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*A READER'S JOURNAL*

Cosmosophy, Volume 2, GA# 208

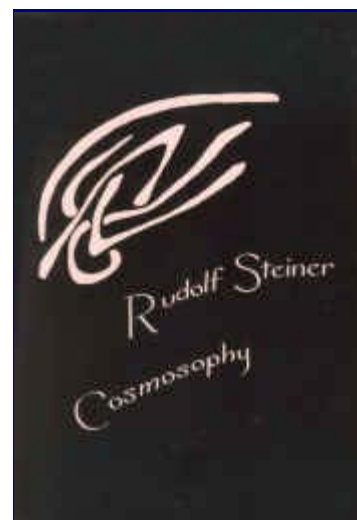
by  
Rudolf Steiner

**Cosmic Influences on the Human Being  
11 Lectures in Dornach, Oct 16-Nov 13,  
1921**

**Translated by A. R. Meuss**

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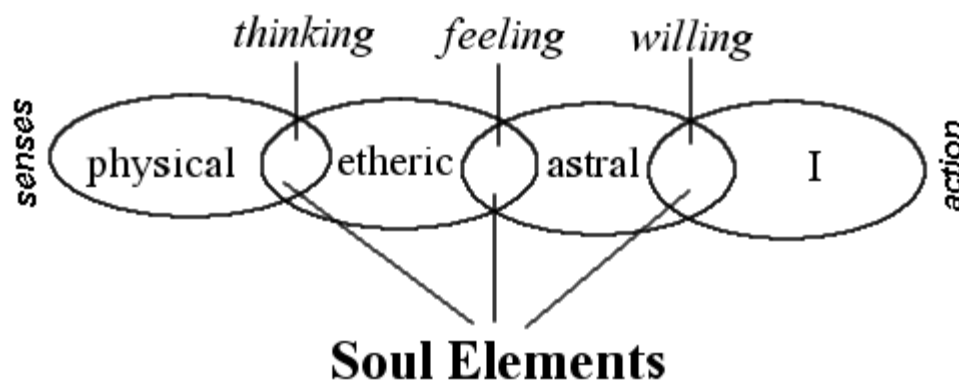
In the previous [volume](#) we discovered the interplay between the four basic human bodies, the physical, etheric, astral, and I and we caught a glimpse by the end of the volume of how the first three bodies are refined by the I into *spirit self*, *life spirit*, and *spirit human*. All of these activities take place during our time between birth and death where I am as I type these words and you are as you read them. The lectures in this volume begin with a consideration of the other half of the physical-spiritual cycle that the human being rhythmically flows through — the time between death and a new birth. It is a time when we are in effect inside out — our bodily organs which are inside of you and me as I type and as you read these words were formed out of the cosmos around us as we prepared to enter the physicality portion of the cycle at birth. During the spiritual portion of the cycle we undergo an inversion: what was inner becomes outer and what was outer becomes inner.

**[page 20] That is the tremendous change which comes with death. The outer becomes inner. We can bring to mind the way the inner life of the soul is made up of interweaving thoughts and feelings and that this is what we mean when we say "I". After death everything our senses have perceived with regard to our actions becomes our inner life, which is then gathered in a point or, better, a sphere: a view of everything we have done on earth. We take with us through death our whole life on earth, like an inner memory, and this becomes our inner life. There has been a complete reversal: everything the senses previously perceived to be our actions outside us will then be our inner life. Now we live in our inner responses and feelings; then we'll live in our actions, which will have become our inner life. So if you have done a kindness to someone or you have done something bad, after death you yourself will actually be the good and bad things you have done. You mustn't be abstract about this and imagine some vague I slipping through death and then being something else, or a bit different. No, we ourselves will be our past actions, in every detail. We shall be every one of our actions and experiences and call all of this "I".**

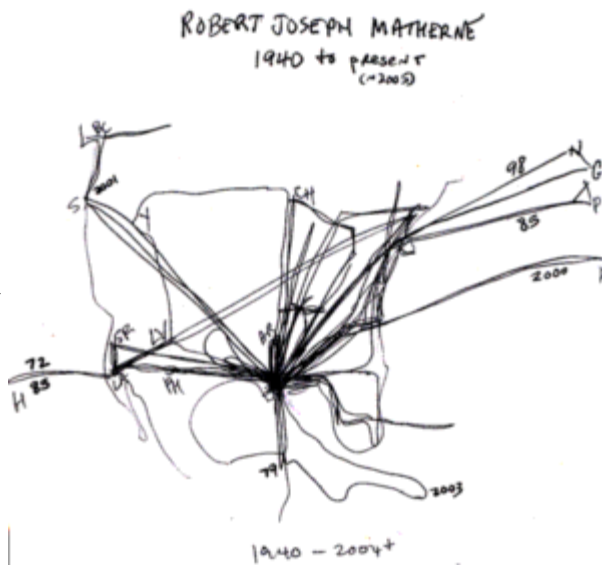
We will undergo a complete inversion as dramatic as if one were to take a ripe fig with a brown outer skin and open it, invert it so the inner core becomes a tiny ball of brown skin and the outside of the fig becomes a beautiful floral array of white and red buds.

**[page 20] The inner on the other hand will become the outer. The whole world of our thoughts and feelings becomes something outside us. Here and now we have the sun and the clouds around us, or the starry heavens and their movements during the night. After death our present thoughts and inner responses will be our external environment. Things that are in our innermost heart will become part of the outside world after death and appear in mighty images. The heavens, where now the sun is shining, will then be shining with the inner life that we have here and now.**

We will be as a sphere expanding away from Earth but looking back upon it where we will see the feelings and experiences we had as clouds and stars streaming back towards us. Those experiences that did not involve people will appear as cloud formations, those with people as starry constellations. This image of people as stars after death was most memorably portrayed by Antoine de St. Exupery at the end of "The Little Prince."



The diagram above from my review of Cosmosophy 1 shows the two poles of "senses" and "action", but notice that these two are linked or looped together in this way: whatever actions our I leads us to do our senses experience and record. These records of our I-initiated experiences form into a tissue of our inner life during our time *then* — The time between death and a new birth. Try this exercise: take a sheet of paper on which you have an outline map of the portion of the world you live in and have visited. With a pencil, beginning with the place you were born draw a continuous line through each place you visited in each year of your life moving up through the years to the present day. (See my own sketch at right.) If you do this exercise, it will give you a sketch of the outermost skeleton of your inner life *then*.



**[page 24] Everything you have done combines to form a tissue; this expands into a sphere and becomes the inner life. By becoming inner life it ensures that the human being will have an I during life on earth, for we have our I from the earth, or through the earth. Everything we have done on earth is woven into a vast image of remembered sensory perceptions, and we are thus able to take our "I" through death. Our inner experiences are relieved for a short period after death, for the ether body only dissolves away a little later. It dissolves out into the universe and in consequence everything woven out of thoughts and feelings, from the ether body, but also with an astral element to it, becomes the cloud formation, or constellation of stars that surrounds the earth. Our inner and outer aspects drop away in two directions,**

**towards the earth and out into space, as it were, as we go through life between death and rebirth.**

For thousands of years before the Christ Being entered Jesus of Nazareth in the Jordan during His baptism by John, the Christ Being was observed as approaching the Earth from the Sun. Upon the death of Jesus on Golgotha, where could the Christ Being go but return to the Sun? When Christ Jesus walked on Earth, the Sun was up there in the heavens, and after His death, the Sun was inside of Him and it is but the vestures of the Christ Being that we now observe in the heavens each day as brilliant rays of sunlight shining down upon us on Earth. In the words of the epigram "As Above, So Below" — which expresses so well how the microcosm and macrocosm are reflected in each other — we can well expect to find that, during our life between death and a new birth, the Sun will disappear from the sky in the heavens, because we will likewise be within the Sun.

**[page 24] Try and really see in your mind's eye the kind of world in which you will be between death and rebirth. The actions that arose from your will are then your inner life. Your present life of feelings and thoughts will be the cosmos outside you. The difference is that you'll not be looking out into the cosmos but inward from the cosmos to the earth which reflects your inner thought aspects back to you. When we live on earth between birth and death we have, on the one hand, the life of the sun. The sun is out there; we are on earth and look at the sun. After death the sun immediately disappears, for we ourselves are then the sun, and we do not see something which we ourselves are. We simply move on into the life of the sun, and it is this transition which I have been describing to you. The fact that our actions become ourselves is connected with this. And as we move away from the earth, the things we have experienced through the earth become something we look at.**

Someday the Earth will fade away as an old soldier who has done his duty and all that will remain will be the memory of his deeds and a new world will arise which is called [Jupiter](#) upon which human beings, you and I, will remain. We will find on Jupiter a life surrounding us that was woven by all the human beings and what they have inwardly lived through during all of their repeated lives on Earth. Rightly understood, we are Earth-Builders all. We in our respective lives each comprise the deeds of the old soldier Earth which will one day fade away and a new world will arise we have no words to picture.

