, Christ has come. He has come, but He did not appear as the Church expects Him, but in a completely different way.*⁶⁹

When Christ was among the Israelites they did not recognize Him. We think sometimes that the karma of any particular country of the past or the future does not or will not affect *us*, but in reality we all are connected and interdependent. Paying for the Jewish Karma had a core importance for all of us. The Master hinted at the link:

*The Coming of Christ will date from 1914. In 1914 the Karma of the Jews was already at an end, and from then on a small revival will begin. The present [old] order must be dissipated and the forces that act must be decomposed. Christ's order must be regained for good people to come, for them to develop.*⁷⁰

*Opening the hearts of humans and receiving Christ is what His Coming to Earth means. If they do not accept Him in this way, storms, earthquakes, cyclones, poverty, famine, disease, crises, etc. will come. How long will these continue? — Until people leave the old life — the life of external beliefs.⁷¹ The Gospel Angel⁷² is the One who bears the New Teaching. From 1914 the trial of the world began and will continue until 1999. Throughout the 20th century will be the judgment of the world. In the 21st century — [there will be] a return [of Humankind] to its Father, as in the [story of the] prodigal son.⁷³ It is the age of establishing a new order in the world (according to the requirements of the LORD's Kingdom) and a strong spiritual uplift. In the 21st century, the Kingdom of Christ will be restored to Earth. All the occult movements of the East and the West⁷⁴ will draw together. All occult movements today lack something — application. All previous teachings, such as Christianity, Buddhism, Mohammedanism, Theosophy, etc., in their form and external side, have already done their part. Now the New Teaching of Christ will come and will resurrect you. God, who will straighten the world, will emit such Light that within you not a single dark place will remain unlit.*⁷⁵

It is God Who manifested Himself in the past through the Light of the Holy Sepulchre, and He is the same God who will sanctify everything in us in the future. The core of the Master's Teaching was Christ:

⁶⁸ Deunov, P. "Talk about the Spring Festivity," in *Seek strength – have faith*. Sofia: White Brotherhood Publishing, 1994, p.9. See http://petardanov.info/Knigi/Iskayte_sila_imayte_vyara.pdf

⁶⁹ Deunov, P. "Notes from a Notebook by D. Golov," in *Walk in the Light*. Sofia: White Brotherhood, 1994, p.23.

⁷⁰ See n.67.

⁷¹ Deunov, P. "To give them Life," in *The Royal Path of the Soul*. Sofia: White Brotherhood, 2009.

⁷² The Angel of the Good News.

⁷³ See Luke 15:11-32.

⁷⁴ Spiritual Movements.

⁷⁵ Association "The Higher Self of the Bulgarians - DAY," 2009. "Coming of Christ and regaining the Kingdom of God," in *The Master - The Healer - The Prophet, Volume 3*. Stara Zagora: s.n. See https://petardanov.com/PDF/ULP_t3.pdf

*Christ, but as a Spirit, will abide on Earth always, to the very end of this age—during the times of violence [and] the evil that we see in the world today, that is, until the end of the age. Then will come a New Epoch, a time of a New Earth and a New Heaven.*⁷⁶

Christ gave the Great Teaching 2000 years ago, but evolution is taking its course, and He has prepared a New Teaching whereby Humankind will have its New Passover in the future. This Teaching of Christ was brought from the Divine World through the Master Beinsa Douno:

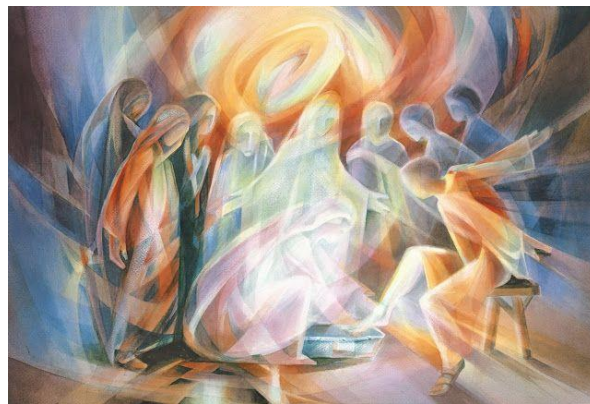
*What was given two thousand years ago by Christ was a preface to the New. "Revelations," for example, talks about what will happen in thousands of years. There is one Revelation in which God reveals His Spirit. It sends great people into the world, bearers of the New, of the True Culture. You will witness these times: you will depart from the Earth, you will come again, but in the end you will be convinced of what I am saying today. The New Culture requires people with a deep, inner understanding. They must lay Love as the foundation of their lives.*⁷⁷

Becoming the Divine Conductor of the New that is coming to all Humankind, carrying the Divine Teaching of the Third LORD's Testament, setting His Love at the basis of every human's Life, the World Master Beinsa Douno came to prepare the New Passover and the Sixth Post-Atlantean Epoch. This is a Great Mystery and a grandiose Divine Act of Heaven, which will be explored and better understood in the future. For us all this is a spiritual task that will/must be thoroughly assumed.

