

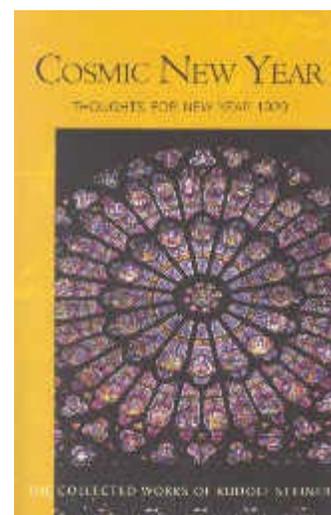
Site Map: [MAIN / A Reader's Journal, Vol. 2 Webpage](#) [Printer Ready](#)



A READER'S JOURNAL

Cosmic New Year, GA#195
by
Rudolf Steiner

5 lectures in Stuttgart
Dec 21, 1919 — Jan 1, 1920
Introduction by Chris Bamford
Translated by Peter Clemm
Published by SteinerBooks/MA in 2007
A Book Review by Bobby Matherne ©2008
Chapter: Spiritual Science



In his Introduction, Christopher Bamford says of the years following World War I that this was Rudolf Steiner's challenge, "To reach the general public, the spiritual-scientific epistemology and insights had to be translated into accessible, jargon-free, ordinary language that educated people could understand." This is a splendid statement of the challenge we face today, some 90 years later, when the English translations of Steiner's works back then are filled with spiritual-scientific jargon which is inaccessible to educated people today. That reminds me of a story. Around 1970 I was working for a new computer firm in Los Angeles and we had this consultant, Bill, who sat in on meetings with us. After we engineers had explained our proposal in intricate detail, Bill would set back in his chair, adjust his thick spectacles, look at us and say, "What does all this mean?" He did this in meeting after meeting and it irritated us, but at the same time, it drove us to reconsider our proposal, perhaps modify a bit, and explain it a bit better until everyone in the room understood what it meant. I think about Bill's pesky habit often when I imagine reading aloud several of Steiner's lectures to some educated person, who could then rightfully ask me afterward, "What does all this mean?" These reviews are my way of answering Bill's question to my Readers.

One need only Google my name or Steiner's name to encounter the fear that some people have of spiritual science. One finds the fear disguised under abusive language, e. g., Loon of the Month, but the disguise is a thin one. Positive Atheists are not immune to such fear — they are positively afraid of anything spiritual as if it would open them up to something deep inside of themselves that they do not want to face. Instead of facing this thing, they attack others who dare to reveal this thing. Skeptics fit also in this category of fear, but they must confront a paradox — they are *absolutely sure* that one cannot be *absolutely sure* of anything!

Steiner confronted such fear in his critics back a hundred years ago.

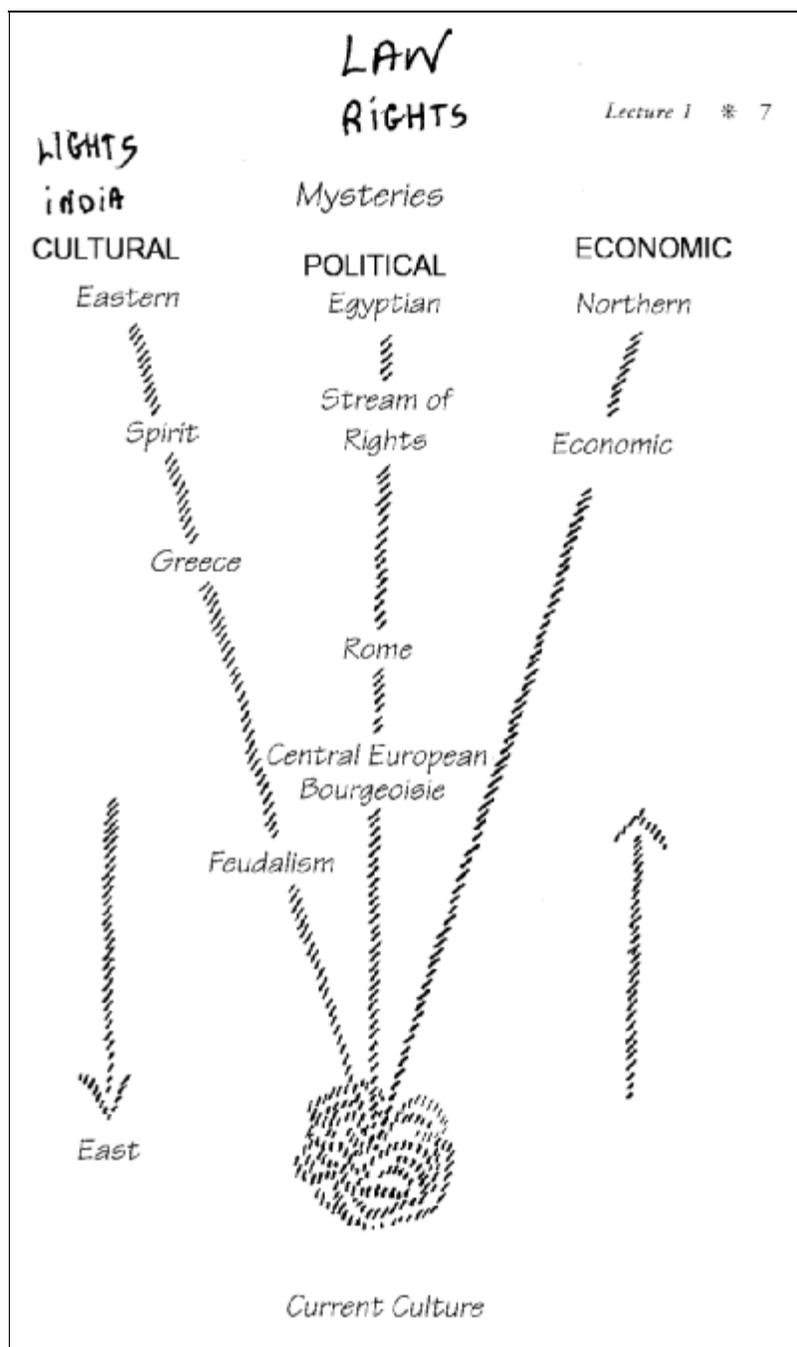
[page 1, 2] For how, according to some people, at a time when we have come so wonderfully far, could people have any kind of fear of knowledge? Indeed, people today believe they are able to encompass nearly everything with their intellectual powers. But people are not generally conscious of this fear that I have often described. In their consciousness people pretend that they are brave enough to receive every kind of knowledge, but deep in the unknown part of the soul (which today people basically don't want to acknowledge) there sits this unconscious fear. Because these people have this

