

SPIRITUAL ASTRONOMY

A

**Spiritual-scientific journey
from the Milky Way
to Earth via the Zodiac and
Planets**



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INTRODUCTION

The present work stems from a desire and a request - the desire of the writers to try to lift the veil that hides the deeper being of the Cosmos, and the request from a group of people for a spiritual-scientific exploration of Astronomy.

We wish to be clear right away that none of the three authors is a "professor" in this field of study, but by mutual cooperation (and with the course participants) this work has arisen, whose purpose is to raise at least a corner of the veil in full awareness that we cannot reveal the complete majesty of the cosmos.

Silvia Giaretta - thanks for your valuable collaboration.

The Authors

CONTENTS

PART ONE: THE STARS5

1: THE ZODIAC AND MILKY WAY5

 1) INTRODUCTION.....5

 2) THE MILKY WAY.....7

2: THE ZODIAC IN RELATION TO MAN AND THE EARTH24

 1) VISIBLE FEATURES IN RELATION TO THE HUMAN FORM.....24

 2) THREEFOLDNESS OF THE ZODIAC IN MAN34

 3) INTERNAL ZODIAC RELATIONS.....38

 4) THE ZODIAC AS A PATH OF INITIATION39

 5) THE CREATION AND THE THREE ZODIAC CROSSES.....40

 THE CROSS OF THE FATHER.....49

 THE CROSS OF THE SON.....53

 THE CROSS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.....56

 THE HOLY TRINITY IN THE ZODIAC.....59

 THE ZODIAC IN THE LIFE OF THE PLANT60

PART TWO: THE SOLAR SYSTEM64

1: THE NATURE AND MOTION OF THE PLANETS64

 1) THE UNIQUENESS OF THE PLANETARY WORLD.....64

 2) PLANETARY MOTION.....68

 3) LEMNISCATORY MOTION71

 PLANETS IN THE LIFE OF MAN76

 1) DIVINE LIFE AND PLANETARY BEINGS76

 2) PLANETARY INFLUENCES IN THE LIFE OF MAN.....78

 3) THE PLANETARY THREEFOLDNESS OF MAN.....84

2: THE GENESIS OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM AND ASTRONOMICAL THEORY86

 1) THE EVOLUTION OF THE BEING OF THE EARTH86

 2) DATA: PHYSICAL AND ORBITAL ASPECTS OF THE PLANETS89

3: HISTORICAL VIEWS ON THE SOLAR SYSTEM91

 1) THE GEOCENTRIC VISION AND THE EPICYCLES91

 2) THE HELIOCENTRIC VIEW92

 3) TYCHO BRAHE, KEPLER’S THREE LAWS OF PLANETARY MOTION94

4: THE APPARENT MOTION OF THE PLANETS98

 1) THE APPARENT MOTION OF THE INNER AND OUTER PLANETS98

 2) PLANETARY EPICYCLES100

 2.1) MERCURY.....100

 2.2) VENUS101

 2.3) MARS102

 2.4) JUPITER.....103

 2.5) SATURN.....104

CONCLUSION.....106

SPIRITUAL ASTRONOMY

PART ONE: THE STARS

1: THE ZODIAC AND MILKY WAY

1) INTRODUCTION

To make a scientific approach to the world of astronomy with sufficient consciousness we should remember that this is an extremely vast and complex subject, ranging from the earthly to the most distant celestial spheres. We must also remember that our mindset, upon which materialistic thought has been so formative, initially hinders us from grasping the true nature of stars and celestial bodies. From our intellectual training we will retain the rigorous processes but be most wary of the "scientific" conviction of the absence of the spiritual within natural phenomena.

The stars are beyond our solar system and are, therefore, as we shall see, outside of the reality where there is matter, space and time (at least as we know them)¹. They are actually the manifestation of spiritual entities² that weave their influence within the cosmos, and what we perceive as starlight is actually the visible expression of God's love. To understand the stars, their placement in the sky and their movement (because, as we shall see, the stars are not fixed), we put aside the belief that they are clusters of matter no matter how rarified, because this is not their nature. The starlight is the visible aspect of divine Love when it comes into contact with the solar system, with the world of matter and space-time. When divine light becomes visible it looks like starlight to our eyes, but we should not fall into the error of believing that this is its true and essential nature.