Are we ready for the New Passover, dear friends?

*May God's Kingdom of Love come, may the feelings in our souls unfold, and may the Truth shine!*⁷⁸

Amen.



The Washing of the Feet
Aquarelle by Leszek Forczek

⁷⁶ See n.75.

⁷⁷ See n.4.

⁷⁸ A verbal formula given by the Master Deunov to be pronounced by each person at the beginning of each of the 12 months of the year.

“That Nothing Should Be Lost”

Robert Powell

Valentin Tomberg indicates that the communion of bread and wine, relating to the physical body and the “I”, and also the communion of milk and honey, relating to the etheric and astral bodies, were known and celebrated in Ancient Egypt, and that there would come a time—in connection with the resurrection of the Egyptian Mysteries—when these different forms of communion would come together again in the new Grail Mysteries. In the words of Valentin Tomberg from the *Lord’s Prayer Course*: “*The Grail was there. It was a Mystery, but it was not complete. The whole must come again. In the future, when the Egyptian Mysteries will resurrect, then all four kinds of communion will live again.*”

These words indicate something of significance within the stream of ancient hermeticism, something which perhaps can be seen in relation to the following indication from the eighth Arcanum in *Meditations on the Tarot*:

Hermeticism will live until the end of the world and, perhaps, beyond the end of the world. Moses and the prophets will live on for ever, for they have acquired their place in the eternal constellation of the Word of resurrection and life. The magical poetry and songs of Orpheus will be resuscitated and will live for all eternity as color and sound of the Word of resurrection and life. The magic of Zarathustra’s mages will be revived and will live as the eternal human endeavor of aspiration towards light and life. The truths revealed by Krishna will join the retinue of the ‘recalled to eternal life.’ The ancient cosmic revelations of the Rishis will live again and will awaken in humanity anew a sense for the marvels of the ‘blue, white and gilded...’

All these souls of humankind’s spiritual history will be resuscitated, i.e. will be called to join the work of the Word that became flesh, that died and rose again from the dead—so that the truth of the promise—“I have come so that nothing should be lost but that all should have eternal life” (John 6:38-40)—will be accomplished.

Hermeticism also is called to live—not only as a reminiscence, but also as a resuscitation. This will take place when those who are faithful to it—i.e. in whom reminiscences of its past are living—comprehend the truth that Man is the key to the world, and that Jesus Christ is the key to Man, and that Jesus Christ is the key to the world, and that the world—such as it was before the Fall and such as it will be after its Reintegration—is the Word, and that the Word is Jesus Christ, and that, lastly, Jesus Christ reveals God the Father who transcends both the world and Man.

Through Jesus Christ one arrives at the Word or Logos; through the Word or Logos one understands the world; and through the Word and the world, whose unity is the Holy Spirit, one arrives at an eternally-increasing knowledge of the Father.¹

These are very important words in *Meditations on the Tarot*—

“that nothing should be lost”...

¹ [Ed. From p.195 of *Meditations on the Tarot*, tr. Robert Powell, New York: Tarcher/Penguin, 2002.]

Starlight, the journal of the Sophia Foundation, appears twice a year, around Easter/Pentecost and Advent/Christmas. The present issue is the third and final installment in the recent series that has been seen through by John O'Meara as Editor (see the final paragraph of the Editor's Overview above for a description of this series). If you are intending to send a contribution to the next issue, please email this to astrogeographia@gmail.com by September 15th, 2020. Contributors are encouraged to submit as early as possible, for the issue will be in process of shaping itself as the contributions come in.

For a schedule of upcoming events sponsored by, or associated with, the Sophia Foundation see:

<https://sophiafoundation.org/upcoming-events-sponsored-events/>
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Sophia, the Almighty Wisdom of God
by Nicholas Roerich (Nikolai Rerich)
Roerich Museum, New York