unconscious fear, there rise up in them all kinds of reason that they claim to be logical objections against spiritual science. However, they are only emanations of the unconscious fear of the science of the spirit that reigns in human souls. For in the depths of the soul every human being really knows much more than is known intellectually. We do not want this knowledge rooted in the depths of the soul life to rise to consciousness, because we are just afraid of it. Above all else, the human being divines this about the supersensible worlds: in everything we call thinking, in everything in the world of thoughts, something of the supersensible world can be found.

Steiner gives details behind his threefold society(1) in Lecture 1 which is summarized metaphorically in the three threads of wool which are rolled up into a ball of yarn at the bottom. We can see the Light which came from the highlands of Asia in the East migrating south to Greece and forming the basis for the thread of our cultural life today. Most people would place Rome as the origin of our concepts of Law today, but Steiner shows that the political thread of human rights and Law originating in ancient Egypt from which it found its way through Rome to us today. The third thread is that of the Economic Life which formed in Northern Europe and England for which old customs and festivals provide the best evidence for its origin there.

In his threefold society proposals, Steiner endeavored to unravel the Gordian Knot of our current culture. He showed how we can progress in our time only by keeping the three threads separate from each other, so that they do not become entangled. One need only look at the immense set of regulations of economic firms by the political systems to see the extent of the current entanglement. The others entangled are equally present if not equally obvious: the religious with the political in many countries, the political with the arts sphere of the Cultural, and so forth.

So long as one of these three spheres of influence can lord it over another sphere, the entanglement will continue and the people who should be served by the three spheres will be dis-served.



The arrows in the diagram indicate that the Light came down to Earth in the East, but the Economic Life

rose upward from the Earth in the North (and the West as far as America). In a surprising revelation, Steiner indicates that the Laws of Nature are an artefact of Roman culture, bringing the processes of the judicial system into play in what constitutes establishment science yet today. No wonder innovators in the field of science are treated like criminals and heretics(2).

[page 13] Laws of nature only arose when the Roman side-stream was taken up. There the judicial law crept in through a window into the perception of nature and became a law of nature. Goethe wanted to grasp hold of the pure appearance, the pure fact, the pure phenomenon(3) — the archetypal phenomenon. Unless we cleanse our natural science from the appendages of jurisprudence, we will not achieve a cleansed spiritual life. Therefore spiritual science everywhere takes hold of facts, and only points out laws as secondary phenomena.

The concept of Law as it comes to us from the Romans knocks up the Economic Life and from this impregnation the bourgeoisie or merchant class is born. Even though it's been almost two millennia since the last Roman man impregnated a woman, on an economic level, the seeds of Roman law are still alive.

[page 14] Life penetrated by law has bred the modern bourgeoisie — the bourgeoisie comes from the legal stream. Today one must clearly see through these things. I would like to say: subconsciously people have the urge to see through such things, but only spiritual science can bring real clarity to this urge, this longing.

Nowhere is Roman law more apparent today than in the church which bears its name. In Steiner's time, that church proclaimed that its members could not read Steiner's writings, requiring those members to inform themselves of what Steiner wrote about by reading what Steiner's opponents have to say about him. One can see that science and religion today are completely infused with Roman law. Both have a method of creating outcasts from those violate their man-made laws in the guise of eternal verities. When a man wrote an essay in which he claimed Rudolf Steiner to be the "Rasputin of Wilhelm II", Steiner simply stated the facts that his connection with Wilhelm II was nothing more than being in the same public place with him on several occasions, as a spectator, not as a confidant. He urges that we go to the source and not accept the slanders which are promulgated as Law by the protective cadres of religion and science.