When we speak of stars we will always have to speak of entities. For example, if we talk about the constellations of the Zodiac, we must be aware that when we say "Bull" or Taurus we actually mean: "Those cherubic and seraphinic entities who act with the specific qualities that the ancients called the Bull". The material part of the cosmos is only the corpse or, in alchemical terms, the fixed part that has become material in the same way that man's physical body is only the house of the ego, and it is certainly not the true essence of man. Contrary to popular belief there is no real mechanism in this material part of the cosmos: so-called *celestial mechanics*, which assumes a regular repetition in the movements of celestial bodies, is in fact an unfounded abstraction. The planets actually follow variable orbits³, and are never found in the same place. To support this assertion we can think about the fact that Mars, in 2003, was closer to Earth than at any time in the previous 75,000 years, and this implies that it has profoundly changed its orbit, otherwise the distance from Earth would always be the same! Even astronomical probes must continually correct their course, because they are programmed for a "mathematical" orbit of the planet, but

¹ Space and time are actually variables that the Father has placed in our evolutionary system to enable man to develop through understanding freedom and love - the developmental goals of humanity. See *Creation and the three zodiac crosses* later in this book.

² An entity is a being with autonomy, one who can be creative and act upon its own initiative.

³ See *The movement of the planets and the lemniscate* later in this book.

they need constant corrections in the face of what is really happens. As further testimony we remind ourselves, for example, that for calculations related to the Sun astronomers use at least three Suns: the real one which, however, must be corrected (in fact appropriate to the rest of the mathematical system) by a second calculated Sun and this second Sun is again corrected by a third Sun. To make reality meet with the mathematical model, in short, the Sun will be corrected by two fictitious Suns.

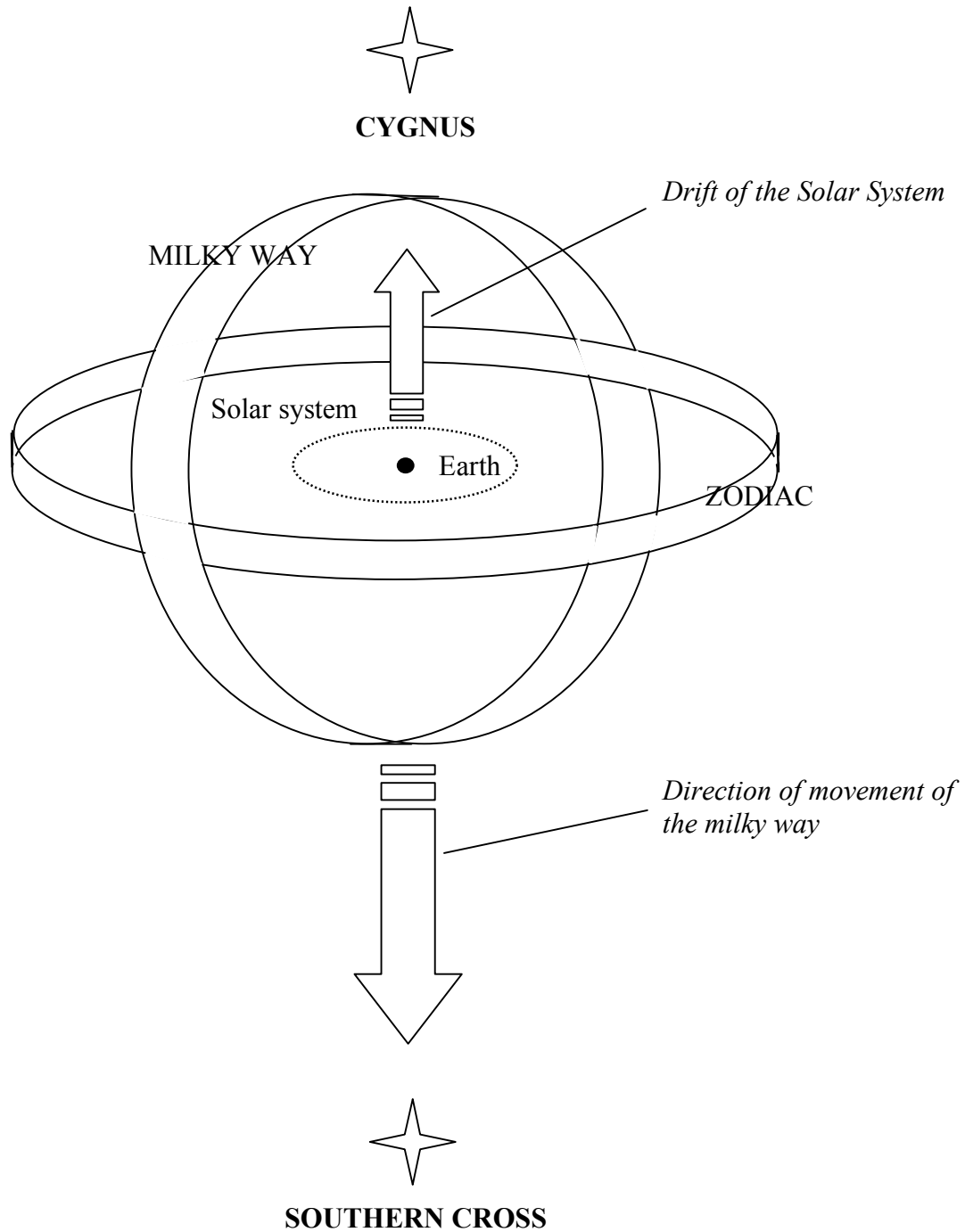
We can also say a few words on the law of universal gravitation to which the classical astronomy ascribes the regulation of all the movements and relationships between the planets. In reality this law is valid only for the Earth-Moon system, and not for the rest of the solar system. As physics itself has found out, in fact, if the law of gravitation were truly "universal", that is valid for the entire cosmos, the universe would have misplaced 90% of its mass, ie there is not enough detectable matter in the Cosmos to explain the attraction that the stars would exert on one another through gravity alone. They can find the attraction but not the mass that should be the cause⁴. But this may lead us to speculate that one really should not pursue the missing and invisible matter, but rather the invisible spiritual entities who live and weave in the Cosmos. Finally we can find an example known to all - that the course of the year is also irregular: even the most precise atomic clocks, in fact, are occasionally "adjusted" to the actual conditions.

