

The Cosmic Background of the French Revolution II
Unrevised Notes of Three Lectures by Willi Sucher
Hawkwood College, England - July 30-31 and August 1, 1954

French Revolution, Lecture II - 31 July 1954

We have previously had a moving account of the Temple Legend and of the Golden Triangle and Hammer of Solomon. The Temple of Solomon was a visible sign of something much greater; that is, the Temple of spiritually-integrated humanity in future ages.

I wish to show you that the Golden Triangle of Hiram is an overwhelming reality, but in order to show this we must first do some astronomy work. You have heard of the world of planets and the fixed stars. The fixed stars do not move—at least not noticeably in a person's lifetime—but remain in the same composition as the twelve constellations of the Zodiac. For instance, the fixed-star Regulus will remain at the heart of Lion throughout a person's lifetime, even though the whole solar universe shifts slowly through the ages. But the planets move through these constellations of the Zodiac, and the Moon moves with an appreciable velocity.

Last night we considered Saturn as the outermost planet of the solar system. At present it lies between the constellation of Scales and Virgin, in its approximate thirty year movement round the Zodiac. Jupiter is closer to the Earth and moves similarly, being now in Twins, next year in Crab, and in two years it will be in Lion. Jupiter takes about 12 years to move through the Zodiac. Sometimes Jupiter catches up with Saturn, and it is their Great Conjunctions that we will deal with tonight. It is a kind of conversation between the two planets, occurring about every 20 years and forming a triangle in the Zodiac. In 1921 they met, and again twenty years later, though in a different part of the Zodiac.

Two thousand years ago, when Christ Jesus walked this Earth, there was a Great Conjunction. Also there was one in 7 BC, in Fishes, when there were three meetings, in fact, because there were loops in the planets' courses. In 14 AD a meeting occurred, and yet again in 34 AD, and it is here that we are shown the true cosmic aspect of that Great Triangle, which is not only Legend.

We have called Saturn the vestment of the Spirits of Will, the Thrones. We have said that they give us the foundation of all existence. They work still as the Will of God, of the Divine World, giving backbone to the world's evolution and guarding its direction out of their profound, unimaginable memory, which is always carried within their Being. Where there is a deviation, they restore all things to their rightful direction in the cosmos.

We have seen Jupiter as the vestment of Divine Wisdom. The Spirits of Divine Wisdom hold the entire great plan of evolution in all its details. Into their archetypal form, the successive stages of life and evolution are guarded and treasured. They are concerned with the future, which is to grow out of the seed that is sown, though it must also rest on the foundations of the past.

When these two planets meet, it is like the hands of a great cosmic clock announcing what should be carried out in the stream of evolution. The meetings are connected always with renaissance. Saturn looks back; Jupiter carries the future into birth. All this was known in Celtic tradition, in which was contained a deep knowledge of this triad of meetings. The Roman Church tried to wipe out Celtic Christianity and also this triad, which is the foundation of the Trinity. In so much as humanity had lost this Holy Triangle, so did Christ restore it.

The year 7 BC was deeply connected with the nativity of Jesus. Exact calculations prove this Great Conjunction in 7 BC to have been equally, deeply associated with this Nativity. It is, in a sense, the "spiritual nativity", when that Great Being descended into incarnation at the indication of the cosmic hour. It is connected with the story of the Shepherds in the Gospel of St. Luke, but it also reaches back into the life of Buddha. The Shepherds, we know, have to care for their flocks and feed their sheep. Simple human beings seemingly, but what a mighty tradition stands behind them! A tradition of Abel and Abraham and of David the King, who fed their flocks and cared for the spiritual nourishment entrusted to them. This is the ancient meaning of the Shepherds. In modern terms, we can speak of it as representing all that concerns the spiritual life of humanity.

In 14 AD, there was another conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn, and another great happening on Earth. It is the approach to the time indicated on this cosmic clock, which is always significant, rather than the actual striking of the hour. For at this time, the twelve-year-old Jesus visited the Temple and sacrificed his life in the body to that other Child Who awaited Him. The one who sacrificed was the reincarnation of the great Zarathustra, that most perfected of human beings in Earthly and cosmic wisdom, inter-playing between the two realms. This individual was the Jesus Child whose birth was heralded by the Magi, and it was he who laid down his life for the other Child in the Temple as a great sacrificial gift. And it happened at the time of this mighty cosmic conjunction, or conversation.