[page 17] Today one must go to the source of things; today it is not enough just to accept the things that are said, but it is necessary that people accustom themselves to going to the source of what is said and asserted. But the capacity to recognize the true origin of the outer factual world will only come to bloom for humanity out of a deepening into real spiritual knowledge.

In several other lectures times Steiner speaks about the regency of Michael the Archangel as beginning in 1879, but in Lecture 2, he speaks most directly about it as a fact and how the countenance of Michael in his previous regency before Christ was that of Yahweh, whereas in this post-Mystery of Golgotha time, Michael is now the countenance of Christ Jesus. He says on page 24, "Now we should approach Christ through Michael." First Steiner explains Michael in his regency during the time of the Old Testament.

[page 22] In our time, when we say something like this, we point out two things: an objective fact, and how that objective fact is related to all that human beings want to engage in their will and in their consciousness. The objective fact is simply that in November 1879, beyond the sphere of the physical world, in the supersensible, the following took place: Michael won the power for himself, that when human beings come towards him with all that lives in their souls, he can so penetrate them with his strength that they can transform the old materialistic power of comprehension (which until then had become so great in humanity) into a spiritual power of comprehension. That is the objective fact; it has taken place.

[page 22, 23] . . . the Hebrews of the Old Testament looked up to their Yahweh or Jehovah. Those of the Hebrew priests who perceived Yahweh with full consciousness knew that they could not approach Yahweh directly with human knowledge. Even the name was considered unpronounceable, and when it had to be spoken of only a sign was made that is similar to certain sign relationships we search for in eurythmy. But it was clear to these priests that the human being could approach Yahweh through Michael. They called Michael the Countenance of Yahweh. Just as we come to know human beings when we look into their visage, when we reach a conclusion from the mildness of their visage about the mildness of their soul, and about their character from the way they look at us — in the same way the Old Testament priests wanted to reach conclusions about Yahweh, whom it was not possible for humanity to reach, based on what crept into their soul as atavistic clairvoyant visions of the visages of Yahweh and Michael in their dreams. These priests had the correct attitude towards Michael and Yahweh; they had the right attitude to Michael because they knew that when the human beings of that time turned to Michael, they would find the strength of Yahweh through Michael, which was fitting for the human being of that time to seek.

Through the name of Yahweh being considered as unpronounceable back then, some people yet today will only write God as G-D, a curious atavism. Luckily the Hebrew people chose to approach Yahweh through Michael and avoided an overweening egotism that could have changed the course of history.

[page 23] What then would have become of the Hebrew people of the Old Testament, if they had wanted to approach Yahweh directly, instead of coming close to him through Michael? They would have become intolerant and egotistical as a people, a people only able to think of themselves. For Yahweh is the god connected to everything natural, and who expresses his being in the connection between the generations of the people and in their character as a people. Only because at that time the old Hebrew people wanted to approach Yahweh through Michael did they save themselves from becoming so egotistical that not even Christ Jesus could have come forth out of their midst. Because they penetrated themselves with the strength of Michael, as that strength then was, the Hebrew people thereby did not impregnate themselves with forces producing such a strong folk-egotism as would have resulted from a direct approach to Yahweh.

What does all this mean to us today? Can we think of some in the world who have become "intolerant and egotistical as a people"? Do we see large countries having smaller countries split off from them as their ethnic populations demand independence for them as a people? These tendencies appeared in the post-WWI time during which Steiner gave this lecture. He saw then an evil arise, a good out of its time, one justified during the Old Testament time when every ethnic group of people wanted freedom under the pre-Christian Michael. Now we see this evil arise again a hundred years later as a Luciferic approach to freedom, one that is not necessary in a post-Christian Michael period in which every human can achieve freedom independently of whatever State they live in, if they, through Michael, find Christ Jesus, who unlike Yahweh — the leader of Hebrew people, is the leader of all humankind, rightly understood. One cannot understand Steiner if one thinks he is talking about religion at this point instead of a striving for spiritual truth, and this spiritual truth may become reality only when it penetrates into human souls and striving.

[page 24] Again and again during the war years one heard the great falsehood: independence for each, and even the very smallest nation. This sentiment is a false one, because in this time of Michael it is human individuals, not groups of people, that are important. This falsehood is nothing but an effort to penetrate every single group of people with the pre-Christian Michael strength of the Old Testament. As paradoxical as it may sound, there exists today among so-called civilized humanity the tendency to transform Luciferically what was justified in the Hebrews of the Old Testament into the innermost impulse of every group of people. Today, with a pre-Christian state of mind,

one wants to create Polish nations, American nations, French nations, and so forth. We strive to follow Michael in the way that was appropriate before the Mystery of Golgotha, when through him one should find Yahweh, a god of the people. Today, through him we should find Christ Jesus, the divine leader of all humankind. We must find feelings and ideas that have nothing to do with any human differences on the Earth; but these we cannot seek on the surface, but must seek them where the human soul and spirit is pulsating, by way of spiritual science. We must decide to seek the real Christ by way of spiritual science, in other words in a Michaelic way — the Christ who can only be sought and found on the basis of a spiritual striving for the truth. Otherwise we should rather put out all the Christmas lights, kill all the Christmas trees, and at least honestly admit to ourselves that we do not want to have any recollection of what Christ Jesus brought into the development of humankind.