So how can the planets and stars move in the sky if they are not supported and governed by sound mathematical laws? The answer lies in moving from the world of quantities, of matter, to that of the entities that interweave the stars and then consider them not as a "what" but as a "who." That way we can understand that the complex movements of the planets and stars are actually governed and regulated by the spiritual entities that have their principal centre of action in the visible stars.

These movements are also included in a general motion of our zodiac system, a movement that can give a precise indication of the goal of our evolution. Our solar system is actually moving toward the constellation of Cygnus which, as we shall see, is the home of the forces of Christ (as celestial life). Even more broadly, our entire galaxy, the Milky Way, is moving toward the Southern Cross constellation, which we will examine as the way to enter the Father's House. The motion of the Cosmos, then, is in tune with our spiritual evolution. The skies show us that we are a child who is returning home, a prodigal son, and not a lump of matter that is created and governed by chance.

Given this brief introduction we might begin to think that to understand the Cosmos, it is necessary that each of us, according to our forces, should work to connect the cosmic spark which is present in him, to the spiritual forces that act in us and in the Earth as microcosms, and in the Heavens as a macrocosm via the heavenly bodies. The quality of these forces is the same, so we have to rediscover this in ourselves by lifting the veil that has obscured our awareness to reconnect what in us is akin to a star or planet. Thus the trip to the cosmos is concurrently an examination into the faculties of conscious perception of the spiritual world that Anthroposophy calls "higher consciousness": imaginative consciousness (which is gained through access to the lunar sphere), inspired consciousness (from the solar world), and intuitive consciousness (from the stars).

⁴ To plug this gap astrophysics suggests that the cosmos is permeated by a "dark matter" - that is not detectable by instrumentation.

