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*A READER'S JOURNAL*

**The Christmas Conference, GA#260  
for Foundation of the General  
Anthroposophic Society  
and The Laying of the Foundation Stone**

by  
**Rudolf Steiner**

**Introduction by Virginia Sease  
Foreword and Conclusion by Marie Steiner**

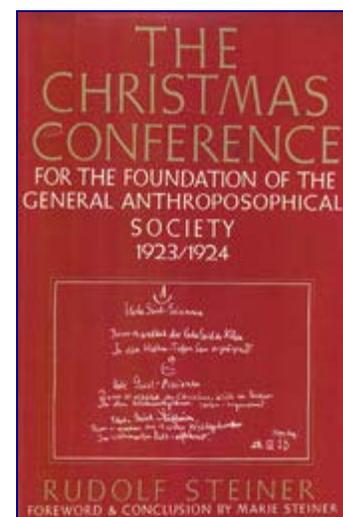
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Chapter: Spiritual Science



This conference took place one year after the original wooden Goetheanum had burnt to the ground. Steiner called together all the members of the various national Societies from around the world for this conference at which his goal was to form one General Society to be headquartered in the Goetheanum in Dornach, Switzerland. One member objected that there was no Goetheanum present, only the charred remains, and Steiner rebuffed him saying, in effect, the Goetheanum is present in spirit and will be rebuilt on the same spot, and so it was. When it was completed about four years later, it was a stronger and larger concrete structure with two performance halls, one atop the other so that rehearsals and performances could happen simultaneously. That is the Goetheanum I visited in February of 2013 for a Mi-cha-elic Conference of about forty people from around the world. Our sessions were held in a wooden building which abuts the carpentry shop where the 1923 Christmas Conference took place. The new Goetheanum was a short walk away, having arisen from the ashes of the earlier one whose charred remains were visible to attendees of the Christmas Conference.

In the Introduction, Marie Steiner relates how eurythmy comes into existence through the three processes of Intuition, Inspiration, and Imagination. First her overall summary.

**[page 35] So actually eurythmy came into existence when what works unconsciously in the human being to transform his capacity for movement into speech is subsequently recalled from speech and returned to the capacity for movement. Thus an element which belongs to Inspiration becomes an element belonging to Imagination.**

This will not make much sense to someone new to eurythmy, and it wouldn't have to me except that I have had the opportunity to talk to Bradford Riley. When he talks, eurythmy gestures are an integral part of his speech. The gestures are a natural expression of our way of talking, but a way that has become unconscious to us today. Consider eurythmy as a way of learning consciously what we as human beings only know as unconscious, up until now. We write a poem and we feel its effect inside of us, that is Intuition at work. Then we recite the poem and Inspiration is at work inside of us. If you then allow the poem to settle into you and express itself as movement, you have Imagination at work inside you and its effect is visible as eurythmy to others. Marie Steiner explains it in detail.

**[page 35, 36] Consider, dear friends, a poem living in your soul. When you have entirely identified yourself inwardly with this poem and have taken it into yourself to such an extent and so strongly that you no longer need any words but have only feelings and can experience these feelings in your soul, then you are living in Intuition. Then let us assume that you recite or declaim the poem. You endeavor, in the vowel sounds, in the harmonies, in the rhythm, in the movement of the consonants, in tempo, beat and so on, to express in speech through recitation or declamation what lies in those feelings. What you experience when doing this is Inspiration. The element of Inspiration takes what lives purely in the soul, where it is localized in the nervous system, and pushes it down into larynx, palate and so on.**

**Finally let this sink down into your human limbs, so that in your own creation of form through movement you express what lies in speech; then, in the poem brought into eurythmy, you have the third element, Imagination.**

And, now, in a concise summary:

**[page 36] In the picture of the descent of world evolution down to man you have that scale which human beings have to re-ascend, from Imagination through Inspiration to Intuition. In the poem transformed into eurythmy you have Imagination; in the recitation and declamation you have Inspiration as a picture; and in the entirely inward experience of the poem, in which there is no need to open your mouth because your experience is totally inward and you are utterly identified with it and have become one with it, in this you have Intuition.**

In an earlier meeting in April, 1923, Rudolf Steiner explained that the Anthroposophical Society was not organized in any recognizable way; that it existed mainly as a movement, the Anthroposophical Movement, and that a conference was needed to give the Anthroposophical Society a genuine task, and he exhorted the members present:

**[page 38] I beg you, my dear friends, not to break up today without a result. Come to the point of setting a task for the Anthroposophical Society which can win a certain degree of respect from other people.**

From this and other planning meetings, the agenda for the Christmas Conference emerged with the goal of uniting the mishmash of local and national societies under the umbrella of a truly international society headquartered in Dornach. Steiner opened the conference stating that the new Society will be located in Dornach, on Swiss soil, but will have no national character and will always consider itself a guest of the Swiss in the realm of ideals. Steiner had to deal the sharing the Statutes of the new Society and having each Statute ratified by those present. A first reading without comment was followed by a second reading of each Statute, with questions allowed, and a vote taken on each Statute. With deft diplomacy Steiner answered the objections raised and obtained a unanimous vote on each one. To move to the kind of Society that Steiner envisioned, he had determined after long consideration that he would have to be its Founding President, and he was so accepted as such.