Once Lucifer incarnated into a Chinaman, thousands of years before Jesus, and was the "bearer of the human light that was the basis of pre-Christian wisdom" which streamed later through Greek culture. Everything human came as a heritage of the incarnate Lucifer, up until the Mystery of Golgotha. (Page 25) According to Steiner, Ahriman is or has incarnated among us, as an American(4). What does this mean to us?

[page 25, 26] But then a time will come when, just as Lucifer once incarnated in the East as an earthly personality in order to prepare the coming of Christianity, the real Ahriman will likewise appear in the West in an earthly incarnation. We are approaching that time when Ahriman will actually wander over the Earth. As truly as Lucifer and Christ. actually wandered about as human beings, so Ahriman will wander over the Earth with an intellectual faculty of tremendous power. We human beings do not have the task to prevent the incarnation of Ahriman, but we do have the task of preparing humanity in such a way that a right assessment of Ahriman will be made. For Ahriman will have tasks and will have to do one thing and another, but human beings will have to assess and utilize in the right way what comes into the world through Ahriman. Humanity will only be able to do this if we can today orient ourselves in the right way to what Ahriman is already sending to the Earth from other worlds in order to be able to operate on the Earth without being noticed. Ahriman must not operate on the Earth without being noticed; we must fully recognize his peculiar nature and be able to face up to him in full consciousness.

Ahriman is the agent of materialism and all of the ills that it can bring to humankind. Human beings have been reduced by science to an advanced ape whose consciousness was a by-product of an increased brain size. Christ Jesus has been reduced to a wise man who gave simple teaching during his lifetime. But paradoxically the worst tendency today comes from the Christian fundamentalists whose devotion to the Bible blinds them to any possibility of perception of a contemporary Christ in our world today. They act as if nothing important can be added to what appeared in the Bible almost two thousand years ago. Their intellectual interpretations of the Bible gloss over the numerous contradictions in its texts(5). One must take notice when Steiner says that such fundamentalistic interpretations of the Bible are as bad as materialistic views of the world.

[page 26] Now, while I am lecturing here in Stuttgart, I will show you some of the things that must be carefully watched in the development of humanity until the incarnation of Ahriman, so that when he comes he will be properly evaluated. Today I would only like to draw your attention to one thing: in relation to Ahriman, just as bad as the worst materialistic view of the world are some of the current interpretations of the Gospels. When today the Gospels are simply taken as they are by the representatives of the so-called religious communities, and when every new revelation is rejected, then such a

devotion to the Gospels, such a way to practice Christianity signifies the best way to prepare oneself in an Ahrimanic sense for the earthly appearance of Ahriman. A great number of representatives of the so-called confessions of today are paving the way for Ahriman, in that they disregard the truth, "I am with you always, even until the end of the world," in that they declare all that comes forth out of a direct perception of the contemporary Christ to be heretical, in that they conveniently hold on to the Gospels in a literal way, but literal only according to them. There should be a wisdom to protect people from holding on to the Gospels in this way, since in a purely external way the four Gospels contradict one another when approached only through our intelligence. Whoever today does not advance to a spiritual interpretation of the Gospels spreads a mendacious interpretation of them, because he deludes people about the external contradictions that exist in the Gospels. And to delude people about their most important concerns is just what best advances the aims of Ahriman.

Simply put, Bible thumpers unknowingly spread lies about the truths portrayed in the Bible. And by doing so act as the henchmen of Ahriman in furthering his materialistic agenda for the world. We do best to balance ourselves between the soaring fancies of Lucifer and the nitty-gritty clenches of Ahriman, and the only way for us as humans to do that is with the help and strength of Christ.

[page 26, 27] It is very necessary for people of the present time to place Christ in between Ahriman and Lucifer. The strength of Christ must penetrate us. But as human beings we must always seek the balance between what would, so to speak, draw us up in an extravagant, mystical way and what wants to drag us down to the Earth in a materialistically intellectual and heavy, pedantic way. At every moment we must seek the balance between what would uplift us Luciferically, and what would make us want to strive downward in an Ahrimanic way — in the search for this balance lies the Christ. And only when we strive to find this balance, can we find the Christ.

What happens if one takes full knowledge and removes the guts from it until only an abstraction of the original knowledge? One is left with a dialectical argument according to Steiner, which is "spirituality filtered to abstraction". [Samuel Hoffenstein](#) in 1933 wrote an insightful quatrain on how we distill reality into abstraction: "Little by little we subtract/Faith and Fallacy from Fact/The Illusory from the True/And starve upon the Residue."