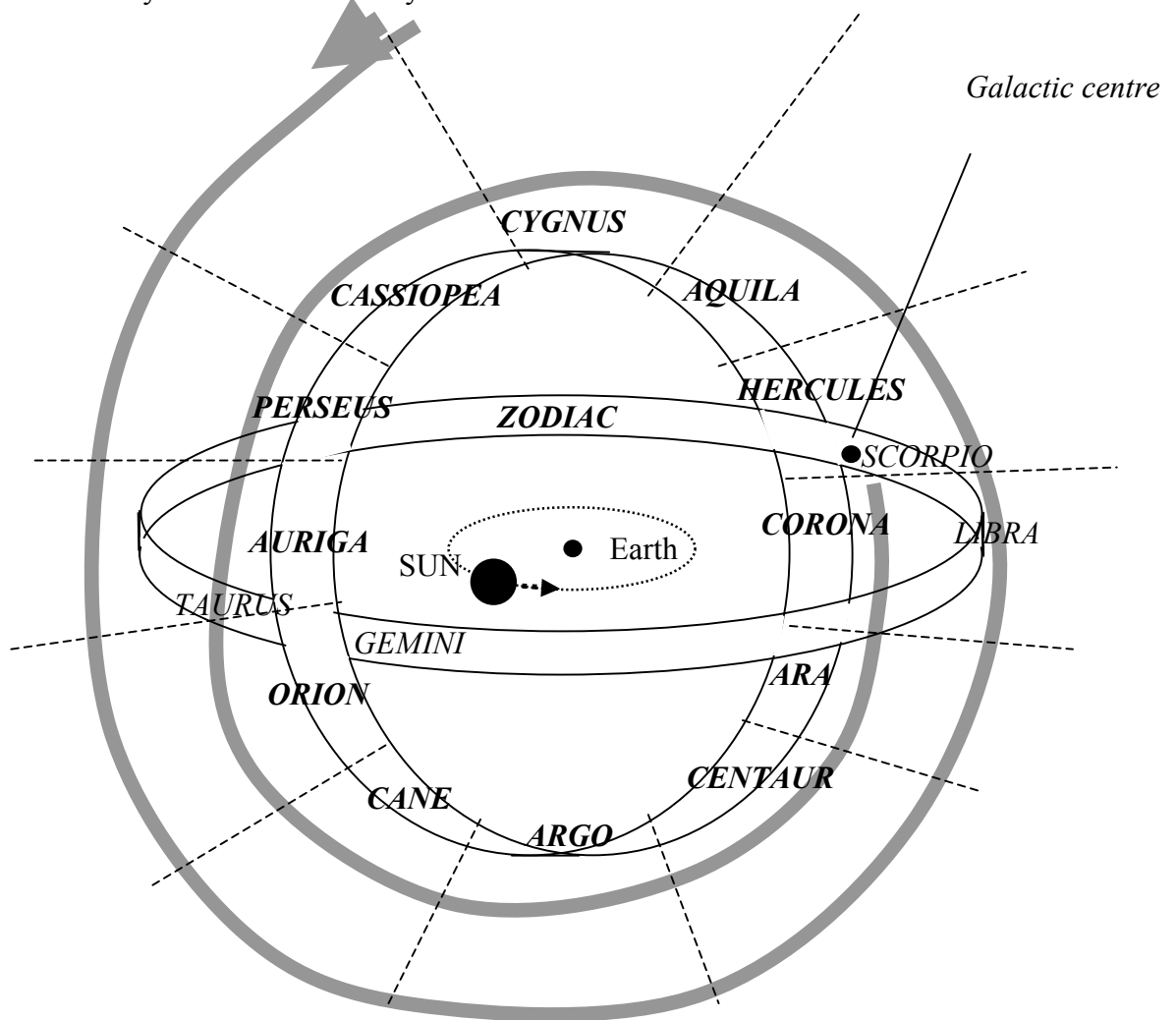


The double movement of the solar system: The first is northerly towards the constellation Cygnus (which is the door towards the Son aspect of the Most Holy Trinity; The second is Southwards towards the Southern cross (which represents the Father aspect of the Most Holy Trinity).

2) THE MILKY WAY

We begin our journey into the stars from the broadest sphere, our Galaxy, the Milky Way. It is formed, like the zodiac, of twelve constellations arranged almost at right angles to the circle of the zodiac. The Milky Way is a spiral and, when seen from outside from a great distance, coils itself counter-clockwise in relation to the zodiacal system and, so to speak, "intersects" the projection of the zodiac at two

points. The solar system is placed towards the periphery of the spiral itself. The spiral has its "centre", as we shall see, behind the tail of the Scorpion, finishing in its vortex. From spiritual science we know that counter-clockwise motion incarnates the spiritual forces of consciousness, so we can already interpret the general movement of the Milky Way as the descent of the highest spiritual entities that work in from it, entities whose activity esoteric Christianity calls Divine Providence.



Zodiac and Milky Way

Among others, the twelve Bodhisattvas are based on the Milky Way. These are the spiritual teachers who have the task of guiding the evolution of Mankind and the entire solar system. They manifest in various incarnations on Earth to help humanity develop new faculties. When they have completed their task they ascend to the higher 'rank' of Buddha. The last Bodhisattva to become a Buddha was the Buddha Sakyamuni or Gautama, who we know as the founder of Buddhism. He enabled mankind to develop the power of compassion, a prelude to the conquest of love brought later by Jesus Christ.

From the time of Sakyamuni's enlightenment, a new Bodhisattva began to act in humanity to bring understanding and the experience of the impulse of Christ: this is the future Maitreya Buddha, an entity that instructed humanity through the individuality of Rudolf Steiner, who became his conscious spokesmen.

Divine Providence marks the "boundary"⁵ between two spheres of manifestation of the spirit that Christian esotericism calls the Holy trinity and the Most Holy Trinity. Everyone knows these names, but few know the distinction between these two spheres sufficiently to say what, in the cosmos and the world around us, is attributable to the Holy Trinity and what it due to the Most Holy Trinity. The study of the cosmos can support us in our attempt to approach the Beings of the Trinity with full awareness and our forces, which is an extremely rich and intricate study. In this regard remember Rudolf Steiner's assertion that there is a trinity of trinities in the Cosmos. We will pursue this when we talk about the Zodiac. If creation is indeed the image of God, and God is a triune Being, the smallest and largest beings must be pervaded by the presence of this threefoldness, which is characteristic of spiritual beings.

Above all we must be clear about the region covered by the Holy Trinity: it lies in the realm of the planets and the Zodiac, through the nine steps that form the so-called "ladder of the Alchemists" or "Jacob's Ladder." The initiation process is the climb up these rungs through the planets to the stars, represented first by the Sun and then by the Zodiac. This ladder is none other than the divisions of Dante's Paradise, or the Anthroposophical teaching about the Nine Heavenly Hierarchies that bridges the distance between Earth-Man and the Cherubic and Seraphinic Zodiac.

HOLY TRINITY	1 ST HIERARCHY FATHER	{ ZOD. SERAPHINIC ZOD. CHERUBINIC SATURN	SERAPHIM	<i>Spirits of Love</i>
			CHERUBIM	<i>Spirits of Harmony</i>
			THRONES	<i>Spirits of Will</i>
	2 ND HIERARCHY SON	{ JUPITER MARS SUN	DOMINIONS	<i>Spirits of Wisdom</i>
			VIRTUES	<i>Spirits of Movement</i>
			POWERS	<i>Spirits of Form</i>
	3 RD HIERARCHY HOLY SPIRIT	{ VENUS MERCURY MOON	ARCHAI	<i>Spirits of individuality</i>
			ARCHANGELS	<i>Spirits of Peoples</i>
			ANGELS	<i>Spirits of Life</i>
		EARTH		HUMANS

Connection of the Holy Trinity with the hierarchies

The boundary of the Holy Trinity is, therefore, the zodiac belt which encloses our solar system. What we are currently considering, however, is the Milky Way, which is beyond this system. It is in fact the manifestation of the closest part of the Most Holy Trinity, namely the Holy Spirit aspect. Considered in terms of beings, we have already seen that this is home to the Bodhisattva, whose weavings are manifest here as Divine Providence. These twelve teachers act as a *stellar council* who watch over the evolution of humanity, a maternal embrace that guides and protects the zodiac system. This characterisation can help us see the influence of the Bodhisattva as a *pleroma* - a collaboration between spiritual entities that have the same evolutionary

⁵ Such 'boundaries' are always relative in the spiritual worlds because spiritual beings interpenetrate each other - one within the other. We present this and what follows as a living indication that should not be understood as a rigid map.

mission. Pleroma are actually very active in the spiritual world, and occultism indicates such collaborations by giving them a feminine name (Diana, Mary, Hecate, Anthroposophia, etc). For example, the Archangel Michael is a spiritual entity with a specific mission to help humanity, but he also collaborates with other entities in a pleroma that supports evolution, the pleroma from which all other pleroma originate, the pleroma generated by the cosmos, the pleroma known as Mary. Therefore, the presence of a pleroma in the Milky Way shows us that it is characterized by a Marian aspect or is a manifestation of Mary. Here we are faced, therefore, with the cosmic body of the Most Holy Mary, an entity that we have already described under the name of Divine Providence. Mary is also deeply tied to the sphere of the Holy Spirit⁶, and so it is no surprise that we find her associated with the Holy Spirit aspect of the Most Holy Trinity.