**[page 51] By hinting at moods of soul I am indicating what it was that moved me to take on the task of being President of the Anthroposophical Society myself. This Anthroposophical Society — such things can often happen — has been called by a good many names. Thus, for example, it has been called the 'International Anthroposophical Society'. Dear friends, it is to be neither international nor a national society. I beg you heartily never use the word 'international society' but always to speak simply of a 'General Anthroposophical Society' which wants to have center here at the Goetheanum in Dornach.**

When I read this, it clarified for me why the name General Anthroposophical Society came into being. I

found myself immediately in agreement with Steiner's averseness to the use of "international" in its name. I especially found resonance with his requirement that nothing administrative be contained in the Statutes. Oh, if only the United States of America's Constitution were designed that way!

**[page 51] You will see that the Statutes are formulated in a way that excludes anything administrative, anything that could ever of own accord turn into bureaucracy. These Statutes are tuned to whatever is purely human. They are not tuned to principles or to dogmas.**

Think of it: if there can be no soil in which bureaucracy can grow, then there would be no coercive bureaucracy, which has grown like rampant weeds in the USA's government exactly as specified in the Statutes of its Constitution, senselessly choking out all that is human from the government, until all that is left is noxious weeds. Rightly understood, government cannot operate in the presence of such weeds and turns into a so-called government, a coercive bureaucracy, one that necessarily harbors the seeds of its own destruction. Steiner was wiser than anyone else in his time, and knew the correct model for a true government of the Anthroposophical Society. Reading the proceedings of this Christmas Conference has given me to understand that I can join the Anthroposophical Society in complete freedom.

**[page 52] Those who wish to join this Society are not expected to adhere to any principle. No religious confession, no scientific conviction, no artistic intention is set up in any dogmatic way. The only thing that is required is that those who join should feel at home in being linked to what is going on at the Goetheanum.**

I began my study of Rudolf Steiner because I found small books of his in an occult bookstore. Over the course of a dozen years, I bought about ten of them, read them all, and was still wondering what he was talking about it. His books were clearly important and said important things, but the sense of what they were saying was beyond my ken at the time. Yet, I asked myself, why do I keep buying his books. You have probably guessed that these were all books containing his lectures given to members of the Anthroposophical Society who had studied Steiner's basic books and were able to make sense of his lectures. With the new presence of the internet, my first question was, "What should I be reading of Rudolf Steiner's works?" Soon I had a laundry list of his books that were not lectures, but books written by Steiner that presumed no previous training or knowledge of his work in spiritual science. They were a revelation to me. None of those books were at that occult bookstore since the owner simply ordered extra copies whenever someone in one of her study groups ordered a book from her and put them on the bookshelves. Steiner was urged not sell these books to the public, which if that advice had been heeded, I might never have come to Steiner's works at all. This is how he laid down the principle regarding lecture cycles and their sales.

**[page 54] In future all the cycles, without exemption, are to be sold publicly, just like any other books. But, suppose, dear friends, there was a book about the integration of partial differential equations. For a great many people such a book is very esoteric indeed. . . . The book, however, may be sold to anybody. . . . As you can see, there is no harm in the judgment of someone who understands nothing the matter, for he is a dilettante, an amateur. In this instance life itself draws the line between the capacity to judge and the lack of capacity to judge.**

**Thus as regards anthroposophical knowledge we can at least try to draw the line morally and no longer physically. We sell the cycles to all who wish to have them but declare from the start who can be considered competent to form a valid judgment on them, a judgment by which we can set some store. And we also declare that in future we shall no longer take any account of judgments passed on the cycles by those who are amateurs. This is the only moral protection available to us.**

Notice that what Steiner considers to be moral is completely devoid of coercion, a lesson all governments who wish to remain *true governments* and not devolve into coercive bureaucracies will overlook to their

own peril. Steiner declares at the end of his closing remarks that the new General Anthroposophical Society "must become a Society of attitudes and not a Society of statutes. The Statutes are to express externally what is alive within every soul." (Page 57) Someday a government based on a set of attitudes instead of binding statutes will arise and will begin as and remain as *a true government without coercion at any level*.

The Foundation Stone was buried under the first Goetheanum. It was designed by Rudolf Steiner as a double dodecahedral solid: two pentagonal dodecahedrons, one large and one small attached to each other. The smaller one to represent the human being and the larger one to represent the cosmos. Although the physical foundation stone was lowered into the ground some seven years earlier, it survived the fire which burnt down the original Goetheanum (whose etheric form yet hovers over the site) and could equally well act as the Foundation Stone both for the new Goetheanum (whose future spirit hovered over the site) and the General Anthroposophical Society whose reality the Christmas Conference was bringing into existence. Let us listen to Steiner benediction of the Foundation Stone.