[page 37] The Socratic epoch took from the prior impulsive wisdom merely the logic, the dialectic. This taking of only the logic from the old clairvoyant wisdom is the characteristic of our Western culture. It has also left its stamp on Christianity, because the theology of the West is also a dialectical one. But what comes up in Greece as dialectic, as spirituality filtered to abstraction, goes back to the Mysteries of the East; and with these mysteries were also those that founded the culture that later became the Chinese culture within which Lucifer incarnated. This should not be concealed, that Lucifer himself was once in a body, just as the Christ wandered about the Earth in a body at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha.

The theme of this book is stated best in the first sentence of Lecture 4 Steiner gave on New Year's Eve, 1919.

[page 43] On this evening it always behooves us to think of how past and future are linked together and connected with all of the cosmic life into which the human being is woven. . . . How does our life actually relate to the past and future? It is like a mirror. Yes, this comparison with a mirror corresponds much more to reality than we might at first imagine. In fact we stand as if in front of a mirror, just when we are striving for a little self-knowledge. What is being reflected in the mirror is the part of the past that we know about.

Consider that the part of the past we know about comprise the events and thought we were conscious of when they happened, i. e., our day-time knowledge. Those events and thoughts which occur within the time we are in deep sleep constitute our night-time knowledge and as such we are not conscious of them, so they *cannot* form a part of the "past we know about."

[page 43, 44] And behind the mirror lies what for now cannot be looked at, no more than you can see what lies behind a mirror when standing in front of it. Perhaps we have to especially raise the question here: what actually is the reflecting coating in our world mirror that allows what is transparent to become a mirror? In a spatial mirror the back of the glass is coated so that our vision cannot penetrate this glass. What then coats that world mirror, which shows us a reflection of the past, but hides the future behind itself for the time being? It is coated, my dear friends, with our own being — coated with our humanness.

We need only consider that with ordinary knowledge we are in fact unable to become clear about what we ourselves are. We cannot look through ourselves; we look through ourselves no more than we can look through a mirror. Much is reflected back to us when we look into ourselves. What we have experienced and learned is reflected, but our own being hides itself, because we can no more look through into our own self than we can look through an actual mirror. . . . There is a continual intervention of the nighttime experiences not included in one's thoughts. We are deceived when we look back and believe we are looking over our whole life: we, so to speak, piece together only what the days contain, and our life's course passes before our soul with constant interruptions.

Our night-time knowledge is one of the things we "subtract" from our experience; we cannot call them fact because we are not aware of the experiences, but they nevertheless affect our behavior during the day-time. As a result we can see that only our day-time experiences are capable of reflecting our past to us. This suggests a short poem to me:

**Our map of the world, our day-time knowledge,
coats the mirror of life and
reflects the past back to us
While preventing the future
from reaching us.**

**Our humanness, our day-time knowledge,
is the silver lining which coats the mirror of life
and reflects the past back to us
While it masks the future from us.**

**Our divinity, our night-time knowledge,
penetrates the uncoated glass
which we look through to forever.**

**We watch the scrolling film of our life
and get lost in the images as
day-time knowledge fills us up.**

**Between each day-lit frame of the film
is a night-time darkness
in which we recover our immortal "I".**

To be human is to be awake at times and to sleep at other times. We cannot stay fully awake and be human. Consider a God who slept — how would you feel if you knew that God slept as much as the

average human being does? How can God be all-knowing if He sleeps part of the time? No, our impression of God is of a Being who is wide-awake at all times. Similar logic would apply to spiritual beings all the way down to Angels. Would you want your Guardian Angel to be asleep while you were asleep? Our very experience of ourselves as an "I" require these nighttime interruptions of our experience of the world.

[page 44] We can now ask ourselves: are these interruptions in the course of our life necessary? Yes, they are necessary. If we did not have these interruptions in the course of our life, or rather in the retrospect of our life, we would not as human beings become aware of our "I." We would see the course of our life only filled up by the outer world, and the "I"-consciousness would not enter into our life at all.

But the "I" each of us experiences today is only our own "I" whereas people of ancient times had an "I" filled with clairvoyant perceptions which convinced them that they were divine. No one argued whether God existed back then, but it was a common experience. As Steiner says in several places in other lectures, "Discussion begins when knowledge ends."

[page 45, 46] Just as the "I" was filled for the human being of the past with atavistic-clairvoyant content that guaranteed a connection with the divine, so in our time our "I" should fill itself with a new spiritual content received in full consciousness, which once again provides the tie that binds(6) our soul to the soul being of the divine.

Here is the key point which Steiner hinted at earlier: our logical, abstract way of talking, our use of dialectical arguments, is an atavism of humankind's former clairvoyant nature and is no longer appropriate for us from this time forward. This reality comes to us as most spiritual realities come to us: as a feeling.

[page 46] What remained behind as the last inheritance of the old atavistic clairvoyance is the abstract thinking and abstract knowledge of the people of today This remained behind as a dilution of the previous atavistic clairvoyance. People of today can have the feeling that this dilution, this logical-dialectical dilution of the old atavistic-clairvoyant nature can no longer be borne in the soul. Then we will experience a longing to receive something new in our "I."