**[page 25] Here we are on earth and look to the sun. We see the earth beneath us, which is due to the physical, material nature of the earth. The sun does not exist in material form. As I have said before, the things physicists are saying about it are mere fantasy. When we ourselves are in the sun and look back, we have the whole world of the spirit with all the hierarchies behind us. Here on earth we look down and see solid matter. Between death and rebirth we have the world of the hierarchies behind us. Thus we will be sun and see the true sun, which is of the spirit. The earth may be called sky then; it will be the sky we create out of our inner experiences. This will also be the future life on Jupiter. I have given you a clear picture of it all. Everything human beings weave around the earth with their feelings and thoughts will remain. The physical earth of today will perish. When we are between death and rebirth today we can see what is woven in the inner life. Later, when the earth is coming to an end, this will be the reality of a new earth; the old earth will melt away, and everything human beings have inwardly lived through will be the future of the earth.**

**This is how the metamorphosis will come about in real terms. It is superficial and abstruse to say: "Earth will become Jupiter". We only gain insight into the process if we know that the physical substance of the earth will melt away into cosmic space; it will turn to dust. The tissue woven around it out of our feelings will be the future earth; it will grow denser and denser and become the true Jupiter planet.**

"Will there be geologists on Jupiter?" Steiner asks and then he answers us. Yes, but there will be no strata

of minerals to explore and describe the origin of — instead there will be strata of thoughts. He tells us our inner experiences do not pass away, "they are world in the becoming. All that human beings are able to see even now in conscious awareness between death and rebirth is this substance of a future world." (Page 26)

**[page 25, 26] In future, on Jupiter, it will be possible to investigate the layers that have evolved there. All kinds of strata formed of human feelings and thoughts will be found. A Jupiter geologist will clear away one layer after the other, for instance, and just like a geologist on earth will say: "This is the Lower Permian; these are Tertiary strata", so our Jupiter geologist will say: "Ah, here is a layer going back to the early 20th century, as they called it on earth. It is the layer produced by the thoughts and feelings of all the racketeers who lived almost everywhere on earth then." Just as we speak of the Silurian system today, for instance, they will be able to speak of the "racketeer system" in time to come. There will be other layers as well, of course, and these things are absolutely real.**

As we continue to expand away from Earth then we pass through the orbit of the Moon. The Moon acts as a *life preserver* for us, saving the events from our previous life for us. It was for this reason that the orbit of the Moon is shown first on those old geocentric maps of the cosmos — it was the first planetary orbital sphere through which we human beings progress in the time between death and a new birth. The heliocentric Copernican view came to the fore when humankind began envisioning travel to the planets with their physical bodies, but the older geocentric view remains important for travel to the planetary orbital spheres with our spiritual bodies.

**[page 27, 28] Moving out of the moon sphere we see a vision on its inner wall; the memories we retain of this we retain as the effects an earlier life on earth has had on our later life on earth. This moon actually preserves the events of one life on earth as something that comes into effect in a later life on earth. The way the contents of one life on earth live on from one earth life into those that follow is connected with the moon and the whole of its mystery within the cosmos.**

In the time between death and a new birth, we take the highest member, our I, and we leave behind the three lower members of our human being: our physical body dissolves into the Earth, our etheric body dissolves into the far reaches of the cosmos, and the astral body dissolves into the region of the stars. We live then in a four-membered body with the I as the lowest member and three spiritualized members. The three higher members are what our I had distilled on Earth from our three lower members as one might distill spirits from a grain mash: *spirit self*, *life spirit*, and *spirit human* which are called in the East by the names, *manas*, *buddhi*, and *atman*.

**[page 30] It is in fact the spirit self which radiates into cosmic space as an image of earth. The I lives in the sun, and the light of the spirit self is reflected by the earth. The other elements are higher ones that come to human beings from the cosmos and to begin with have nothing to do with their inner life. The light that shines out towards human beings will appear in a new life and become life spirit. Into the actions of the human being enters a high spiritual substantiality, shivering through them — the spirit human being. This is something given and received from the cosmos when we are out there. When we come down to earth at birth we receive our physical and ether bodies.**

During this current period of [Earth Epoch](#) we are continuously from lifetime to lifetime building and perfecting our *spirit self*, and it will only be during the next or [Jupiter Epoch](#) that each of us will have a fully developed *spirit self*. When Earth disappears in that day "when sun and stars will rise and set no more", we will each take our I and our *spirit self* with us to Jupiter. Our *life spirit* and *spirit human* are even more primitive than our *spirit self* now, but we are given them as if on loan as garments then.

**[page 30] When we have gone through the gate of death we receive our life spirit and spirit human being; they are given to us as garments. But the I we shall have will be truly our own — I have given you an outline of this. And the spirit self which shines out from the earth truly is a finely woven planetary existence between death and rebirth, something that is like a transformed earth for us on which we look back and on which we continue to weave from life to life. When the earth will have come to the end of its present development, human beings will go on with it to Jupiter. Thanks to the substance we have woven we shall be able to develop a physical spirit self on Jupiter, having laid the foundations for this through our own inner activity during life on earth.**

As a physicist by academic training I was taught to envision a world of moving atoms, electrons, ions, etc, existing behind our sensory impressions which generate the perceptions we have of the physical world. Steiner points to a reality ultimately more complex than any reductionistic physics theory has ever pointed to — he points to the spiritual realities dancing outside of our Plato's cave which cast the shadows we espay on the wall of our cave and from which we formulate our physics theories, up until now.

**[page 35, 36] I have made it clear to you on more than one occasion that the fantastic world of moving atoms that physicists dream of is definitely not to be found behind our sensory impressions. No, behind the world we perceive with the senses lies something which is of the spirit. It is present in the world of the senses, though we are not directly aware of it when we have the tapestry before us in ordinary consciousness. In reality the tapestry presented to the senses contains the totality of all the spirits which in my *Occult Science* are collectively called the Spirits of Form. Anything which presents itself in space has form, and the colored surface also gives objects form. In everything which we experience in space through the senses live the Spirits of Form, which in the Old Testament are called the Elohim.**

The colored surfaces we perceive, therefore, are rightly called *maya* or illusions created by the underlying realities which we are not yet able to perceive at this stage of human evolution. What we are able to perceive or experience in our *sleepy* state are the effects of these realities in the form of Imagination, Inspiration, and Intuition. If and when we wake up, we will experience a spirit-filled world in which we have always existed, but were mostly unconscious of, up until now.

**[page 36] We do, quite rightly, call the world that presents itself to the senses the world of phenomena. This is only correct, however, in so far as at our ordinary level of consciousness we human beings perceive no more than these outer phenomena of the world. It is the "maya" of the Orient. But the moment our conscious mind wakes up and is able to perceive in images, this whole world of the senses is filled with, or, even better, transformed into, a world of flowing, moving images which also reveals the world of the Angels that is woven into it. This is also the world which inspires us when we are capable of Inspiration. It is then transformed into the world of Inspiration in which the Archangels are active. Later we also experience the world of Intuitions, when we advance from the world of the senses to the world of the Archai.**

We must be careful when entering the world of Imagination because we will encounter luciferic and ahrimanic elements there which can create on the one hand sheer fantasy and on the other hand strange unearthly elements.

**[page 40] If we do not go out of ourselves inwardly when awake but do so in sleep, entering the region where the imagination we use when awake has its roots, the principle which shows itself in our imagination when we are fully awake comes to expression at a more subconscious level in our dreams. Imagination can become sheer fantasy if a luciferic element enters into it, and in the same way our dreams may degenerate into all**

**kinds of strange things, which we may even take for real, if influenced by ahrimanic elements. Dreams are essentially luciferic, but an ahrimanic element may enter into them. Yet when our dreams are "innocent", as we may put it, and purely human, the Angel lives in them, the same Angel which is in us when we use our imagination and inwardly go beyond ourselves, as it were.**

In an amazing metaphor, Steiner imagines that a boy is asking what makes a freely mounted magnetized needle move, and a reductionistic scientist explains to him that to find out what makes the compass needle move we must closely examine the compass needle, analyze its components, and figure out what is happening to the compass needle based on its constituents parts. If the boy says, "Look, it always returns to pointing to the north," he is met with the retort, "We cannot talk about the whole Earth being involved in the needle's movement, we must look into the needle for the cause." That is blatantly foolish, of course, as anyone who took elementary school science would know: it is the Earth itself in which we must look for the source of the movement of the needle." And yet modern biologists insist that the human being develops only in the womb from a tiny germ, and that the universe has no effect on it. Steiner illustrates the interaction of the human embryo to the world of stars and planets surrounding it by drawing a compass needle on top of the embryo in left half of this colored blackboard [diagram](#), also shown below in Lecture 5.

**[page 45] They look only at the germ cell. But just as the whole earth is active in a magnetic needle, so the whole universe is active in the creation of the embryo. The part which the human being plays in this is, of course, at an unconscious level.**

As human beings we are connected to both a material and a spiritual universe, and we ignore the latter at our peril. To those materialists who ignore that the universe is alive inside of them, we can only say, "Maya, oh my!" and shake our heads in dismay. For the truth of the matter will ever escape them until they come to see through their cherished delusions.

**[page 46] The nature of our internal organs is truly such that a whole cosmos is alive in them. If we merely consider those organs the way they are presented in ordinary anatomy and physiology, this is maya to a much higher degree than the maya we face in the world around us.**

We are able to know about the world from memories we have stored since we had conscious awareness, since about five years old. But we grasp, apprehend the things that occur to us in the world from bodily memories or *doyles* stored from events that happened to us before we were five. When we look back on a memory, any doyles associated with that memory will be triggered and those familiar feelings will arise that lead to what we call understanding or comprehension of the events we recalled. This is how we understand the world through our cognitive and doylic memories working together. But our entire human organization is required to understand the cosmic processes at work, and there are instruments that can perceive or register those processes outside of the complete human being.

**[page 47] Isn't it true that we know about the world which has been our own for as long as we have had conscious awareness here on earth from memory? We are able to reflect on everything we are able to recall from memory. We look inwards and find that the world we have known outside is inside ourselves, and we realize that the outside life has entered into the images we have inside us. Looking back in memory we understand again what we experienced before. Now if we look at our physical organization and understand it, we also understand the cosmic process. Our memories let us understand life's experiences. Our whole human organization lets us understand the cosmic process, if we know how to look at it. And this is what anthroposophy is all about — to understand the human being in every way.**

Any number of materialistic scientists would immediately hurl at Steiner the epithet of *anthropomorphism*

if they were to read his book *Occult Science*, and they would be done with anthroposophy once and for all. But if the reality of the world is such that human evolution and cosmic evolution proceeded together then every appearance of anthropomorphism is the sign of a deep truth which we do best to respect and inspect and come to know deeply for our evolution and the evolution of the cosmos are bound up together. Thus Steiner tells us that "anthroposophy is also cosmosophy" and "The human being is to be found in the world, and the world in the human being."

**[page 47] This is also why it is not anthropomorphism to speak of human evolution in the same breath as evolution through Saturn, Sun, Moon and so on in my *Occult Science*. Cosmic evolution is something that is given, and human evolution is something that is given, for the further we penetrate the secrets of existence, the more do cosmos and human being come together; the more does it become apparent that the separation between cosmos and human being that exists for us on earth is mere maya.**

How did we arrive at a way of understanding the world that is so filled with *maya* or illusion in our time? To understand this we must overcome the *chronomorphism* of the materialistic scientist of today who operates as though what is true of our current way of understanding the world of imaginations, concepts, thinking, and abstract thoughts was *always* that way. If one projects our current way of understanding the world on ancients peoples, one becomes completely blind to the evolution of consciousness which has been taking place which has led us to our current condition of *maya*. He goes into details in Lecture 3, but a few passages will give us the flavor of his argument.

**[page 49] At about the beginning of the 8th century BC the nature of human understanding became what essentially it still is today, though with modifications. Until now, we have more or less characterized the earlier way that went before it by saying: It was a kind of instinctive perception. Insight lived not in concepts but in images; these were not entirely like the dream images we see, yet they did not have the clear definition when they lived in human souls which they have in the modern world of concepts, but took more the form of images that passed through the conscious mind.**

All the Greek myths occurred before that time, but were written by people after that time, and thus we have written reports by a people who were dramatically different than the people they were writing about. Those people with the earlier capabilities, such as remembering their earlier incarnations and knowing their karmic destiny, were called "gods." Achilles' mother, Thetis, is one excellent example of such a "god." What the Greeks called "gods" were earlier human beings with capabilities that so far outshone their own, they called them "gods". Here's how Steiner characterized these early godlike Greeks.

**[page 52] People acted more or less out of instinct on earth, we might say they acted like a higher kind of animal. And into this creature shone the sublime wisdom which began to fade away towards the 8th century B.C.**

As we near Plato's time, things begin to change. With the fading away of divine wisdom, the rising up of the individual intellect began, and the intellectual soul age replaced the sentient soul age with its instinctive wisdom. Plato had one foot in each age and it showed in his writings.

**[page 52] There followed the development that goes hand in hand with the intellectual or mind soul. Human beings began to let the mind be active in them and evolve concepts. Greek civilization still had the angelic wisdom of earlier times but worked it through with human concepts. Plato's wisdom makes such an impression on us because he was subjectively evolving concepts and ideas, but the old instinctive wisdom still shone into the process.**

When the Homeric epics were written down, the author implored his Muse to radiate the story into him as he wrote it down. For example, in *The Iliad*, the first line goes, "Tell me, O Muse, of the wrath of

Achilles." When Plato writes, he uses the form of a dialogue. Rather than merely copying down what a Muse told him, Plato held a conversation with his Muse, a definite sign of an evolution of humanity between Homer and Plato.

**[page 52, 53] His writings therefore are a marvelous combination of the highest wisdom and a way of thinking that was human and individual. Considering Plato's mind and spirit it would be impossible to imagine him writing his philosophical works in a form other than that of dialogues, for the simple reason that he was definitely aware of a wisdom that had only been an indefinite feeling to earlier people. They would say: The wisdom simply exists; it comes to me and radiates into me. Plato found himself in a form of dialogue with the entity that brought wisdom into him. Experiencing this wisdom in dialogue he also preferred to express it through dialogue.**

From the time of the Greeks to the Romans, humanity underwent a metamorphosis again from the imaginative thinking of the Greeks to the abstract, logical thinking of the Romans. Someone once said that Latin was taught to early school children because it taught them how to think. It was a form of thinking that did not exist before the Romans and comes to us embodied in the Latin language and the Roman concept of jurisprudence, both of which have been cornerstones of civilization since the earliest Roman times.

**[page 53, 54] Anything the Romans still had by way of imagination actually came from Greece. The Romans introduced the prosaic, logical thinking that was later to give the Latin language the logical quality that was to govern civilization for ages to come. . . . We may say that in the Latin language, a luciferic element lives on in an ahrimanic way.**

How do we tell the difference between people who are primary luciferic or primarily ahrimanic? Here's an easy way: ask yourself about a given person: Are they more into anger or more into pain? If into anger or ire, they're luciferic. If into pain or suffering, either experiencing it or complaining about it, they're ahrimanic. While everyone may be angry at one time or in pain occasionally, those who have a demonstrated propensity for either can be seen to be under the influence of either luciferic forces (ire) or ahrimanic forces (pain).

**[page 57, 58] The luciferic spirits may be said to be spirits of ire in the human soul who do not intend human beings to be glad to be on earth but draw them away from the earth, over and over again, always wanting to draw them up towards the superhuman. . . . The ahrimanic spirits, on the other hand, may be called spirits of pain and suffering. They seek to achieve the human form for themselves but are unable to do so. Essentially these ahrimanic spirits suffer terrible pain. It is as if an animal were to feel dimly: You ought to come upright and be a human being — as if it wanted to tear itself apart inwardly. That is the terrible pain experienced by the ahrimanic spirits. It can only be relieved by approaching human beings and taking hold of their minds. This will cool the pain.**

We human beings are the battleground for the luciferic and ahrimanic forces, and our only chance for balancing these two sets of forces is through Christ who is ever ready to assist us with maintaining a healthy balance between the two forces. Anger, pain or balance — the choice is ours. The luciferic forces come down from the higher world and seek to lead us to rise to their level — they can be found in the "arts and abstract theology". The ahrimanic forces come up from below, from the level of matter and seek to achieve human status by possessing our mind. They want to keep us from progressing so that they might relieve their own pain.

**[page 58] Ahriman has a hand in the development of mechanics, technology, anything that seeks to take the human intellect away from people and put it into machine tools and also the machinery of government.**



The Artificial Intelligence researchers are the most ahrimanic of all the scientists today with their attempt to create human intellect in machines which is the ultimate in taking it away from people. If they are successful in their endeavor they will have succeeded in committing suicide, because they will have become so bound to the Earth that when the mineralized Earth dissolves into space they will die with it, having become unable to reach the spiritual development to live during the spiritualized Jupiter stage of evolution.

**[page 59] If the industrial technology and materialistic science which has evolved from Renaissance times and is entirely ahrimanic by nature is allowed to spread without there being any understanding of Christ, it will bind human beings to the earth and prevent them from reaching the Jupiter stage. Yet if we bring understanding of Christ, a new life of the spirit, and Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition to what at present is mere discovery of the physical world, we will redeem ahrimanic nature.**

How is this redemption to take place? It can begin to take place in you, dear Reader, when you endeavor to study and comprehend the truths of anthroposophy — the science of the material and spiritual human being, of the full human being or *anthropos*. Convert in your mind the battlefield of Luci and Ahri into a balance scale and imagine that Christ is holding that scale and placing His hand on the side of the scale that you need to restore balance in your world. He stands ready to help, if only you will ask Him for help.

**[page 61] The human beings of today are caught in the midst of this battle. They need to realize that anthroposophy enables them to find and perceive the spirit and is therefore the true gift of Christ. Holding on to this they can keep the balance between luciferic and ahrimanic elements and thus find their way.**

Steiner gives us the image of the two extremes of Lucifer and Ahriman, in what I might call the Buddhist Monk and the New York City Marketing Man. The Buddhist Monk has no use for his legs as he sits for long hours in a cross-legged posture while his head swells with divine inspiration. The NYC Marketing Man is constantly on the run from one market to another, one meeting to another, and his legs are constantly in motion as he executes the items on his To-Do list from morning till night.

**[page 62] Lucifer wants [people] to use their heads and pour their hearts into their heads; Ahriman seeks to make people think only with their legs, pour everything into the legs.**

In what one may interpret with 21st Century hindsight, Steiner seems to be saying that Personal Computers are a good thing to have around if they are pressed into the service of anthroposophy.

**[page 63, 64] The things they write in shorthand or on typewriters might just as well stay unwritten. We usually know all about it and there is no need to put it down on paper. The content does not matter, for only the ahrimanic skill has some significance. Yet it will be good to have the things that are coming up in the science of the spirit laid down exactly, for it is necessary to express ourselves in a careful, accurate way. And in this respect the ahrimanic element will be able to serve the realm of the spirit well.**

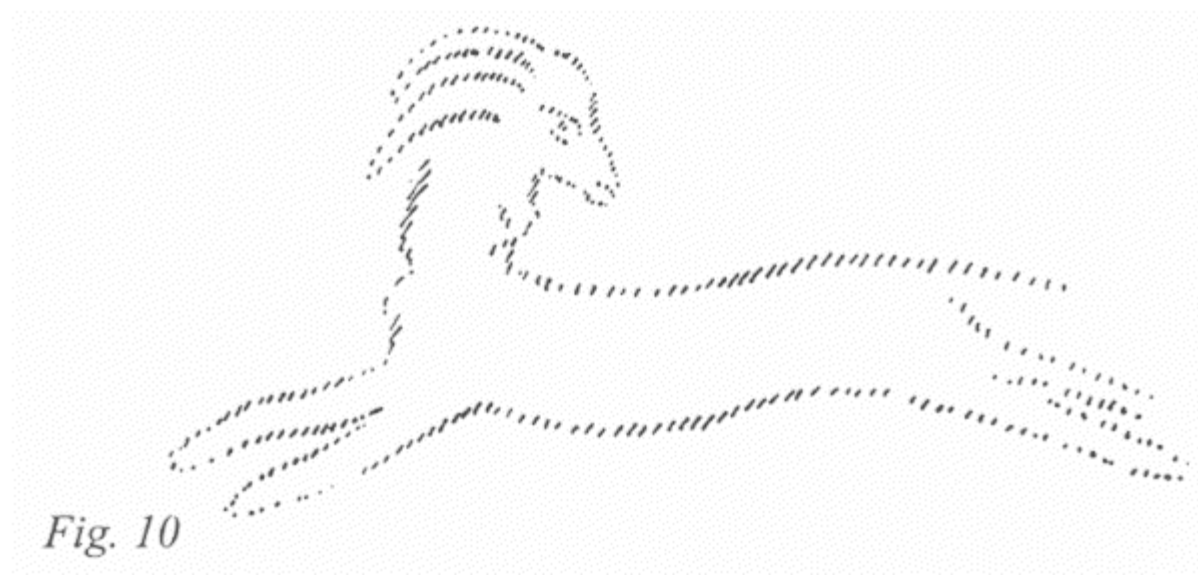
## **The Human Form in Relation to the Universe, Lecture 4**

In Lecture 4, Steiner discusses the human body in relation to the universe. The items in the list below are definitely worth reading in detail in Lecture 4 to understand how Steiner derives them. Below is a summary list of the 12 form principles from pages 67, 69, and 70. Read them carefully, note the sequence in which they appear and ask yourself if something about this list seems even vaguely familiar.

### **The Twelve Form Principles of the Human Being**

- 1. The universe reaching in. Looking back**
- 2. Looking out into the universe. Taking in the mobility of the universe**
- 3. Experiencing self, touching self**
- 4. Enclosing ourselves.**
- 5. Something that fills us**
- 6. Ripening**
- 7. Becoming part of the inorganic world. Finding our balance**
- 8. Poison sting**
- 9. Hunter**
- 10. Animal breeder**
- 11. Tiller of the soil**
- 12. Trader.**

The twelve principles are divided into three groups having to do with the head, the chest, and the legs. The first four principles have to do with the human being formed out of the universe and the Ram symbol of Aries begins at the top of the head. It is generally shown looking back as in this diagram from page 73 (and the back cover of the book).



Each of the remaining forms of the twelve can be analyzed to find that they fit with the corresponding astrological sign as they progress down to the feet. In the middle group, we find the Lion leading off with his proud chest, the Virgin carrying the ripening wheat stalk, the Scales finding the balance, and the Scorpio representing that which fills us with poison. In the lower part of our chest is our stomach and digestive system which receives a minor amount of poison with every food we eat. The next group of four is the legs and has the human being as walkers upon the Earth doing business. The four major businesses of humankind since the beginning have been the Hunter, the Breeder, the Farmer, and the Trader. Each of these have a unique symbol: the Archer, the She-Goat ( a hybrid animal), the Water-Carrier watering his crops, and the Two Fishes representing two sailing ships, one going out and one coming home — the traditional sign of the Trader.

If we take the signs and lay them across the curled up human fetus we get this diagram which now has taken on more meaning as Steiner shows us how the human being is formed out of the universe. (From page 76)



*Fig. 11*

**[page 76] This figure I am drawing really arises from the twelve signs as if of its own accord. We are able to say: There (in the middle) the universe with its stars is more active in the inner human being; there (at the top) the stars act from outside, and there (below) they compress the human being. You can see that the form I have drawn is the human embryo. Basing yourself on the laws of zodiac, you really have to draw the human embryo like this, just as you get a triangle if you draw a figure that encloses 180 degrees. It is therefore immediately apparent that the human embryo is created out of the whole Universe.**

This is a brief review of Steiner's presentation of how the human being is formed out of the stars, and the entirety of Lecture 4 contains many details and elaborations. After reading this chapter only the most skeptical materialist could scoff at the connection between the stars and the human form. We also see the three processes of thinking, feeling, and willing evolve out of our basic understanding of the forming of the human being. One can no longer wonder about how the human form came about — rather, one is led to wonder in amazement at how it came about.

**[page 77, 78] Again it is possible to see that human beings are really threefold by nature: formed out of the universe in so far as they are head; developing inwardly, merely in concord with the outside world, in so far as they are chest; developing limbs and metabolism in so far as they make themselves part of the physical world, i.e. are limb people, or earth people (see Table 73).**

For a bit of a stretch, imagine now a head person, a person with only a head. What does he grasp things with? His eyes act as arms. Where are his legs? The jawbones can be seen as pivoting on a knee-like joint and forming the head's legs, albeit arranged backwards. Now take the chest person — they grasp with their arms which also act as their eyes. The limb person has the liver and kidneys as thinking and seeing organs. We are, rightly understood, three human beings fitted on top of one another. It is that underlying reality that leads us to laugh so heartily when the Little Rascals stack up three kids one on top of the other in one adult's clothing. We recognize unconsciously that we are each such a top-heavy stacking of three persons.

**[page 78,79] Even in terms of form and shape, we have three human beings fitted into one another. In the human being who has vanished into the head and become a sphere**

**we see the previous incarnation coming alive, in the chest we have the actual human being of the present time, and in the person who is walking about we may see what will enter into the next incarnation.**

What Steiner has shared with us was the understanding of the ancient people who perceived how the human being was shaped and formed out of the starry universe. Rather than scoffing derisively at their knowledge, we would do well to learn to respect and admire the legacy they have bequeathed to us who no longer have their visionary capabilities.

**[page 80] We are thus able to evolve the human form in relation to the whole universe. You need to take these things very seriously, even if they are presented with a fairly light touch and not in a pedantic way. Taking them seriously you will see that on the one hand everything I have said today holds the potential for understanding the human form out of the whole universe, and on the other hand it is something to make us feel the greatest respect for the perceptiveness of people in the past; out of instinctive clairvoyance they were able to gain the most tremendous knowledge of man from the signs of the zodiac.**

Rudolf Steiner wrote in his book, *Life Between Death and Rebirth* a passage which, rightly understood, impels us to become more conscious of how we were shaped and formed out of the universe and born into the time and place we each find ourselves right now.

**[page 53] The more conscious I become that I am born out of the universe, the more deeply I feel the responsibility to develop in myself the forces given to me by the whole universe, the better human being I can become.**

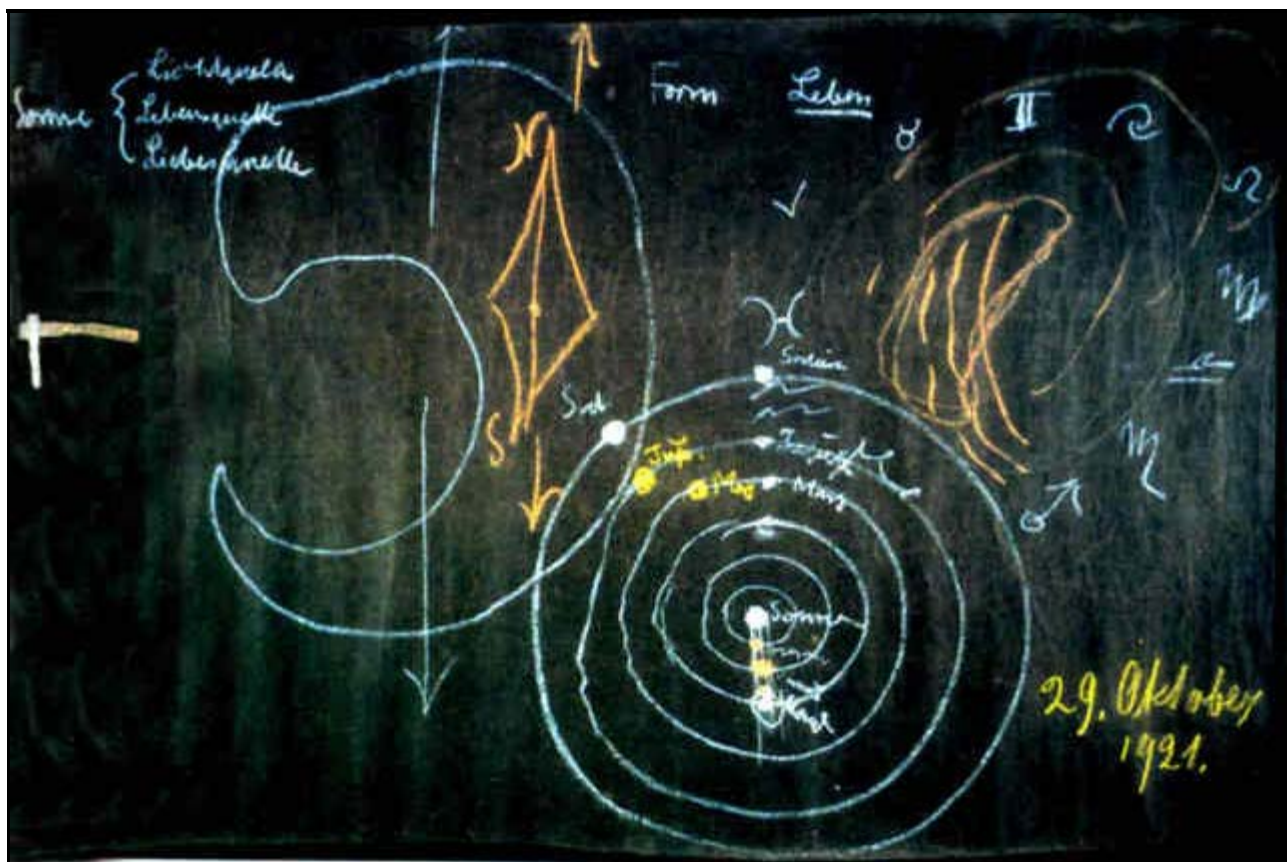
While reading the passages about the hands and kidneys as "eyes" of the chest and limbic humans upon which our head human sits with its eyes, it occurred to me each of us are provided with two eyes, hands, and kidneys. Since we lose our stereoscopic vision when we operate with only one eye, there must be some corresponding deficiency when one operates with only one hand or one kidney in addition to the halving of the obvious functions of seeing, grasping, and renal function provided by operating with two parallel organs. I have summarized what I came up with in the following Table:

| <b>TO HAVE ONLY:</b> | <b>MEANS ONE HAS:</b>  |
|----------------------|--|
| <b>ONE EYE</b>       | — No depth perception (no binocular or stereoscopic vision)<br>— No ability to cross-correlate visual data with the other eye.   |
| <b>ONE HAND</b>      | — No ability to grasp one's other hand, to feel one's own hand externally with a hand.<br>— No depth perception in one's external body.<br>— No ability to cross-correlate sensory data with the other hand. |
| <b>ONE KIDNEY</b>    | — No depth perception in one's internal body.<br>— No ability to cross-correlate the poisonous nature of substances with the other kidney.   |

### **The Human Life in Relation to the Universe, Lecture 5**

As we enter Lecture 5 and continue our study with Steiner of the human life in relation to the cosmos, take a long look at this color diagram drawn by Steiner's own hand on 29 October 1921. This is a photograph

taken of the diagram drawn on a large sheet of black paper using colored chalk. Pieces of this diagram appear in this book as Figure 12, 13, 16, and 17 separated out and translated into English.

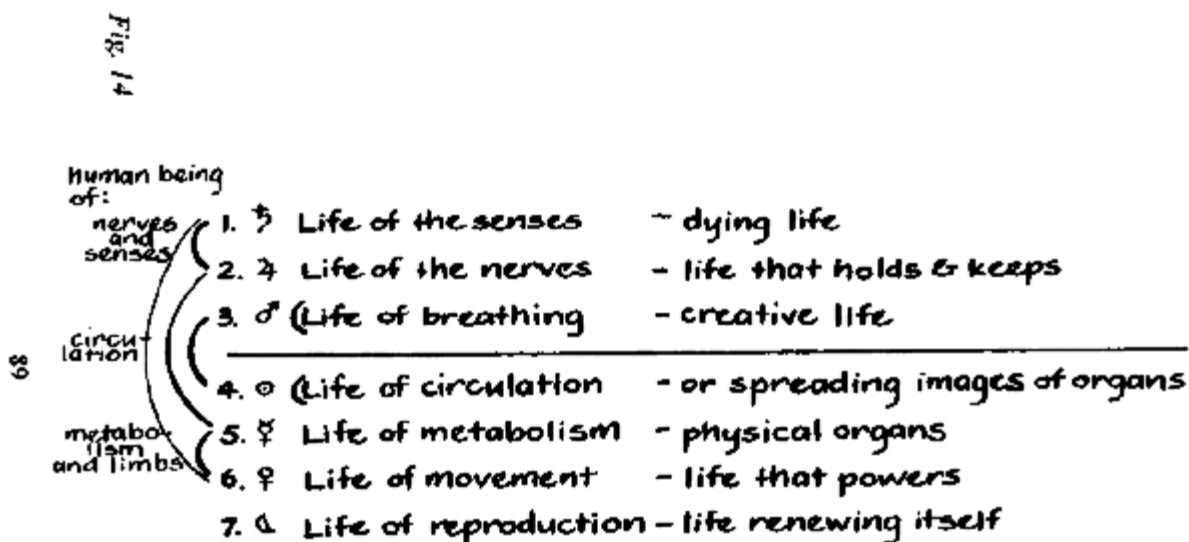


In the left side of the above diagram we see an embryonic form and Steiner explains to us how humans intrinsically differ from all the lower animals: we are able via our head to take into the essence which is held over from our previous lifetime, but animals are not.

**[page 83] During life on earth between birth and death, human beings tear themselves away from this embryonic form. They certainly have their form given by the universe during the embryonic period, but they "stretch" during their time on earth, lifting the head up and out of the circle that reflects the zodiac. They then have the form given to them as embryos, but no longer allow it to relate to the fixed stars, and this means that human beings become able to take into the form of the head what they have brought with them from their previous life on earth.**

**Animals keep their backbones horizontal, and essentially continue much more in the position given by the zodiac, with the head merely attached to the front part of the backbone. This means that animals are not able to use the head to take in anything from a previous life.**

In the upper right of the diagram, Steiner draws out the influences of the twelve signs of the "little zoo" or "zoo-diac" — the name that comes down to us from the ancient Greeks for the sweep of twelve constellations which fill the sky above us from which our twelve-part human form originates and with which it is aligned. Our human form is aligned with the stars just as a compass needle is aligned with the North and South antipodes of the Earth. (Note that Steiner sketched a compass needle on the embryonic form in the above diagram.) Then he takes on a trip from our outer skin where our senses are located to the nerves which carry the senses into our body to the breathing and circulation to the metabolic life of the inner organs, all of which permits us to have movement and to reproduce. This table in Figure 14 (page 89) shows the relationships of these first eight of our intrinsic "life's" and is explained in the passage quoted below the table.



[page 90] The attributes I have added on the right (Fig. 14) give you an idea of the differences between the levels of life. Living in the senses, our ether body is in a kind of life that is dying. In the life of the nerves, the currents in the nerves, it is in a life that holds and keeps. The breathing life is where our ether body truly becomes a body of creative powers that designs images. The life of circulation ensures that those images become our whole internal organization. Physical substance is then brought in through the life of metabolism. The ether body enters into metabolism and suffuses the actual body of creative powers with matter. Subjective human energy is added through the life of the limbs, and so on.

In the lower right hand side of the colored diagram, Steiner draws out for us the relationship between the geocentric (ancient) view and the heliocentric (Copernican) view of the cosmos. I first encountered these two views in the diagram on this [page](#) which showed the right arrangement of the cosmos in ancient times. I had to work my way through the Latin words for the planets including an inversion of the names of Mercury and Venus which occurred later among heliocentric astronomers(1). Now, some seven years later, I find this complete explanation of how to line up the two views of the cosmos:

[page 93] Let us say, and this is certainly also possible, that we have Saturn, Jupiter and Mars here, and then come sun, Mercury, Venus and earth, with the moon, however, which we'll position here.

It is not essential, of course, to take this particular position, I am merely presenting it to show you that even with the Copernican system it is possible to get the sequence that was thought to be the right one in ancient times: moon, Venus, Mercury, sun, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn. All we need is for the relative positions to be such that the earth is to one side of the sun and the outer planets are somewhere on the other side. It is not necessary to have this kind of opposition or conjunction — which may happen in alternation — but the sequence is certainly feasible. And it is the sequence that was in people's minds out of the old instinctive wisdom. This sequence seemed important to them.

These relationships can be seen in Figure 15 from page 91 which also shows the outer band of the stars of the zodiac surrounding the planets. To the fixed stars of the zodiac we owe our human form, but human life itself comes from the roving planets of the cosmos.

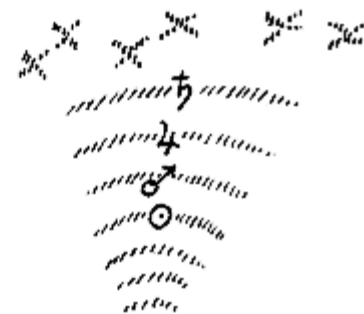


Fig. 15

In the upper left hand corner of the colored diagram we see the word *Sonne* which is the German word Sun and in brackets to the right is the trinity which Steiner tells us that the ancient people with their instinctive clairvoyance could see in the Sun: "the source of light, life and love" (from page 92).

On pages 93 through 96, he develops the relationship of the various aspects of human life shown in Figure 14 above to the planets which I will share brief passages of, then summarize in a chart:

**Saturn:** Continuously exposed to the sun, human beings would not be able to develop eyes, nor any other senses. They are able to do develop them because Saturn, the outermost planet, reduces the influence of the sun. Saturn dries the vessel out, as it were, and this, roughly speaking, produces the physical apparatus. The ancients had as instinctive knowledge what we are discovering again today: The life of the senses develops under the influence of Saturn. (Page 93, 94)

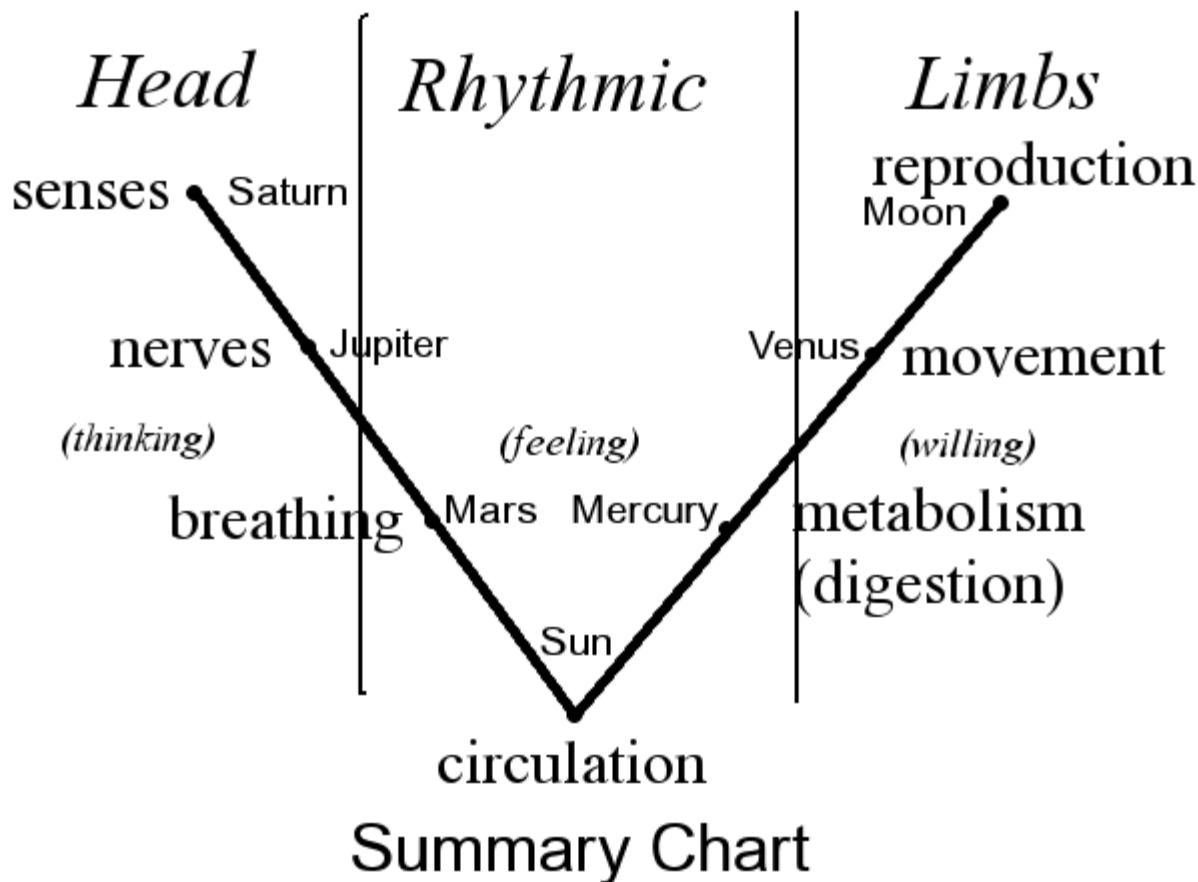
**Jupiter:** Human beings also would not be able to develop the life of the nerves if they were continuously exposed to the sun. Thanks to the influence of Jupiter, the life of the nerves dries up and does not become as vital as the muscles and similar organs. The ancients would say: The life of the nerves is stimulated by Jupiter. (Page 94)

**Mars:** The third planet, Mars, reduces heaving life to the point where breathing becomes possible. Mars, too, may be blocked out by the sun, and the life of breathing then receives a special stimulus. (Page 95)

**Mercury:** We owe the development of our metabolism to the fact that the life of Mercury weakens the life of the sun a little in this respect. The ancients therefore thought that the Mercury principle came between the life of circulation and the life of metabolism. The Mercury principle thus pushes physical matter through the human organism and into its individual organs. (Page 96)

**Venus:** Energy comes in through the life of movement which depends on Venus life, just as the life of metabolism depends on Mercury life. The ancients therefore ascribed to Venus the power that streams through the human being, this inner self renewal, the feeling that there is another human being, an energy human being, inside one. (Page 96)

**Moon:** The life of the moon, which is close to the life of the earth, does more than reduce the life of the sun and thus enable human beings to digest physical matter and process energies. The background to reproduction is something I have spoken of before: a space is created, with matter pushed back at the organic level, as it were. The embryo is able to develop because matter is pushed aside and in energy terms the embryo is organized from the cosmos. In this respect the life of reproduction depends on the moon life. (Page 96)



In Steiner's Cosmosophy we come to see that 12 is the number of completeness in the human form coming in from the stars and seven is the number of different levels of human life coming in from the planets. We also learn to perceive the counter action to the images coming in the process of speech such that "if the counter action relates more to life, we produce vowels, if it relates more to form, we produce consonants." (Page 99)

**[page 99] The truth is that human beings take their form from the life of the fixed stars and reproduce this as an echo, which gives rise to the consonants. They take in the movements of planetary life which influence their own life. The life of breathing in particular creates images of all this. The counter action then produces the vowels. Human speech can only be understood if consonants are seen in relation to the constellations of fixed stars and the vowels in relation to planetary conjunctions and oppositions. Thus human speech and language is seen to derive from the whole cosmos.**

This lecture inspired me to write this poem to express the consonants of the stars which fill us with form when we speak, and the vowels of the planets which fill us with life when we open our mouths to sing.

### **Cosmic Speech**

*Speak to me of the stars  
in stuttering prestidigitation,  
Sing to me paeans of the planets  
in psalmic hallelujahs.*

*From the sparkling, twinkling night sky realm  
Bring me human form.*



*From the wanderlust of roving planets  
Infuse me with life.*

---

## The Human Soul in Relation to the Universe, Lecture 6

I have written elsewhere that the Fall of Man, rightly understood, should be called the Leap of Man. It was a Fall into materiality, of course, but it was also a Leap into freedom. Everyone knows the first man was named Adam, but few understand the coded mystery in the name "adam" - it is the same root appearing in the words, *adamantine* (very hard) or *diamond* ( a very hard mineral). Adam was thus the first *hard man* — he represented the beginning of the race of human beings of the Earth Epoch of evolution (when Earth's existence began). It was at the time that both the Earth itself and the human body became hard or mineralized. From this we can understand why our head is the most mineralized portion of our human body. Recall that we are all head when we first form in the fetus, and this indicates that our head was the first part to evolve of all the parts of our body.

Our head, as we discovered earlier, is different from animal heads because we can raise it easily and comfortably to a vertical position. This is crucially important to understanding how human beings have a soul life in relation to the universe.

**[page 106] It is important to realize that human beings develop an independent etheric life towards the head end because they raise that part out of both the zodiac and the movements of the planets. Then the astral body and the I enter into the independent etheric life and are able to take part in the thought and idea activity of the ether body.**

**[page 107] We thus see that the nature of the soul principle can be understood if we know that human thought life has soul quality, that is, it does not take part in material life.**

There is another relationship between a mineralized Earth and freedom which illustrates dramatically that the stars play a key role in our lives. One can visualize it easily in the image Steiner conjures up in us of standing on a non-mineralized Earth that is transparent to the influence of the stars. In such a case, we would lose all freedom of action, we would be covered with a horn-like substance over our entire body, and we would live only one life and die. We are protected from this horrendous fate by the mineral body of the Earth. It is the mineral body of the Earth which blocks the influence of the stars and planets. It is this very real blocking which makes it important the arrangement of stars and planets that are arrayed above the horizon at the moment of our birth and leads astrologers to be interested in our natal horoscope which summarizes that arrangement.

**[page 108] If we stood on a transparent earth so that both zodiac and planetary movements could influence us from the other side as well, we would not be able to act freely and independently but only under the influence of the life of the planets and fixed stars. Freedom of action is only possible because the earth blocks out the life of the planets and fixed stars. Furthermore, if we were fully exposed to them, then in view of the special nature of the human life span, with repeated earth lives, the life of our limbs would grow wooden, it would harden in itself. We would be unable to let matter fall to dust, and our organic substance would become cornified (horn-like) before it matured. Human limbs would be cornified in a way that is utterly different from the hoofs of horses or cows — almost all the way up. We are protected from this horny development because as human beings we are lifted out of the zodiac.**

Between our head and limbs is the rhythmic systems of circulation and respiration and each of the three systems can be seen in Figure 19 which looks like a baseball. The upper left section shows Pisces, Aries, Taurus, and Gemini related to the Head section; the middle section, Cancer, Leo, Aquarius, and Capricorn which are related to the Rhythmic section; and the lower right section shows Sagittarius, Scorpio, Libra, and Virgo which are related to the Limb section. Steiner describes the figure thusly:

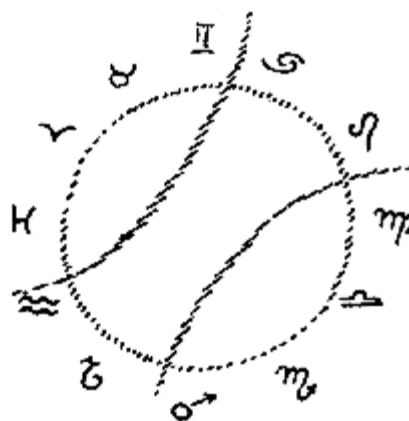


Fig. 19

109

**[page 110] Here (above) we can say we have living inner experience of a purely etheric principle — the image. Here (below) we live not in the image but in germinal life and we know ourselves to be bound up with matter, which is also why we are able to move our limbs. We do not have much physical movement in the head, except in so far as our senses are transformed into limbs, so that in the head, too, we are human beings with limbs. One thing is also always to be found in the other, that is a basic principle. In a sense our eyes are also hands, in so far as they are able to move. Nevertheless, the head is largely immobile, and the lobes of the brain and similar structures in particular are incapable of voluntary movement.**

We can understand the inner life if we study carefully the 43 figures of this book and the descriptions which Steiner provides of them, but there is one important thing we must do first: we must destroy the words of the authorities who have carefully taught us that it is impossible for us to know these things *because* it was impossible for *them* to know these things.

**[page 115] What happens is that people who carry some authority stand there and tell people that it is not really possible to know anything about the inner life, though certain phenomena suggest that something exists that has soul quality, which they call "psychoid". Giving an explanation of the way Descartes and Spinoza endeavoured to discover the nature of this interaction, they are unable to be anything but abstract — the body on one side, the soul on the other. It will never be possible to get at the truth in this way, because the relationship between soul and body is different in the life of thought, the life of feeling and the life of will. People will not get to the truth if they insist on making one big muddle of the whole inner life and talk of a "psychoid" element rather than giving real consideration to the way the I, astral body and ether body are related in real life. It is as if someone were to refuse to look at the real human being and talk about an "anthropoid" in order to avoid speaking of the *anthropos*. That kind of science is anthropoid-sophy rather than anthroposophy; it is psychoidology.**

How many times have you read writers talking about cosmology and discovered that they left the human being completely out from their consideration? The propensity of writers to do this is the greatest hindrance today to our human evolution, rightly understood. Steiner says it this way in his closing to Lecture 6:

**[page 119] If human civilization is to show true progress we need a cosmology that includes the human being and does not leave humanity aside the way our present-day cosmology does. We also need a theory of independent activity and we need ethics that are able to show that the potential for good which they hold is the seed for worlds. We need ethics that have reality, their values not abstract but having the power in them to come to realization. Cosmology, a theory of independent activity and ethics — these are the things humanity will need to be able to rise to something higher.**

## The Life of the Mind and Spirit, Lectures 7, 8, and 9

Have you ever gone to a lecture all wide awake and quickly found yourself becoming sleepy because the lecture was so boring? Have you ever been told some startling news and felt your knees buckle? Or seen an obviously healthy person suddenly faint? Perhaps you've been very sleepy driving and then suddenly found yourself in an argument with a passenger and suddenly felt wide-awake. These are common human experiences, but not ones whose origins are clearly understood, up until now. One can only come to a true understanding of why we may feel physically strong one moment and very weak the next moment if one looks closely at the life of the mind and spirit as Steiner does in these next lectures.

**[page 123] We are thus able to say that we enter into the living physical body by pouring our spirit, and that means in the first place the soul principle, into it. We shall see in a minute that with the soul principle we actually pour the spirit into the physical body. We feel physically strong when the soul has been poured into the body. We do not feel physically strong, but wide awake, when we have ideas and sensory perceptions.**

Each night when we go to sleep, our spirit (I-body) and our soul (astral body) leave our physical body and life body (astral body) on the bed. We are unconscious until first the soul and then the spirit are poured back into us. The movements when we feel suddenly weak or strong are movements during daily life when external events or internal thoughts drain or fill us with our spirit and soul bodies.

We are able to experience or enter directly into the external reality of the world, but we are completely unconscious of the times during which we do this as they must necessarily occur during sleep. To not know that one has a capability can lead to one's denying the existence of the capability and that is the lot of most humans beings in this age, up until now.

**[page 126] We enter into outside reality, but essentially it enters into us at an unconscious level because we know nothing of the states of sleep when we are out there in the outside reality, which spins a web around us, as it were and enters into us all unconscious. There (pointing to drawing) we live in the reality, but we live in a physical body, or in an outer, physical element. In so far as we live in the element of the spirit, we know it only as image. The physical body is however created out of the spirit, and if we develop our faculty of Imagination, we can gain living insight into the imaginative life that lies at the back of it.**

Imagination is the tool of spiritual insight to be acquired when one begins one's training in "attaining higher worlds." Imagination leads to one's experiencing the spiritual world in images. The next tool is called Inspiration and makes itself known to us in our feelings. "Every single time you have a feeling you also have an Inspiration. But just as your Imaginations slide down into general vitality when you have ideas, so the Inspiration slides down into the physical body when you feel." (Page 127) Imaginations and Inspiration cooperate with each other in the following ways:

**[page 127] A hidden Inspiration slips into rhythmical movement and activity, into our breathing and the circulation of the blood. If we were to have a look at someone who was thinking and feeling we might say: You have ideas and you think; this is something you know. But from this activity Imaginations are continuously instilled into every part of your body to maintain your vitality. You feel — and Inspirations are continually going down into your breathing and circulation.**

The final activity to be considered is *will activity*. It is, rightly understood, will activity which brings us strong and awake and the lack of will activity which makes us weak or drowsy. This brings us to the third and final tools of spiritual insight, Intuition, which goes down into our metabolism and movement activity.

**[page 127, 128] Below this lies will activity. Among the activities of life between birth and death, will activity in the first place belongs purely to the living physical body, and it is experienced as such, for muscle activity lays claim to the spirit. So we have experience of it in the body, but at the sleep level, for only the spirit can be experienced in full consciousness. Here, it sleeps. But there is Intuition in there. It is genuine Intuition when human beings do what I spoke of the last time and send their inner activity and therefore also the spiritual experience they have into their muscle activity in form of images and thus become doers, people with will intent. They are then truly intuiting. They go outside their I life, letting the I enter into something entirely different, which is the movement of muscles and bones. Thus we can say: Intuition slips into metabolic and movement activity. The spirit therefore has its life in Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition.**

How do antipathies or feelings of hatred, aversion, or dislike arise in us? This is a normal process which is ordinarily below the threshold of consciousness, unless our relationship to the outside world becomes abnormal and filled with defensive reactions. When that happens, our breathing becomes out of balance when we sleep and result in nightmares. This will lead in the extreme to the process called paranoia when not even one's loved ones are exempt from suspicion.

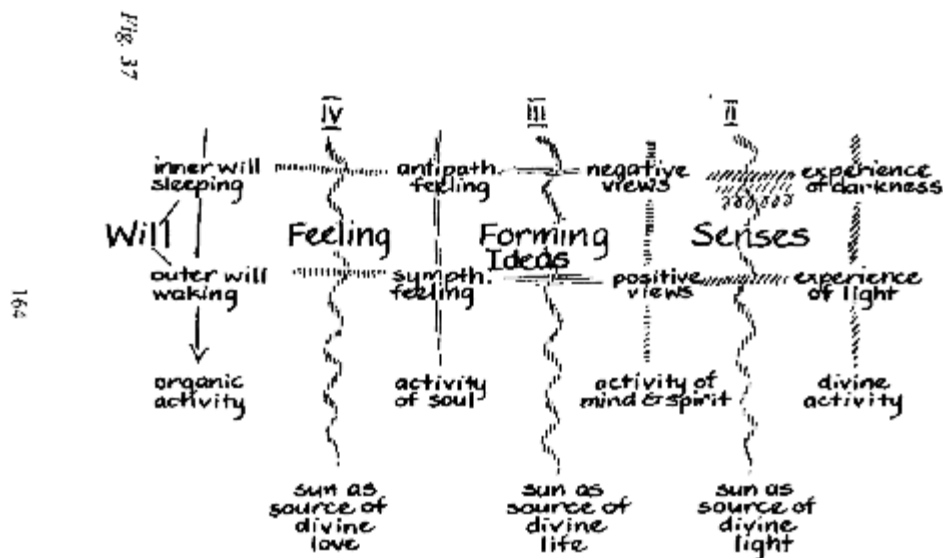
**[page 167] When someone develops very powerful antipathies which then also enter into waking life, antipathy may enter into everything, even the astral body. The astral body then lets antipathetic nature stream out in front, rather like an abnormal aura. It may happen that the individual feels even people with whom he normally has a neutral relationship to be antipathetic and indeed people he normally loves. All the different kinds of persecution mania arise from this kind of situation. When we experience antipathetic feelings that cannot be explained by external circumstances, they come from overflowing antipathies in the soul.**

But the energy or power that gets poured into feelings of antipathy is required for balancing our organic life and restoring our spent energies during sleep.

**[page 168] When you come to know it, you come to know everything in human beings which can take them to an extreme degree of badness. It is a profound mystery of life that our organic activity is balanced out by powers which would make a person a criminal, a bad character, if they were to gain the upper hand in conscious life.**

Steiner says in several places that sin or evil is simply a "good out of its time." This certainly applies to this power — it is very useful to us when it is rightly used during sleep and it is very bad for us if it is used during waking life.

**[page 168, 169] Nothing in the world is in itself evil or ,good. Something which is thoroughly evil when it comes up into conscious life, also regulates our organic functions and restores our used up powers of vitality during sleep, which is the right place for it to be used. If you enquire into the nature of the powers which restore used-up vitality, you have to say: It is evil. Evil has its function. When human beings gain spiritual insight and see this element it is an element about which spiritual scientists of earlier times also said: Its true nature must not be described, for sinful are the lips which utter it, sinful the ears which hear it. People must know, however, that life is a dangerous process and that evil is very much present down in the depths, a much-needed power.**



This next revelation seems right on. Steiner tells us that a negative opinion when it enters the sphere of the senses (see the upper right corner of Figure 37) is experienced not at all — in other words, as darkness — whereas a positive opinion is experienced as light. This could be expressed he tells us in terms of each of the twelve senses.

**[page 170] It becomes a situation where we perceive nothing. In terms of the most notable form of sensory perception, vision, we may call it a situation in which we see nothing and experience darkness: Experience of darkness. A positive judgement on the other hand means experience of light. We might of course just as well speak of experience of dumbness, experience of sound, etc. We could put this into words for every one of the twelve senses.**

Our eye is an organ which was formed by the light which first impinged on it and created the organ to perceive the impinging radiation from the Sun. Humanity's experience of the Sun is dramatically different now in the fifth Post-Atlantean age from what it was during the earlier Post-Atlantean ages of the Persians, Egypto-Chaldean, and Greco-Roman ages. Here's is Steiner summary of the human view of the Sun through those ages up to the present time where anyone would surely agree that the Sun Mystery is not known or acknowledged:

**[page 172, 173] Then, from about the 4th century onwards — I have spoken of various aspects of its specific nature on other occasions — came the age when the sun was experienced as no more than a physical body, a sphere of vapor, out there in space. The sun had, in fact, become obscured for humanity. Persians truly felt the sun to be the reflector of the light which billowed and lived in space with tremendous vigor. The Egyptians and Chaldeans saw it as life billowing and pulsing through the universe. The Greeks experienced it as something which instilled love into organic nature, as Eros guiding them through the waves of the emotions. Entering more and more into the human being, experience of the sun vanished into the deep down depths of soul. Today we carry the sun element down in those depths. We are not meant to reach it, because the Guardian of the Threshold stands before it, and because it is in the depths of which it was said in the ancient mysteries that no utterance should be given, for sinful were the lips which uttered it, and sinful the ear which heard it. Schools existed in the 4th century who essentially taught, to allow Christianity to spread: The Sun Mystery must not be revealed; a civilization has to come where the Sun Mystery is not known.**

Behind everything which happens in the physical world are the inner powers which, I'd say, are teaching out of the universe. The Roman emperor Constantine (306-337) was

**one of the instruments of those powers. Under him, Christianity took the form in which the sun is denied.**

Not only was the spiritual reality of the Sun denied, but all records of it, all forms of worship of the Sun, and every work of art which acknowledged it was destroyed. There is one notable exception which any Catholic will immediately recognize: the design of the monstrance is that of the blazing Sun which displays the Body of Christ in the form of a consecrated communion wafer of bread within its center. There is represented for all to see the Christ residing in the Sun, but its meaning has been masked by dogma ever since Julian the Apostate was murdered because he sought to restore the Sun Mystery during the 4th Century.



**[page 174, 175] Countless works of art, works of ancient wisdom and written works were destroyed, anything that might give people even a hint of the old Sun Mystery.**

We were all taught in public school that the Sun is a sphere of gases which creates heat and light by a sustained thermonuclear explosion in which hydrogen atoms are fused into helium atoms and the weight of mass difference before and after the fusion is converted into pure energy. It should be pointed out in fairness to Steiner's departure with the standard interpretation of the reality of the Sun that no scientist has ever gone inside the Sun nor has anyone retrieved an instrument which has gone inside the Sun to confirm that fusion takes place there.

What Steiner tells us seems to indicate that the nature of the inside of the Sun is that of a black hole or what he calls "negative space" and that the light and radiation we perceive from the Sun is a reflection of spiritual radiations from the planets which orbit the Sun. If we have two explanations of something with no possibility of direct confirmation by observation from either party, the only intellectually honest opinion to hold is that either one is equally plausible. Obviously no one in Julian the Apostate's time considered both views equally plausible.

**[page 175] It is true that in order to achieve freedom, humanity had to come to believe that a sphere of gases moved through the universe out there, though physicists who would be able to go there would be really surprised, for instead of a sphere of gases they would find an empty space, indeed less than space. They would discover that the sun out there is not a sphere of luminous gases — which is a nonsense — but in the first place just a reflector (Fig. 39), unable to radiate light and at most merely reflecting it. In the spirit, Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Mercury, Venus and the moon radiate light. Physically the sun appears to be shining on them, but in reality they radiate light towards the sun, which acts as a reflector. This is the physical reality. The ancient Persians were still able to perceive the sun as the source of light for the earth, but not an actual source but a reflector. Later it became the reflector of life and the reflector of love.**

**Julian the Apostate wanted people to understand this and was got rid off because of this. To achieve freedom, humanity had to go through superstitious belief in a sphere of gases radiating light — something we see represented as the absolute truth in modern physics textbooks.**

Even though it is so-called modern science that upholds the view that in Julian's time was upheld and enforced by the Church, Steiner tells us that a truly modern science will need to inform itself of this long-hidden reality. The symbol for this Sun reality is the Palladium of ancient legend.

**[page 178] We have to realize that the light which will let the Palladium shine out again must be sought in modern science. Only then will an important step in world history come to fulfilment.**

Ask yourself this question: can a sleeping person be considered to be either good or evil while they are asleep? The answer seems obvious, doesn't it? No matter how evil a Hannibal Lector may seem when he is

awake, when he is asleep, there is no sign of his evil nature. The reason for this is that the only portions of the four part human body that can express good or evil are the astral-body and I-body, and both of these bodies are separated from the human being who is asleep. We can perceive the physical body of a human being with our eyes and can detect the presence of the etheric body by heaving of their chest and the beating of their heart. The astral- and I-bodies are not visible and the "whole human moral element is brought back when we wake up and I and astral body return to the physical and ether bodies." (Page 183)

Steiner tells us the effect that evil or good in us have on our I-body during sleep.

**[page 186] When the I is in touch with the powers of the spiritual entities between going to sleep and waking up, everything evil in our state of soul makes the I waste away; everything good allows the will-related I to develop in freedom.**

Did you ever awaken from a truly wonderful night's sleep and tell someone that you slept like a baby? This simile holds a deep spiritual truth which Steiner illuminates for us.

**[page 188, 189] If we try to discover the true nature of that which is given form and color outside the human being between going to sleep and waking up, we finally arrive at the following. Between waking up and going to sleep the human form is complete, with I, astral body, ether body and physical body forming an interrelated whole. This goes hand in hand with a specific intensity of conscious awareness which is intellectual and has qualities of feeling and will. Compared to it, the element which is outside during sleep has an infantile quality. We think of a child's dimmed-down state of consciousness, something we can only come close to when our consciousness is filled with dreams. Now imagine the child's dimmed-down consciousness becoming even less developed-this would be closer to the nature of what is outside us during sleep. We might say: The element which is outside the human being during sleep is more infantile than the mind and spirit of a child.**

Did you ever tell someone who asked you a question which required a decision, "I'll sleep on it." Again this is a common experience everyone has had which reveals a deep spiritual truth. Every night when we go to sleep, unbeknownst to us, we ask the spiritual world the following question and receive an answer to our question before morning: "How does my moral constitution appear to the entities in the world of spirit?" (Page 190)

**[page 190] And we are given an answer which consists in the shaping of the furrows and the coloring we are given, both in accord with our moral constitution of soul. Every morning we enter into our physical and etheric bodies on waking up with an answer gained in the world of soul and spirit. Going to sleep, we always unconsciously ask a question; waking up, the answer is given at the unconscious level from the world of the spirit. At that level, we are all the time in dialogue with the world of the spirit, gathering there the answers which tell us the true state of our inner nature.**

If you awake in the morning feeling as though you "slept like a baby" you can be sure that feeling is a result of an approving answer you received from the world of spirit. If you awake feeling troubled, whether or not you remember some nightmare you had, you can be likewise sure you have received a non-approving answer.

The Earth goes to sleep in the summer and wakes up during the winter, as paradoxical as this may appear to the materialistic eye of most people today. And yet this is the reality that Steiner points us towards and which we may experience if we begin to cast aside our materialistic colored glasses and perceive the world directly.

**[page 196] We understand the waking-up process if we understand the coming of autumn and winter; we understand the process of going to sleep if we understand the**

**coming of spring and summer. From the progress of time in the human being we are taken into the progress of time in the cosmos, into the changing seasons. The human being is seen to be an image also of what happens in time. In the preceding weeks we endeavored to see the human being as an image of the macrocosm more in terms of space.**

Everyone knows that a child's head is larger in relation to its body than an adult's and that a child sleeps more than an adult does. This would make immediate sense if we were to discover that during sleep the organs in the head use their powers to structure the lower portion of the human being, the metabolism and limbs. Children with their larger heads have more structuring of their fast-growing metabolism and limbs to accomplish than adults. Here's how Steiner reveals the structuring performed by the forces in our head during sleep to us:

**[page 201, 202] In the life of sleep, the eye and its surrounding parts, above all the surrounding nerves and blood, influence the physical organism in its metabolic and limb aspects. The powers of the eye closed in sleep influence the kidney system, for example, imbuing it with the cosmic image. Other organs in the head imprint other aspects of the cosmos on the human system of metabolism and limbs. For the physical body, therefore, the time we spend in sleep serves mainly to let the powers of the head structure the human being of metabolism and limbs (Fig. 42, reddish arrows). It is particularly during sleep that structuring powers radiate continually from the head to the lower human being, so that in sleep the soul and spirit aspect of the head is indeed the structurer of the human being of metabolism and limbs.**

But there is more that human beings do while they are asleep. In addition to structuring their metabolism and limbs, they also take part in the evolution of the Earth.

**[page 205] Human beings certainly do not exist on earth just for their own sake; they are not without significance for the way the earth as a whole is structured. For the whole of their life on earth, sleeping human beings radiate from their ether bodies into earth evolution what they have taken up in the world of the spirit between death and rebirth.**

We may notice that people who are truly angry tend to tell the truth, often an unpleasant truth, but the blatant truth nevertheless. In the rush to communicate quickly, coherently, and congruently an angry person cannot pause to create a coherent untruth and rehearse telling it congruently. If an angry person attempts to lie, the endeavor will be so obvious a lie that no one would ever attempt it a second time. Since we discovered earlier that luciferic people are into anger and ahrimanic people are into pain, we can now understand why ahrimanic spirits would be "lying spirits" as Steiner tells us in this next passage. It makes sense that ahrimanic spirits would lie in their attempt to control some human mind in order to allay their own pain.

**[page 214] The ahrimanic spirit is a lying spirit. It may happen that lying minds fall so low in this lying spirit as to declare falsehood to be truth. It is necessary, therefore, that out of the depths of what is happening in the world we come to abhor lies utterly. We truly come to abhor lies if we are able to say, in full awareness: In sleep, the astral body becomes the judge of the soul. The I in sleep becomes the sacrifice of its selfhood.**

**Darkness is thrown on these profound truths by the ahrimanic spirit, which has also entered into the religious creeds of recent times. It will be up to people who in all honesty, and with some energy, profess themselves to be followers of anthroposophy not just to develop a superficial, intellectual liking for the wisdom anthroposophy is able to offer, but to develop real inner energy of feelings and will, and to let this energy unite with what mind and spirit are able to perceive of the world of the spirit through the science of the spirit which takes its orientation from anthroposophy.**



How can one negotiate the rapids between the angry Scyllan-heads of luciferic forces and the swirling Charybdian-whirlpool of ahrimanic lies? We must first recognize the dangers of the channel we are passing through and no better map of that channel exists to my knowledge than the anthroposophy of Rudolf Steiner. With map in hand we can plot our course and ask Christ to be our Steersman whenever we enter the rapids. His steady Hand on the tiller will guide us safely through the luciferic and ahrimanic extremes of the roaring channel in freedom and light.

~~~~~ *footnote* ~~~~~

1. To the ancients Venus would be the name of the innermost planet to the Sun and Mercury as the planet closer to Earth, which matches the names of the spheres one travels between death and a new birth, but is the reverse of the order of the astronomers and astrologers of today.

[Return to text above footnote.](#)

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