**[page 72] When now, at this moment, we unite these three forces, the forces of the heights, the forces of the circumference, the forces of the depths, in a substance that gives form, then in the understanding of our soul we can bring face to face the universal dodecahedron with the human dodecahedron. Out of these three forces: out of the spirit of the heights, out of the force of Christ in the circumference, out of the working of the Father, the creative activity of the Father that streams out of the depths, let us at this moment give form in our souls to the dodecahedral Foundation Stone which we lower into the soil of our souls so that it may remain there a powerful sign in the strong foundations of our soul existence and so that in the future working of the Anthroposophical Society we may stand on this firm Foundation Stone.**

Rudolf Steiner

And let us now lower the same Foundation Stone into the soil of our soul, let it grow in us as we move forward as a threefold being and lower it into the soil of our hearts.

**[page 72] Let us seek in the threefold being of man, which teaches us love, which teaches us the universal Imagination, which teaches us the universal thoughts; let us seek, in this threefold being, the substance of universal love which we lay as the foundation, let us seek in this threefold being the archetype of the Imagination according to which we shape the universal love within our hearts, let us seek the power of thoughts from the heights which enable us to let shine forth in fitting manner this dodecahedral Imagination which has received its form through love! Then shall we carry away with us from here what we need.**

With these words providing the frame for several recitations of the Foundation Stone Meditation in various forms (See below to read the Meditation.) the meeting began of the Secretaries of various societies. When Foundation Meeting continued on 26 December 10 am, Rudolf Steiner spoke of the openness that the new Society must ever exhibit, eschewing any tendency toward secrecy at any level, at any time. He had apparently seen those tendencies in various other societies, especially the Theosophical Society, and stated once and for all time there will be complete openness in the newly founded General Anthroposophical Society.

**[page 98] But today, early on, I want to say the following: As we saw in the necessary content of the Statutes, we have to connect total openness with the Anthroposophical Society. Anything less, dear friends, is not permitted by the signs of the times. The present age can no longer tolerate any tendency towards secrecy. This presents us with a fundamental problem which we shall have to solve. . . . We must be absolutely clear about the fact that our Society, before all others, will be given the task of combining the**

**greatest conceivable openness with true and genuine esotericism.**

Then followed the first reading of statutes, then the second reading with question and answers and voting on each statute (each of which passed unanimously). Paragraph 2 of the Statutes says in part that the cultivation of a science of the spiritual world will be the task of the Society. "It will endeavor to fulfill this task by making the anthroposophical spiritual science cultivated at the Goetheanum in Dornach the center of its activities . . ." (Page 122) which brought a question from Herr Van Leer: "The Goetheanum is mentioned here; but we have no Goetheanum." Steiner answers:

**[page 125] We are not of the opinion that we have no Goetheanum. My dear Herr van Leer, we are of the opinion that we have no building, but that as soon as possible we shall have one. We are of the opinion that Goetheanum continues to exist. For this very reason, and also out of the deep needs of our heart, it was necessary last year, while the flames were still burning, to continue with the work here on the very next day, without, as Herr Steffen said, having slept. For we had to prove to the world that we stand here as a Goetheanum in the soul, as a Goetheanum of the soul, which of course must receive an external building as soon as possible. . . . what we see with our physical eyes therefore does not prevent us from saying 'at the Goetheanum' . . . The Goetheanum does stand before our spiritual eyes!**

And by 1928, a short four years later, a magnificent concrete Goetheanum was opened for use, a Goetheanum of the soul then and now present to both our spiritual eyes and physical eyes. It was points like this that Steiner made in response to questions that makes the proceedings of the Christmas Conference so valuable. Mr. Collison added an important comment which helped lubricate the process of getting through the Statutes.

**[page 142] MR COLLISON: Please pardon me, as a very old member, for saying a few words about the Statutes. We have now come to point 4. I believe that it cannot be our intention to improve on these Statutes. Dr Steiner has put so much effort into them and they are truly all-embracing. It seems to me that any debate on the various points should serve the purpose solely of asking any questions there might be about the meaning or the extent of any of them. [Lengthy applause.]**

To forestall any questions about how the Classes should be laid out or, God forbid, administered, Steiner gave a lengthy exposition on the subject which anyone who works in modern-day academia or governmental organization should find some resonance with. He sarcastically refers to the *Classes* as *Sections* to help make his point. His metaphor of "Cloud-cuckoo-land" for "abstract thinking" is marvelous. He wanted instead an emphasis on being with activities already underway to form the Classes. A living process instead of a fairyland process.

**[page 144, 145] What is usually the consequence of such a way of thinking? It is a structure that lies in the realm of Cloud-cuckoo-land. And on the top of that, this structure has to be administered! So then you start hunting for suitable people, you look around all over the place for people who have to fit into the first, the second, the third Section, and finally they are somehow juggled in by means of some sort of election or something. Usually what then becomes apparent is that they settle as though into a chrysalis in their particular department in the scheme; they creep into their chrysalis, but no butterfly emerges. So let us not proceed in an abstract way.**

His characterization of a bureaucrat as someone who builds a chrysalis around oneself out of which no butterfly ever emerges is an apt metaphor for the modern bureaucrat. His metaphor for the need for money was equally ingenious.