As I wrote in my essay, [Art is the Process of Destruction](#), true art is information received from the spiritual world, and its presence in the physical world where it never existed before destroys the sameness which people were comfortable with for so long. As a result they detest the new art form, oppose it, and are basically repelled by it, with rare exception. People seem to be in love with the past for the very reason that it represents all they know and have come to appreciate. Few realize that the very things they are most comfortable with today were things that were detested by the majority when it first appeared. The waltz, for example, was decried as an immoral form of dancing when it was first introduced.

[page 47] But the fact is, that when one turns to the spirit on the one hand, then, on the other, those people who want only to worship what was in the past are drawn towards the spirit of contradiction or opposition. And the more we attempt to take hold of the spirit of what is to be the future of humanity, the more will the people looking to the past be obsessed by the spirit of opposition.

Steiner takes up the "soaring fancies of Lucifer and the nitty-gritty clenches of Ahriman", those "two great enemies of human spiritual progress" (Page 54) in a new way, calling the former, the "dogma of revelation" and the latter, the "dogma of experience". (Page 55) Can anyone today not be aware of how these two dogmas are fighting each other in the public forum over the teaching of evolution? The dogma of revelation is represented by the various Christian groups who wanted their brand of evolution taught in schools based on almost literal interpretation of the Bible, which they call Creationism. The dogma of

experience is represented by various scientific and atheistic groups who wanted pure Darwinian evolution taught without the *taint* of intelligent design. Rightly understood, both groups are wrong and their fight is over whose fallacy will rule the day. The only voice of sanity in the entire matter comes to us from almost a hundred years in the past in Rudolf Steiner who reveals evolution to be a cooperative effort between the spiritual hierarchies in which humans played a part from the *very beginning*(7). Clearly neither of the Lucifer & Ahriman (L&A) dogmas work. Those dogmas don't hunt, as the country expression goes, but they sure do a lot of barking!

Here's how Steiner referred to these "two great enemies of human spiritual progress." Because humanity ignored his pleas a hundred years ago, the L&A dogmas are still roaming and looming large in the world.

[page 54, 55] On the one hand I spoke of the dogma of revelation, and on the other hand I spoke of the dogma of mere experience. I wanted to show that the one-sided cultivation of the dogma of revelation as it has developed in confessional circles is just as harmful as the boasting about the so-called dogmas of experience, which means all of what is only provided by the outer sense world and the world of material facts by the natural scientists and sociologists. It was then my task, in the course of time, to formulate these ideas more concretely and to point out the real forces that lie behind these phenomena.

What lies behind what I called the dogma of revelation? All of what we today in a comprehensive way call the Luciferic influences on the course of human development. Whoever in our present time wants to lead humanity merely under the influence of the dogma of revelation is leading them in the sense of Lucifer; whoever (perhaps the natural scientists) wants to lead them merely in the sense of outer sensory experience, leads humanity in the sense of Ahriman. In our present serious time, may it not be a consideration for the New Year to cast an eye over the last three to four decades, to point out that it is just as essential for us today to raise once more the call that was raised then, only in a much stronger way?

Steiner was writing at the time of the beginning of the great experiment with communism in Russia, and he clearly saw the fallacy in the approach of Lenin back then. Lenin wanted to reach social justice by creating a gross social injustice as a way of beginning. Even though Steiner agreed with Lenin's stated goal that "a social order must be developed where the individual capacities of each human being become of value and where the justifiable needs of each human being can be satisfied," he could see that Lenin's approach would not work.

[page 56] But on the other hand we hear such a personality as Lenin saying that such a social order cannot be established with the people of the present time — with them one can only set up a transitional social order. One can only establish something that of course will contain injustice in the widest sense. It is also present to an absurd degree in everything being established by Lenin and his followers: they believe one could only produce a new human race that does not yet exist by passing through this transitional phase, and when it comes to be, then one will be able to introduce into it that social order in which each person can make use of their capacities and live according to their needs. Thus, they invent a nonexistent human race in order to realize an idea that, as I said, is even justified in an abstract sense.

Ninety years of history has proven Steiner right and Lenin wrong. Steiner dealt with reality and Lenin with abstract non-sense. Clearly Lenin and his followers did not believe the above truths about a soul-spiritual being descended into a physical human body, or else they would not have driven the Soviet Union into atheism so monomaniacally.

How many great sounding ideas are being bruited about today, March 20, 2009, as I type these notes? Ideas which resonate in sleepy heads who close their eyes to the full significance of ideas as if having imbibed a narcotic, the deadly narcotic of abstract logical reasoning which, by careful selection of

premises can prove anything to be the case. As a society we are today, if anything, more addicted to such abstract thinking than in Steiner's time. His way of concrete thinking can yet today provide a foundation for right thinking for those ready to take the first step into awaking-ness.