The Northern hemisphere of the heavens as drawn in 1515 by Albrecht Dürer.
Zodiac in the outer circle and Milky Way in vertical diagonal

⁶ See 'Mary-Sophia' by the Author

Now that we have characterized some spiritual aspects of the Milky Way, it would be useful to understand *who* this galaxy of ours is, not just what it is. We can turn to a more descriptive approach. First we will focus our attention on the points where the Milky Way, in its wide embrace of the solar system, crosses the Zodiac: these crossing points are located between Taurus and Gemini - the region that corresponds in humans (as we shall see) to the neck and shoulders - and between Scorpio and Sagittarius, which is in the area of the pelvis. This allows us to see that the Milky Way analogue within us, "rises" at the shoulders to "set" in the pelvis, and thus corresponds to our arms. The arms - our most active doing bodily member, our will, the primary tools of our actions in the world - are the parts of our body through which we can be the conscious vehicle of our highest spiritual forces, those of Divine Providence, the Most Holy Trinity, that is the active Entity who promotes the transformation and evolution of humanity.



The meridional hemisphere by Dürer with the lower Milky way

Following these thoughts helps us appreciate the process of creating the zodiac: having described the Milky Way as a pleroma, a "cosmic mother" as a synthesis of the active collaboration of twelve entities, we can strongly suggest that the twelve constellations of the Milky Way have "generated" the twelve constellations of the Zodiac and, therefore, that the Holy Trinity is preceded by the Most Holy Trinity. Therefore we should immerse ourselves in the twelve constellations of our galaxy, to understand who the highest entities are and how they act and decided to make themselves known to humans through the constellations of the Milky Way. We need to understand the twelve special cosmic qualities with which they embrace our Galaxy.

CYGNUS the swan: the constellation of Cygnus is located in the northern hemisphere, in an area of sky which is the focus of almost all the winged creatures in the Milky Way. In ancient times it was just a bird, and it was the Greek astronomer Eratosthenes who first identified the special quality we now call "Swan". This detail enables us to approach the identity of Cygnus. With reference to the knowledge of the Celts, we see that they considered the swan as a symbol of the Sun god, as the form in which spiritual entities enter the visible world. This indication is fully supported by spiritual science which considers the Sun to be the seat of the Powers, the Spirits of Form. But we know that the Sun also has a Christic aspect (it is the seat of our Higher Self, of Jesus in us) and a Luciferic aspect (in its dazzling light), and we must understand to which of these two aspects the Swan is connected. The myth may become useful to us showing that Apollo, the God in whose image the Greeks saw the Christ, was always guided by his swans. Christianity has always regarded this constellation as a sign of the birth of Christ. It is placed at the top of the Milky Way in the form of a cross (the Northern Cross). On Christmas night the Swan shines in the Western sky after sunset.



The Stars of Cygnus

Cygnus is, in short, the door for the Christic forces to enter the human evolutionary system. It is the seat through which the Christ - the Son of the Most Holy Trinity which is found beyond the Milky Way in the macrocosm - becomes manifest in the Holy Spirit (of the Most Holy Trinity), and from there into the Holy Trinity (accessed through the constellation of Aries, the Lamb) and then to Earth, where he completed the act of love known as the Mystery of Golgotha. This perspective on the Swan allows us to grasp the extent of the sacrifice of Christ, the immense spiritual sacrifice that this very high entity - who belongs to the Most Holy Trinity and whose home lies beyond our own galaxy - has made for the sake of mankind by binding himself freely to his creatures for the evolution of man.

AQUILA the eagle: the stars of Aquila have always been presented as a bird of prey. To the Greeks Aquila was the executor of divine judgments, carrying the lightning of Zeus. We can find this aspect in the location of the constellation, which is next to the Swan-Christ, ready to be the vehicle of His will. The awareness of this spiritual role of the Eagle is the basis of its being a symbol of the spiritual Church, the Church of John, that is the "invisible" stream which, unlike the institution of the Church of Peter, preserves and perpetuates an interior and exterior conduct in relation to consciousness and knowledge of the influence of spiritual forces. Depictions of this church have been the current of the Grail (the Albigenses), Rosicrucianism and the Order of the Templars, and now this current manifests in Anthroposophy and in the Baptism of Fire, the Christic initiation prepared by the Baptism of Water, of Purification, as brought by John the Baptist.

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Thanks

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