It was the King in ancient times who cared for the organization of the nation that was entrusted to him, especially the physical needs. He had even to lead them into war, if necessary. Nowadays, one can associate kingship with the economic life, though this was too narrow a conception of its duties in ancient times.

In 33 AD, Christ went to Golgotha, and soon after this, Saul, who became Paul, began his great struggle against Christianity, unable to accept the Messiah or His Resurrection, and therefore accomplishing the stoning of St. Stephen. It was on the road to Damascus, and at its very gates, that the Risen Christ appeared to Saul and thereby changed the whole direction of his life. He became Paul, who henceforth was devoted to serving the Christian movement. Along with this, it came at the time of the third great conjunction between Saturn and Jupiter.

In the Risen Christ, all future humanity stands represented in its perfected form. This is what Paul experienced, and this gave him his enormous strength and energy to go forth and preach the Gospel. This represents, in a way (though it is a poor comparison), that sphere of “rights” of which we speak in modern life. Rather, I would call it the Archetype of Humanity and the goal of our true dignity.

In these last three Events, we have the foundation of a new capacity for making real use of this Golden Triangle. These meetings of the planets recur repeatedly. In the course of 60-year intervals, this conjunction returns to its original place, but a little further on, and then a new cycle begins. For instance, in 54 AD, this Great Conjunction would have moved more towards Ram, and 60 years later in 114 AD, it would really be in Ram. The same thing happens to the other corners of this Great Triangle, all of which revolve slowly in the cosmos, moving forward with each point of history; for nothing in the cosmos is ever finally set or static.

But there is always a crucial point in the history of humanity when one of the corners of the triangle moves into the constellation of Scorpion (with its poisonous sting!), and then the Earth faces a great decision. I wish to point out to you two such moments of crisis, which have taken place since Palestine.

About the 8th or 9th century, what we will call the “Damascus” corner of the triangle moved out of the constellation of Scorpion into Archer. This meant that though the old knowledge of the Golden Triangle had died in humanity at that time of crisis in Scorpion, a new one was now to be brought into realization, which was a reminder of the Golden Triangle initiated by the Christ Events themselves. This crisis revealed itself in the tragedy of the Roman Church; for in 868 the tragedy of the Roman Church came through the Council of Constantinople. St. Augustine had not been able to find the truth despite his courageous struggle, so, as did many others, he clung to the written records of the Christ Events, because his soul was not able, in that age, to achieve the necessary spiritual capacities to progress any further. The result of the Council of Constantinople was the division of humanity as a result of its divorce from the spirit, when the dogma was established that a human being consisted only of body and soul, with certain spiritual faculties. The Church carefully hid this in their account, by tortuous phrases that obscured the real issue of this loss of the spirit.

This Council also resulted in a tiny alteration in the Roman Mass, which was, however, highly significant. For at the transubstantiation, at the third phase of the Mass, the Priest had always said, “Let this be the Body and Blood of Christ.” This was also discarded at that moment and was a tremendous loss in the life of humanity. For before this moment, the participants could experience the Presence of Christ in the Mass; they could experience something similar to the Event of Damascus—a direct experience of the Christ. But now the Church intervened between them and the Christ. For the lack of these words, now abolished, brought about the impossibility of penetrating to the Christ any longer at the altar as a direct experience, the experience of the spiritual Archetype of Humanity. This had a tremendous effect on European humanity, and it is truly staggering to follow up its consequences in history. It was the very birth of materialism.

Pope Nicholas could not be solely blamed for this Council; he merely gave form to something that had already been at work for a considerable time. When the Damascus corner of the triangle moved into Scorpion, therefore, great events portended. At the end of the 8th and the beginning of the 9th century, the Holy Grail was founded at this corner, approximately from 809 - 868, as this corner moved forward into Archer, out of the danger point of Scorpion. For, as it moved towards Archer, humanity could recover and restore a new direction to counteract the adverse events that took place in Scorpion. At this time, the movement of the Holy Grail was founded.

This was a constitution, in a modern sense, of what Paul had experienced at Damascus. This Vessel of the Holy Grail was made, according to Legend, from a jewel that had fallen out of the crown of Lucifer, when it fell from heaven. Something then fell to Earth and was taken up and made into a Vessel to manifest the Risen Christ. And only the pure in heart could behold this Grail. In secrecy and in the realm of Legend, there was established that which was brought into the world as the experience of the great Archetype of Humanity.

Slowly, this Great Triangle moved on in history, and the “Shepherds” corner came again into Scorpion, again bringing crisis and choice to humanity. When it was already in the constellation of Virgin, there existed great movements that affected European civilization. The Cathars flourished in the south of France, as well as the movement of the Knights Templar. The Cathars were destroyed in the so-called Crusades, which were instituted by the Roman Church, and unimaginable cruelties were committed then. I think it was in the Town of Albi (the center of the Albigensians) that there was a papal legate and a military commander. The latter asked the former whether he should save the Roman Catholics in the town. The papal reply was, “Destroy them all. God will sort out His own.” At that time, the Knights Templar were also destroyed—those Shepherds of spiritual nourishment for humanity.

In the 15th and 16th centuries, and even into the 17th, the corner of the triangle moved forward into Scorpion. And again, a great crisis was revealed in the development of humanity’s spiritual life. In 1413 the New Age, when the vernal equinox moved into the middle of Fishes, the Age of the Fishes began. Its manifestation was the classic age of science, of Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, and so on. Behind the Shepherds’ stream stands the whole world of Buddha, who aimed to keep the spiritual stream of humanity pure and clear—the Path to Nirvana. The Western idea of Nirvana, as a kind of elimination of the soul, is a misstatement of his teaching, and there are still Eastern streams of thought that contradict it. Nirvana really represents the higher spiritual worlds.

Buddha wished to educate humanity to use its sense organs properly. We have to learn to look into the world again with cleansed sense perceptions. That is the message of his eightfold path. There mustn’t be any egoistic impulses intruding into the holy relationship between object and observer, for he wished to make of the senses a mirror to reflect facts, for only then can we penetrate to the truth. Our modern science suffers from what Buddha regarded as a becoming involved in matter to the extent of losing our humanity. Side theories intrude on observation; when these are falsified by a blind science, they become destructive caricatures.

However, there was already a healthy balance established by humanity as an antidote against this. Humanity was in danger of losing the spirit and falling into materialism. What I have to say is now being denied all too often as fantasy by the modern world: this is the foundation of the Rosicrucian Movement as an actual reality. It was the antidote already present in the Grail Movement of the 9th century, the Grail that carries in its Vessel the holiest of that which the Earth contains, and which is also contained in the picture of Christian Rosenkreutz—the black cross with the red roses.

Humanity could not rise to the Damascus experience, and as a result it only remained to place the Crucifix with the body of the “dead” Christ on the altar. What a sight for human beings! However, the antidote was the picture of the Holy Grail, which had come to Earth.

Again, in the 15th century, that great individuality, Christian Rosenkreutz, brought the message of the Rose Cross to Earth—the black Cross without the dead body, but with the red roses instead, as symbols of new life springing from the dead wood.

In the 16th century, a Great Conjunction took place in Scorpion, and it was then that Valentin Andrae wrote *The Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreutz, Anno 1459*, guided by a true inspiration. (Anno 1459, inscribed on it, refers back to the 15th century and the Shepherds’ “corner” then in Scorpion. Now, with humanity in doubt, a new way was opened into the spiritual worlds, once guarded by the Shepherds of

humanity. Since then, the Rosicrucian impulse has worked to help humanity overcome the increasing materialism. This black Cross with the red roses remains the symbol for its overcoming.

The black Cross holds us down to Earth and brings us to death. But on it, the seven red roses shine forth to show us that, in the moment of deepest descent, we can rise again to the highest point. True Rosicrucianism is always hidden and withdrawn, working toward creating new spiritual life and culture for humanity's needs and future progress. What was established in Palestine 2,000 years ago, was overshadowed by the spiritual Being of the Buddha; then humanity descended into crisis and a new portal into the spiritual worlds was opened through initiation, in a new way.

In the 9th century, an impulse was thrown into humanity as the Holy Grail. It later appeared in a distorted way in the Ideals of the French Revolution, where an attempt was made to establish Equality, Fraternity, and Liberty.

In the 15th century, through crisis, the seed kernel of something was established, which can in future rise to what is meant by "Liberty", in its highest sense, and as meant by Buddha in his eightfold path. True liberty consists in seeing things clearly, by using the senses as a pure mirror of the truth.

I will deal with the third "corner" of the triangle next time. It is in Virgo at present, moving toward Scorpion, and this is the foundation for tomorrow's study of the French Revolution. But all this is the background to the three great Ideals which lay behind the French Revolution, however violently they were ushered in and then deviated from in human hands. But the main events turn on the movements of this great triangle of conjunctions between Saturn and Jupiter at that time.