[page 57] Is it not time for this sleepiness to cease, which closes its eyes a little when something like this appears that in the deepest sense points to the signature of the present, closes its eyes in order not to fully take in the whole significance of such a thing in any way? To come to a concrete understanding about these things, nothing else helps than to abandon the ways of abstraction in the spiritual life. But for that one must really first have a feeling for where abstraction is present, when there is only talk in phrases about soul and spirit, and one must be able to discern when soul and spirit are talked about as a reality. You see, when one speaks of human capacities, they appear as a manifestation of the inner being of the developing person. Humanity is encouraged by a number of its representatives to appropriately develop the capacities and forces that appear in the maturing human being. We only perceive truly in this field if in a certain way we perceive the manifestation of these forces and capacities as a manifestation of the divine. We must say to ourselves: the human being has come out of a world of soul-spiritual being into this world of sensory reality, and what expresses itself there as human forces and capacities and what we have developed in ourselves and in others originates in a spiritual world, and having descended from a spiritual world into this physical human body, it has now been incorporated in this body. But if you take the spirit and sense of what has been explained here for decades, this spirit and sense points out to you that with the incorporation of human capacities and forces in the physical human body the possibility is given to the Luciferic beings to access these capacities and forces.

The Luciferic forces envelop us unless we acknowledge their presence in us. We are trapped by what we deny! This statement is easily proven, as Richard Bandler and John Grinder(8) showed, "Do not think of a chartreuse elephant." Now, what color was that elephant? If you try to follow the process of denial, you create a living thought which sticks in your mind just like the atrocious color of the elephant you just visualized.

[page 57, 58] The incorporation in the human bodily system is the means whereby the Luciferic powers can approach human capacities and forces. Only by impartially facing up to this fact do we come to a right attitude in life to all that gushes forth in human nature as capacities and strengths. If we do not want to see the Luciferic, if we deny it, then we are trapped by it. But it is just then that we get into that state of mind that wants to deliver us entirely to something internally compelling, to be thus relieved by all kinds of mystical or religious powers from the necessity of appealing to the free self of the human being, and to seek the divine in the unfolding of our own free selves in the world.

What do people want today? Look at the majority of people you know who watch situation comedies each night. They must relate to the characters in the sitcoms, don't you think? And where do the characters in those programs get their information? They get it from other people, newspapers, mass magazines, and other TV programs. They learn what is right to think and how to act by taking advice from people who get their information the same way they do. And, most importantly, in the process of acquiring information this way, they do not have to do any *in-forming* in themselves from the actual situation they are trying to solve. People who act this way have reduced in-formation to data collection. They copy other people's maps of reality, and operate out of them, sometimes with hilarious results, but truly the laugh is on them, because for a little more effort they could have in-formed themselves and created a more satisfying though less laughable outcome.

This was also true in Steiner's time as he points out in this next passage.

[page 58] People don't want to think for themselves — they want a vague power to express themselves from their inner being according to which they can prove themselves logical. They don't want to experience the truth, they don't want to exert themselves to have that inner, free experience that also experiences the truth. They want to experience the inner compulsion that compels them from within and expresses itself in the proof that does not appeal to experience, but to the power of something spiritual that will overpower and force them to think this or that about nature and about the human being. But in appealing to this inner compulsion, this inner power, people are delivering themselves up to the Luciferic powers.

Okay, you dear Reader, say that you are an exception and you do not blithely accept what other people tell you to think or believe. If so, you must not belong to any group, whether it be political, religious, or scientific. You don't believe in Darwinism, Creationism, or any other -ism. If you do, be aware that your thoughts have already been shaped Luciferically without your knowing it. If you believe that a human being consists of only a body and a soul, that shaping began in Eighth General Council of Constantinople at which the trinity of body, soul, and spirit was truncated to body and soul by a committee of well-meaning men devoted to the Church.

[page 58] At that time, in the year 869, when it was decided that people must no longer believe in the spirit of the human being, the inclination toward Lucifer entered European civilization. And today we have the fulfillment of that. People have given in long enough to the inclination not to experience the truth, but to allow the compulsion of proof, of impersonal proof to act upon them.

What about the other dogma of Ahriman? It appears in human needs. Like the old Tennessee Ernie Ford song went, "If the left one don't get you, the right one will." If Lucifer doesn't grab you, Ahriman will.

[page 59, 60] Through what Lucifer appropriates for himself on the one hand, Ahriman on the other hand gains the possibility of appropriating what is at work in the needs of human nature. And so along with that possibility and the dogma of mere outer sensory experience, the door is opened to the penetration by Ahriman of the instinctive life of humanity in the last third of the nineteenth century. And so, in not realizing that healing lies in the equilibrium between the two extremes, between the capacities on the one hand and the needs on the other, modern humanity stands before a dreadful fact. Out of its materialistic mind it only looks upon the body that produces the capacities, meaning only upon the Luciferic origin of the capacities — because through the fact that the capacities enter into the body, they become Luciferic, and when one believes that the capacities come from the body, then one believes in Lucifer. And when one believes the needs arise from the body, then one only believes in what is Ahrimanic in those needs.

Steiner was not the only man in his time who recognized our need to recognize the two dogmas and to tread our way carefully between the two(9). Heinrich Deinhardt in the 1860s described "how human beings should be taught to free themselves from compulsory logical necessity and the necessities only arising from instincts." (Page 61) He clearly pointed to the dogma of revelation (logical necessity) and the dogma of experience (instinctual needs). Deinhardt "warned humanity, saying: what otherwise must take place must be prevented by means of education." In founding the Waldorf School system, Rudolf Steiner took the step of creating a system of education which would allow its pupils, our future citizens to mature safely between the two deadly dogmas.