**[149] For just as human beings cannot live on air alone, so is it also not possible to exist with the Anthroposophical Movement if our idealism does not occasionally reach for our**

**wallet.**

Later when no one wishes to ask questions about Paragraph 6 of the Statutes, Steiner says, "Mr. Collison really is a magician!" When he was later asked if the national economy course constituted a cycle (of lectures), Steiner replied in part, "In one way I am quite grateful to you for giving me the opportunity to speak about this rather vexed question." A *vexing question* has the nature of what I call an "unanswered question," (1) that is, a question which one does not immediately dispense with off-hand by some glib response, but which one allows to continue to vex, to trouble, to remain unanswered in one's mind, and, perhaps as Steiner did, to share with other people who could also ponder the question and help come up with an answer. Again a masterful handling of the question by Steiner.

This Paragraph of the Statutes is magnificent and should be tattooed on every would-be anthroposophist's mind.

**[page 156, 157] Paragraph 9. The purpose of the Anthroposophical Society will be the furtherance of spiritual science research; that of the School of Spiritual Science will be this research itself. A dogmatic stand in any field whatsoever is to be excluded from the Anthroposophical Society.**

In case there were nascent bureaucrats in his audience, Steiner immediately added this caveat in his comments about Paragraph 9, "And it has to be stressed that anything dogmatic is excluded from the administration of the Anthroposophical Society." Any person or organization which criticizes the Steiner or Waldorf Schools today for teaching some religious dogma is simply displaying their own ignorance of the founding principles of the Anthroposophical Society.

Steiner points out later in response to questions that "pedantic statutes can be the source of much that has to be settled by tact." He certainly gives masterful examples of handling issues by tact during the second reading of the Statutes, but feels a need to be more explicit.

**[page 174] I am altogether of the opinion that in the management of a society not much can be achieved by a pedantic head. It may have its place elsewhere, certainly, but in the management of a society such as the one to be founded here a pedantic head is quite harmful. What we need are sensitive fingertips. The more we can manage the Society through our sensitive fingertips the better things will be.**

Later Steiner adds "We need courtesy." Having resigned from an organization recently due to its lack of courtesy, I agree wholeheartedly with Steiner's exhortation below.

**[page 229] We shall urgently have to make it our task that courtesy is not the least of the unwritten paragraphs of our Statutes.**

On the evening of December 31, 1923 Steiner's lecture dealt with "The Envy of the Gods — the Envy of Human Beings." It was one year ago to the day that he had given a lecture in the original Goetheanum and several hours later he had been roused from his bed to learn that the magnificent wooden structure was completely engulfed in flames. In a previous lifetime Steiner and Ita Wegman may have been high priests together in the great Temple to Diana in Ephesus(2). This temple was later set fire to by an arsonist named Herostratos. In the chill of the New Year's morning of 1923, Steiner and Wegman they stood together to watch a temple they had created burn to the ground, likely by another arsonist. It was the burning of the Goetheanum that led Wegman to ask Steiner about their previous lifetimes together, and during his answers, he revealed their presence at Ephesus, among other lifetimes. About the phrase "envy of the gods" Steiner tells us:

**[232] Such words are always seen when one looks in spirit towards the deed of Herostratos, the burning of the temple at Ephesus. In the flames the ancient words stand out: The envy of the gods.**

Next he gives us a definition of what the word "god" means:

**[page 233] In those olden times the word 'god' was used to describe anything that lived as a supersensible being without ever needing to appear on earth in a physical body.**

Perhaps the destruction of the Tower of Babel as mentioned in the Bible illustrates an example of the envy of the gods for the towering accomplishment of human beings. Steiner is careful to note that the divine and good spiritual beings responsible for our human development cannot become envious. He directs us to the ahrimanic and luciferic spirits who are envious of our approach to the good gods.

**[page 233] But those divine spiritual beings who are so closely linked with mankind that the human being in his inmost nature has come into existence through them and has been sent by them on his journey through the ages, those beings we sense in the majesty and in the minutest appearances of outer nature, those divine spiritual beings cannot become envious. Yet in olden times the envy of the gods denoted something very real. Following the human race in its development up to about the time of Ephesus we find that indeed the more advanced human individuals had taken for themselves much of what the good gods had been glad to give them in the Mysteries. It is quite right to say that an intimate relationship exists between the good human hearts and the good gods, a relationship made ever more close in the Mysteries. Thus the realization came about in the souls of certain other luciferic and ahrimanic godly beings that human beings were being drawn ever closer to the good gods. And thus arose the envy of the gods towards man. Again and again we hear in history that a human being striving for the spirit, if he meets with a tragic destiny, is described as having been a victim of the envy of the gods.**

Steiner likens the envy of the gods to clouds which hovered over the ancient world until one salient deed of the gods, filled with love instead of envy, the Deed of Christ Jesus on Golgotha.

**[page 234] And there came down into this atmosphere filled with the envy of the gods the deed of that God who was capable of the greatest love that can possibly exist in the world. We see the Mystery of Golgotha in its true light only if we can add to everything else also the image of the clouds in the ancient world, in Hellas, Macedonia, the Near East, North Africa, Southern Europe; the image of those clouds that are an expression of the envy of the gods. Wondrously warming, gently gleaming, there falls into this cloud-filled atmosphere the love that streams through the Mystery of Golgotha.**

If we look back at the Mysteries in their old form, we find that gods are comprehended by humans who make offerings to them.

**[page 234] In olden times, down on the earth, one thought of the Mysteries thus: Human knowledge, human wisdom finds an abode in the Mysteries. But among the gods it was said: When we descend into the Mysteries we find there the offerings of human beings, and in the human being who makes his offering we are comprehended.**

The burning down of the Temple of Ephesus signaled a dramatic change in how humans encountered the gods. Before then, humans encountered gods in these physical temples, after then, humans encountered gods spiritually, inside themselves. The seeking of the Holy Grail became an internal path, replacing the former physical path. With that change, one could no longer find help in physical temples, only in the "gently shining eyes" of the Initiate (Rosicrucian).

**[page 235] Those who wanted to find the way, for example to the Holy Grail, had to know how to follow spiritual paths. In olden times, before the burning of the temple at Ephesus, the paths to be trodden were physical paths. In the Middle Ages the paths were spiritual. . . . Many true Rosicrucians frequented the temples, but these temples could**

**not be found by any external, physical human eye. But it was possible for pupils to find these aged Rosicrucians who lived here or there like hermits of wisdom, hermits of the holy human deed. They could be found by those who could comprehend the language of the gods speaking out of gently shining eyes. I am not talking figuratively. I do not want to speak in pictures. I am telling you of an actual reality which was extremely significant at the time to which I am pointing.**

"When the Pupil is ready, a Teacher will appear." This ancient wisdom comes to help us understand that the path we seek lies within us, not outside. When we have prepared ourselves internally, the Teacher will appear and show us into the Temple, the temple within us. The search for the Holy Grail, rightly understood, was a cover story, a metaphor, for the search for this inner temple.

**[page 235] The pupils found their Rosicrucian teacher if they had first gained the capacity to understand the language of the heavens speaking out of gently shining physical eyes. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in Central Europe these remarkable personalities were to be found living in the most modest surroundings, in the most unassuming human accommodation. They were filled with the divine spirit; in their inner being they were linked to the spiritual temples which existed but to which access was truly as difficult to find as was that to the Holy Grail described in the well-known legend.**

What we learn in [An Outline of Occult Science](#) is how human beings evolved in synchronism with the cosmos which surrounds us. Steiner tell us that this lesson in evolution, in its earliest form, "was the subject of long instruction by a teacher in whose gently shining eyes the pupil heard the speech of heaven." The teacher explained that the First Hierarchy sacrificed of their own being to form the warmth which filled the first humans during Old Saturn stage of evolution. Then the Second Hierarchy helped to build up our etheric body during the Old Sun stage. And finally the Third Hierarchy helped build up our astral body during the Old Moon stage. Steiner adds an important point in this lecture about our physical body. For a quartz crystal, its physical body comes from the Earth, but it does not require any spiritual beings to maintain its shape. When I went mining for crystals, it was an incredible feeling to extract from the Earth a perfectly formed quartz crystal that no human being had ever seen before, one whose form had remained unchanged from the very time when Earth itself was solidifying. And one whose form will remain unchanged until Earth itself dissolves back into the cosmos. Our physical body, however, cannot be maintained by the Earth; the Earth can only destroy it, not build it up.

**[page 236] Your physical body is not of this earth. Your physical body is of supreme spirituality. To Seraphim, Cherubim and Thrones belong the form and shape of your physical body. Your physical body does not belong to the earth; it belongs to those spiritual forces which are the highest as yet accessible to you. The earth can destroy it but never build it up.**

Likewise with our life body, otherwise known as the etheric body, which moves the life fluids within us. The etheric body built up by the Second Hierarchy remains with us until our physical body returns to the Earth, and then it returns to the far reaches of the universe.

**[page 236] The widths of the cosmos can dissolve this etheric body but they cannot build it up. Only those divine, spiritual beings belonging to the hierarchy of the Dynamis, Exusiai and Kyriotetes can build it up. You unite with your physical body the physical substances of the earth. But that which is in you transforms the physical substances of the earth in such a way that within them there is no longer anything resembling whatever is physical in the environment of your physical body. Your etheric body moves everything in you that is liquid or watery. The juices that stream and circulate are under the influence of your etheric body.**

Similarly with our astral body, it is built up by the First Hierarchy, and contains everything which is air which circulates in our body. These astral or ghostly forms can be seen floating through the atmosphere of the Earth years after the human spirit has slipped into the spiritual world. Now Steiner sums up the instruction given the pupil by the being with gentle eyes who could rightly be called their "godparent".

**[page 237] Having undergone sufficient instruction in this way, the pupil no longer felt related to the earth. Going out, he sensed, from his physical, etheric and astral bodies were the forces that joined him through the mineral world with the first hierarchy, through the watery earth with the second hierarchy and through the encircling air with the third hierarchy. It was clear to him that he lives on the earth solely through the element of warmth which he bears within him.**

In the temple of Ephesus stood the statue of the goddess Diana and in the Goetheanum stands the statue of the Representative of Man, "Christ Jesus, into whom, identifying ourselves with him, in all humility, we thought to merge in knowledge, just as in olden times, in their own way, no longer quite comprehensible to mankind today, the pupils of Ephesus merged into Diana of Ephesus." (Page 241)

Steiner sombers up as he recalls that night a year earlier when an event spoke to him of the envy of human beings.

**[page 240 And a year ago, in the night of New Year's Eve, we saw before us the devouring flames. The red blaze shot skywards. Dark blueish, reddish-yellow lines of flame curled through the seething sea of fire, generated by the metal instruments contained in the Goetheanum, a gigantic sea of flame containing the most varied shades and colors. And gazing into this sea of flame with the colored lines darting hither and thither one could not but read words which spoke to the pain in one's soul: the envy of human beings.**

He feels the pain of the loss of his magnificent building by a Herostratus-type deed, but he reminds all present that they will bear the Soul of the Goetheanum into a new building, a building which stands to this very day in 2013, ninety years in the future.

**Page [242] Our pain attaches itself to the old Goetheanum. We shall only become worthy of having been permitted to build that Goetheanum if today in remembering it we vow, before whatever is best and most divine in each one of our souls, to keep faith with the spiritual impulses that had been given an outer form in that Goetheanum. It was possible for this Goetheanum to be taken from us. The Spirit of this Goetheanum, if our will is truly upright and honest, cannot be taken from us.**

**Page [243] Let us bear the Soul of the Goetheanum over into the new cosmic year, and let us endeavor to build in the new Goetheanum a worthy monument to the body of the old Goetheanum, a worthy memorial!**

On the evening of January first, Steiner gave a lecture on "The Right Entry into the Spiritual World." Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley wrote about her novel, *Frankenstein*, "I only wanted to write a tale to tremble by," and we should tremble when we read Steiner's words about entering the spiritual world, of trying to get past the Guardian of Threshold without proper preparation. If we were to enter with the thoughts of the masses today, we would necessarily return in a condition of "soul paralysis." (Page 264)

**[page 264] For if the inner condition experienced before the Guardian of the Threshold were to endure for a sufficiently long period of time, if human civilization were to remain for a long time under the influence of what can be taken in schools by way of what is traditionally passed down by civilization, then sleep would become ordinary life. Human souls would pass through the portal of death into the spiritual world and then be incapable of bringing any strength of ideas with them into their new life on earth. For though you can enter the spiritual world with today's thoughts, you then cannot leave it**

**with them. You can only leave it in a state of soul paralysis.**

Whenever anyone returns from some psychotic break or LSD-type trip, they may begin ranting and raving as if they were soulless; this is a sure sign of their having gone into the spiritual world without proper preparation and having returned in a state of soul paralysis.

What might it be like to live on Earth if the majority of people were in a state of soul paralysis? In a Luke Wilson movie, *Idiocracy*, such a world is portrayed in vivid realism. Luke plays an average Joe in the U. S. Army. He was proven to be average by an extensive battery of tests and was chosen for an experiment. He was put into a capsule and sent five hundred years in the future. This is about the time that most people on Earth would have reincarnated and returned in a state of soul paralysis, unable to think for themselves, doing what they'd always done, and living only on instincts like an animal. Luke arrived to find horrendous conditions. All plant life was dying because people were watering their plants with Gatorade. Why? The reason they gave was, "What else? We can't water plants with stuff that's in the toilet bowl!" Luke was soon acknowledged to be the smartest man on the planet, but ends up nearly killed in a gruesome gladiatorial contest before anyone would listen to his sensible reasoning. It is painful to watch this movie because it shows the direction that most of humankind is already plunging headlong into today. The other amazing quote was when Luke goes to Costco to buy something, and the clerk looks it up and says to him, "It's located at Mile 17."

This is the kind of world that Rudolf Steiner was warning us about a hundred years ago, and the signs are everywhere that we are on a steep slope toward that kind of civilization.

**[page 264] You see, present-day civilization can be founded on the kind of cultural life that has been nurtured for so long. But life cannot be founded on it. It would be possible for this civilization to endure for a while. During their waking hours, the souls would have no inkling of the Guardian of the Threshold; then while they slept they would be turned away by him so that they should not become paralyzed; and the final consequence would be that a human race would be born in the future without any understanding, without any possibility of applying ideas to life when they were born in this future time, so that the faculty of thinking and living in ideas would have disappeared from the earth. A sick human race, living only in instincts, would have to populate the earth. Terrible feelings and emotions alone, without orientation through the force of ideas, would come to dominate human evolution.**

What Luke encountered in the movie when he got out of his capsule five hundred years in the future is what we would encounter when we arrive in a new incarnation about five hundred years in the future, unless humankind endeavors to nurture the spiritual aspects of our everyday life. And this is exactly the task that Rudolf Steiner gave the Anthroposophical Society headquartered in the Goetheanum in Dornach, Switzerland.

**[page 265] See, if this goes on, then the earth will have fallen into barbarism by the time those living today return for a new incarnation; people will live by instincts alone, without ideas; this is what you have brought about by falling away from the ancient spirituality of the orient.**

Why ancient spirituality? Because their ideas, concepts, and deeds were turned toward the gods and the spiritual world, and therefore they were allowed through the Gate of the Threshold by the Guardian. (Page 266)

**[page 266] And if souls then approached the Guardian of the Threshold with these ideas which had been formed in a manner that was worthy of the gods and that had a value for the gods, then the Guardian said: You may pass, for you are bringing with you into the supersensible world something that is directed towards this supersensible world even**

**during the time of your life on earth in a physical body; therefore when you return to the physical, sense-perceptible world sufficient strength will remain to prevent you from becoming paralyzed through having seen the supersensible world. Nowadays human beings elaborate concepts and ideas which, in accordance with the genius of the times, they want to apply solely to the physical, sense-perceptible world. These concepts and ideas deal above all with anything that can be weighed and measured, but they are not at all concerned with the gods. They are not worthy of the gods and they are of no value to the gods. That is why the souls who have fallen entirely under the spell of the materialism of these ideas which are unworthy of the gods and valueless for the gods are met, when they cross the threshold in sleep, by the thundering voice of the Guardian of the Threshold: Do not step across the threshold! You have misused your ideas for the sense-perceptible world; therefore you must remain with them in the sense-perceptible world; if you do not want to become paralyzed in your soul, you cannot enter with them into the world of the gods.**

These thoughts inspired this poem I entitled, "Soul Paralysis":

### **Soul Paralysis**

Most schools today  
teach soul-paralyzing thoughts:  
    Left Brain concepts or  
    Mental Hobbles  
All of which turns the entrance  
    to the Gate of the Threshold of the Spiritual World  
    into a Parking Lot full of Souls  
Who arrive like foolish Virgins with no oil for their lamps.

One foolhardy Soul Sleepwalks  
    past the Guardian of the Gate  
        and, when later evicted,  
Finds it impossible to think,  
remaining in a State of Soul Paralysis.

Only the Wise ones whom the Guardian  
    readily admits can escape Soul Paralysis  
    when they return  
    and Engender Life.

Will the Wise or the Foolish Inherit the Earth?

It would be Foolish not to hold that as an  
    Unanswered Question  
    From now on.

Every day for over a week, I had to walk past the new and vibrant Goetheanum in Dornach, Switzerland during a conference of a Mi-cha-elic Group from all around the world. We met in the Schreinerei Hall next to the Carpentry Shop where the Christmas Conference was held in 1923/24. We experienced directly the "true spiritual life for the blessing of mankind in the future, from the Goetheanum" which was back then only a spiritual vision, but it now houses a living and breathing spiritual science and a panoply of the arts in every cubic meter of its space.

**[page 268] With thoughts which are not easy but which are grave we must depart from this Conference that has led to the founding of the General**

**Anthroposophical Society. But I do not think that it will be necessary for anybody to go away with pessimism from what has taken place here this Christmas. Every day we have had to walk past the sad ruins of the Goetheanum. But as we have walked up this hill, past these ruins, I think that in every soul there has also been the content of what has been discussed here and what has quite evidently been understood by our friends in their hearts. From all this the thought has emerged: It will be possible for spiritual flames of fire to arise, as a true spiritual life for the blessing of mankind in the future, from the Goetheanum which is being built anew.**

Steiner makes it clear that no sleepwalker will be allowed through by the Guardian of the Threshold. Those who speak with derision towards anthroposophy and have plans against the Waldorf Schools will find that they have wasted their thoughts on materialistic objectives, and will be subject to soul paralysis as recompense for their folly.

**[page 269] Those who are not anthroposophists hear: You must remain outside the land of the spirit, you have misused ideas for merely earthly objects, you have not gathered ideas which have value for the gods and which are worthy of the gods; you would be paralyzed on your return to the physical, sense-perceptible world.**

**[page 270, 272] For this purpose we have immersed ourselves in those words with which I began, in those words with which I wish to close this Christmas Conference, this Christmas Conference which is to be for us a festival of consecration not merely for the beginning of a new year but for the beginning of a new turning point of time to which we want to devote ourselves in enthusiastic cultivation of the life of spirit:**

## **FOUNDATION STONE MEDITATION**

**Soul of Man!  
Thou livest in the limbs  
Which bear thee through the world of space  
In the spirit's ocean-being.  
Practice spirit-recalling  
In depths of soul,  
Where in the wielding will  
Of world-creating  
Thine own I  
Comes to being  
Within God's I.  
And thou wilt truly live  
In the World-Being of Man.**

**For the Father-Spirit of the heights holds sway  
In depths of worlds begetting being.  
Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones!  
Let there ring out from the heights  
What in the depths is echoed  
Speaking:  
*Ex Deo nascimur.*  
The spirits of the elements hear it**

**In East, West, North, South,  
May human beings hear it.**

**Soul of Man!**

**Thou livest in the beat of heart and lung  
Which leads thee through the rhythm of time  
Into the realm of thine own soul's feeling.**

**Practice spirit-awareness**

**In balance of the soul,  
Where the surging deeds  
Of the world's becoming  
Thine own I**

**Unite**

**With the World-I.**

**And thou wilt truly feel**

**In the Soul-Weaving of Man.**

**For the Christ-Will in the encircling round holds sway  
In the rhythms of the worlds, bestowing grace on the soul**

**Kyriotetes, Dynamis, Exusiai!**

**Let there be fired from the East**

**What through the West is formed**

**Speaking:**

*In Christo morimur.*

**The spirits of the elements hear it**

**In East, West, North, South,**

**May human beings hear it.**

**Soul of Man!**

**Thou livest in the resting head  
Which from the grounds of eternity  
Opens to thee the world-thoughts.**

**Practice spirit-beholding**

**In stillness of thought,  
Where the eternal aims of Gods  
World-Being's Light**

**On thine own I**

**Bestow**

**For thy free willing.**

**And thou wilt truly think**

**In the Spirit-Foundations of Man.**

**For the world-thoughts of the Spirit hold sway  
In the being of worlds, craving for light.**

**Archai, Archangeloi, Angeloi!**

**Let there be prayed from the depths**

**What in the heights will be granted**

**Speaking:**

*Per Spiritum Sanctum reviviscimus.*

**At the turning of the time**

**The Spirit-Light of the world**

**Entered the stream of earthly being.**

**Darkness of night**

**Had held its sway,  
Day-radiant light  
Streamed into souls of men:  
Light that gives warmth  
To simple shepherds' hearts,  
Light that enlightens  
The wise heads of kings.**

**Light Divine Christ-Sun  
Warm thou our hearts,  
Enlighten thou our heads,  
That good may become  
What we from our hearts would found  
What we from our heads would direct  
In conscious  
Willing.**

In closing, Herr Werbeck quoted Albert Steffen who, praising Steiner's words, said, "Our gratitude is inexpressible. And yet on the wings of these words he did express everything our heart can give." He later added, "If we understand him aright, then we know that for us anthroposophists the hour has come when we must set the deed of gratitude in the place of the word of gratitude. We must requite his great, his immeasurably great deed of love with whatever deed of gratitude our puny strength can muster. (Page 274)

Rudolf Steiner realized that no one should imagine that he alone was able to say all these things; that the Spirit of the Goetheanum, the great Archangel whose face shines through the Rose Window facing Westward from the new Goetheanum, deserves the credit.

**[page 276] In that Spirit's name  
I have permitted myself over the  
last few days to say a great many  
things which ought not to have  
been put so forcefully had they  
not been expressed while looking  
up to the Spirit of the  
Goetheanum, to the good Spirit  
of the Goetheanum. So allow me, please, to accept these thanks [from Herr Werbeck,  
etal] in the name of the Spirit of the Goetheanum for whom we want to work and strive  
and labor in the world.**



The Foundation Stone has been laid, the Statutes have been read, discussed, and approved, and the General Anthroposophical Society has been founded by Rudolf Steiner who promised us that a new Goetheanum, even greater than the first one in many ways, would be built upon the Bloody Hill in Dornach. That Hill, which was first consecrated by the blood of the soldiers of the Swiss Confederacy, whose blood was spilled there in that successful battle to retain their freedom and independence forever, was later sanctified by the bonfire that engulfed the magnificent wooden temple designed by the mind of Rudolf Steiner and carved and painted by his own hands. Two great sacrifices took place on that Hill and now a great temple of Spiritual Science holds its doors open to humankind who might else sleepwalk through the world using ideas for earthly objects but for the Goetheanum and the spiritual realities it brings forth through its architecture, its paintings, its windows, its great performances, and its many people who

carry on today the society founded by Rudolf Steiner nearly a century ago.

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----- *Footnotes* -----

**Footnote 1.**

“What is the power of an unanswered question?” is one of my basic rules, [MR#25](#).

[Return to text directly before Footnote 1.](#)

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**Footnote 2.**

See [Rudolf Steiner's Mission and Its Wegman](#) by Margarete & Erich Kirchner-Bockholt.

[Return to text directly before Footnote 2.](#)

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