People who have wondered exactly why Steiner dropped out of the Theosophical Society after years of lecturing under its aegis are now in a position to understand it fully after reading these five lectures. In Lecture 5, Steiner closes this book with this passage:

[page 63] We should build on the basis of the knowledge that what is intended here has nothing to do with the customary idle talk of Theosophy that takes place here and there, but which is based on just as strict a judgment about things as any science that has ever established its worth. If something like that were thoroughly appreciated, then one would also know why what happened is now called a defection by Father Zimmermann(10). You know that that was not the case, but that we were thrown out because we did not succeed in bringing a real seriousness into this society of wishy-washy talk — because there a real seriousness was not wanted, because there they wanted to continue to chatter on in the same way as they had chattered for years, at best in connection with something or other about which one can say all kinds of things without having any knowledge of the spiritual world. What our time so urgently needs is complete seriousness in the area of spiritual life.

We have come to the end of "Cosmic New Year" and find that Steiner's comments and exhortations are as vibrant and valid today as they were in his time, and they are even more needed. We note one major difference today: there is a world-wide Waldorf School system which is educating the next generation. Steiner's words are being translated more and more into other languages. The publishing house, SteinerBooks, is beginning to publish Rudolf Steiner's entire Collected Works, of which this book is one. People are discovering Steiner's insights into the importance of honeybees. His innovative dance involving spiritual gestures is being performed in more and more locations around the world. Organic architecture as innovated by Steiner can be found around the world. One measure of the success of Steiner's work in the present age is the increasing of attacks made against him by Luciferic and Ahrimanic forces who, on the Luciferic side attack Anthroposophy as a cult, and, on the Ahrimanic side, ridicule Steiner's work as utter fantasy having with no basis in the real world. One must be courageous today to read and study Rudolf Steiner's work. It is no easy task. I looked far and wide for answers to my questions about the big issues of life, and it was only in his writings that I found real answers instead of empty promises. My hope is that you, dear Reader, will begin to want more than my meager reviews and begin to collect and read Rudolf Steiner's books in full.

~^~

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

Footnote 1. See my review of his [Towards Social Renewal](#) here:
<http://www.doyletics.com/arj/towardss.htm>

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

~~~~~  
**Footnote 2.** The list of examples are long, but Galileo, Copernicus, Giordano Bruno, Ignatz Semmelweis, Immanuel Velikovsky, Barbara McClintock, Nicolas Tesla, Goethe, and Rudolf Steiner, among others were treated as shabbily in their time for violating what some thought were the Laws of Nature.

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

~~~~~  
Footnote 3. See the works of Stephen Edelglass: [The Marriage of Sense and Thought](#) and [The Physics of Human Experience](#), both of which deal with physics using the phenomena first rather than the so-called laws of nature.

[Return to text directly before Footnote 3.](#)

~~~~~  
**Footnote 4.** See [Christ & the Maya Calendar](#) by Robert Powell and Kevin Dann which pinpoints 2012 as the year in which Ahriman will appear among us, most likely as an American.

[Return to text directly before Footnote 4.](#)

~~~~~  
Footnote 5. The best interpretations on a spiritual level that I have found are those that Steiner provides in his lectures on the Gospels. The Gospel of [John](#), [Mark](#), [Matthew](#), and [Luke](#). In his Luke Gospels, one can see how he reveals the spiritual unity underlying the Christmas stories in Luke and Matthew Gospels.

[Return to text directly before Footnote 5.](#)

~~~~~  
**Footnote 6.** This expression, "the tie that binds", appeared at the bottom of the deck of [Bulldog Squeezers](#) playing cards and it always caused an ineffable feeling of mystery to rise in me as a child and while growing up.

[Return to text directly before Footnote 6.](#)

~~~~~  
Footnote 7. In his landmark book, [An Outline of Occult Science](#), Steiner reveals a compelling vision of the evolution of the Cosmos, including the creation of human beings, the Sun, Earth, and the planets, which makes more sense than either the Luciferic or Ahrimanic dogmas fighting like bulldogs today for their place in school curricula.

[Return to text directly before Footnote 7.](#)

~~~~~  
**Footnote 8.** See their classic book, [The Structure of Magic](#), at <http://www.doyletics.com/art/som1art.htm>.

[Return to text directly before Footnote 8.](#)

~~~~~  
Footnote 9. I think here of the two bulldogs on the [Squeezers](#) Card deck, Trip and Squeezer, and how we are safe if we recognize that they are chained to the Earth and cannot attack us if we navigate carefully between the Christ-filled space which separate them.

[Return to text directly before Footnote 9.](#)

~~~~~  
**Footnote 10.** A Jesuit priest who wrote disparaging comments about Steiner, either baseless or misleading, such as claiming that Steiner "defected from the Theosophical Society".

[Return to text directly before Footnote 10.](#)

To Obtain your own Copy of this Reviewed Book, Click on SteinerBooks Logo below:

