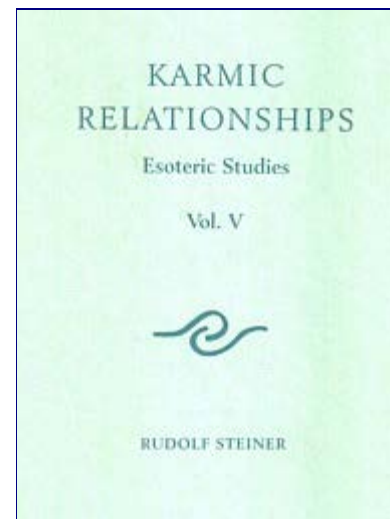


Site Map: [MAIN / A Reader's Journal, Vol. 2 Webpage Printer Ready](#)



***A READER'S JOURNAL* Karmic Relationships, Volume 5, GA# 239**
by
Rudolf Steiner
Esoteric Studies
7 Lectures, Prague & Paris, March & May, 1924
Published by The Rudolf Steiner Press in
1997
A Book Review by Bobby Matherne ©1999



We not only live in our body, we live in our karma. Rudolf Steiner

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Have you ever fallen in love at first sight? Have you ever seen a ring and felt a strange thrill as someone placed it on your finger? Or simply felt an unexplainable attraction to someone you just met? These are examples of an old karmic relationship that will be soon played out in your life. You may wear the ring as a wedding ring for the rest of your life, or get married to the person, or remain friends for a long time. Steiner indicates that there are two types of karmic relationships, of which he calls the above examples "an inner bond" — which type of karmic relationship can be determined when someone has just met someone else.

[page 16] The karmic relationships differ entirely according to whether a man feels an inner bond or whether he can describe only the external characteristics of the other person.

As I read these words I was thinking of my cousin and his wife. She had just died at 57 after he had cared for her for the past ten years or so during her progressively debilitating illness. All the while her brain deteriorated, causing progressive paralysis, she kept her spirits up. If you went to cheer her up, you came away cheered up yourself, because she never felt bad for herself. She would yell into the next room if she overheard her husband saying that life was unfair to her, "Now, don't you be saying that!" She spoke as if her deliverance were at hand, her karmic balancing were in the works, and she knew deeply that it was fair, however unfair it might seem to others. One cannot understand if something is fair or not simply by looking at one lifetime — it would be like trying to understand a plucked flower without reference to the living plant which bore it, as Steiner said once. One cannot understand a jail sentence by only observing the behavior of the person in jail. One must examine the previous events in that person's life outside of jail before the sentence will begin to make sense. As Clare Booth Luce once said, "No good deed goes unpunished."

JoAnn Schwartz wrote on the Steiner98 list, "There is a lovely contemporary translation of the first chapters of the Old Man's thoughts on the Tao by Jesse Garon." [Editor's Note: JoAnn is referring to Lao Tzu as "the Old Man" and Lao's thoughts are his famous "Tao Te Ching".]

Here's a piece that resonates (for me):

**"A wheel has spokes,
but it rotates around the empty center.**

**A pot is made from ceramics or steel,
but you keep things in the empty space.**

**A house is made from wood or brick,
but you live in the emptiness between the walls.**

**We work with something,
but we use nothing."**

These words of Lao Tzu reminds me of the Sun, especially when Rudolf Steiner says that "the Sun is *negative space*" (page 23). When I first read these words I wondered immediately whether the driving force in the center of the Sun is a black hole. A black hole is an object in which the localized mass has become so great that it sucks light and everything surrounding it into itself as a vacuum does. Thus, a black hole can be considered a *negative space*.

Since the concept we know as "black hole" was unknown to materialistic or natural scientists in 1924, so far as I know, one might hazard a guess that Steiner originated the concept, received the information from the universe via his heart, that Rudolf Steiner understood the concept of black hole before the scientific concept was first created, that he understood it at the same time that scientists were beginning understanding literally the meaning of their mathematical equations that called for an infinite mass to exist at a singularity and attract surrounding mass into it. Prior to the creation of the black hole, singularities were considered to be impossible in the physical world, and now there are natural or materialistic scientists all over the world scanning the remote heavens for the proof of the existence of a black hole out there. And they are finding all sorts of likely candidates.

Materialistic scientists have never found a black hole nearby because they have been looking for them very far away. That's a sure fire way to make things more difficult, but it was necessary because the concepts of what a black hole looked like were so limited. What if a small 2 km black hole outside of its event horizon looked externally like the Sun, the medium-size star that brings us light? What if the black hole of the materialist scientists were the white hole or better yet, *white source*, of the spiritual scientists? In the spiritual world things are arranged in the reverse of things in the material world. What would be a fearsome light-sucking Machine to a Natural Scientist would be an awesome light-raying Spirit to a Spiritual Scientist.

Is it possible? It is, if the major source of the physical radiation of the Sun came, not from some thermonuclear fusion in its center as theorized by Natural Scientists today, but came instead from the Sun which acts as a large charged body moving in a galactic magnetic field. That would produce, according to Faraday, a generation of electrical energy or current. That flowing energy could be responsible for the radiated energy of the Sun. It is already postulated that the temperature of the atmosphere of the Sun is much higher than predicted for the interior of a thermonuclear fusion furnace. If there were no energy-creating agent in the atmosphere, the temperatures should be reversed: the Sun should be cooler in its atmosphere than in its center. What happens if a 2 km black hole is moving in a galactic magnetic field? Has anyone calculated that? How much energy would be created in the enormous atmosphere surrounding such a black hole?

I have often thought over the past thirty years that wherever there's a black hole, there should also be an associated white hole or white source of light. But I have always thought about the white hole materialistically as being somewhere and *somewhen* faraway away in a distant universe, up until now. Steiner leads me to see the situation close-up and personal. Right here and right now, the rays of the Sun's light are flowing upon me and my surroundings from our local black hole which has an associated and equally local white hole. A white hole, not in some distant Universe, but in our universe, inside our Sun — a white hole that exists in what is a remotely *distant* universe for the materialistic natural scientist — a

white hole that exists in the *spiritual world* in our local Sun and can only be directly experienced by a *spiritual* scientist, up until now.

Rudolf Steiner says there are three kinds of space: filled space, empty space, and negative space. In the first space, if he walks into a chair, he hits it, in the second space, if there's no chair, he walks through the space without being held up or knocked.

[page 23] . . . there is a third possibility. I might go to the spot without being held up or knocked, but I might be sucked up and disappear: here there is no space, but the antithesis of space. And this antithesis of space is the condition in the Sun. The Sun is *negative* space. And just because of this the Sun is the abode, the habitual abode, of the Beings who rank immediately above man: Angeloi, Archangeloi, Archai. In the case of which I am speaking, the gaze of the Initiate directed towards these Beings in the Sun, the spiritual Beings of the Sun. In other words: a meeting of this kind that is not part of a karmic past, but is quite *new*, is for the Initiate a means of coming into connection with these Beings. . . . The way in which these Beings approach the Initiate reveals to him — not in detail but in broad outline — what kind of karma is about to take shape; in this case it is not old karma but karma that is coming to him for the first time. He perceives that these Beings who are connected with the Sun have to do with the *future*, just as the Moon Beings have to do with the past.

We have an old saying, I believe, that goes this way, "New as the Sun and old as the Moon." But how is it that the Beings of the Sun should be concerned with the future? In Chapter 7 he tells us that the Sun is the spiritual embryo of the future. We can feel the warmth of the blessed rays from the Sun falling upon us on Earth. Here's how he describes the process in the Sun.

[page 94] But when we know what the Sun is in reality, we shall feel: Up yonder, where the glowing orb of the Sun moves through the Universe, is the scene where the spiritual prototypes of future generations of men first take shape; there the higher Hierarchies work together with the souls of men who lived on Earth in their previous existence. The Sun is actually the spiritual embryo of the Earth-life of the future. In point of fact, it is the first half of the Sun-existence that we spend with the Gods, shaping together with them our future Earth-existence.

Here's how he describes the process on the Earth.

[page 94] For the being born of a mother has not arisen on the Earth; it is only the scene of action, as it were, that comes into existence on the Earth. A wonderful cosmic creation, formed in supersensible worlds, in the Sun-existence, incarnates into what is produced through physical heredity.

The Beings in the Sun have to do with the future because they assist humans in the time between death and a new birth in shaping their futures.

Let's revisit now, in light of these understandings in our hearts, what Steiner was talking about when he said, "a meeting of this kind that is not part of a karmic past, but is quite *new*". But first let's examine the quite *old* example, the one that stems from the Moon Beings. When we expand through the Moon Sphere in the time between death and a new birth, the Moon Beings record what we experienced in our previous life so that they may transcribe it into our new astral body when we incarnate once more on Earth. Thus it is that the *old* wells up in within us.

[page 19] We meet someone and form a bond with him, no matter what outward impression he makes upon our senses or aesthetic feelings. We do not think about his individual traits; our attraction to him is caused by something that wells up from within us.

Steiner goes on to add that, "When we meet other human beings, we are not inwardly stirred in this way." This person we just met does not show up in our dreams, for example. This is an example of a *new* relationship.

[page 22] When the Initiate meets a man in connection with whom the ordinary consciousness simply receives an aesthetic or mental impression unaccompanied by dreams, no picture rises up in him, to begin with. In this case the gaze of the Initiate is directed to the Sun, not to the Moon.

Thus Rudolf Steiner encourages us to think of the Sun not merely as the gaseous body of the Natural Scientist, but as the womb of the future of mankind.

"A wheel has spokes, but it rotates around its empty center," said Lao Tzu. The Sun has a fiery corona, but it rotates about its negative space center. We cannot enter a house by walking through the walls. The empty space of the house cannot be entered except where an empty space exists in the boundaries of the house. Then we can enter the house with our physical body.

We cannot enter the Sun with our physical body, it will be vaporized. The negative space of the Sun cannot be entered except where a negative space exists in the boundaries of the Sun. Just as we enter the empty space of the physical house with our physical body, so do we enter the negative space of the Sun with the negative space of our body. The boundaries of the Sun prevent our physical body from entering just as the walls of the house. The negative space of the Sun cannot be entered except where a negative space exists in the Beings of the Sun. The Beings of the Sun are the doorways to the Sun-existence.

In the following passage, Steiner is clearly talking about what we today call "black holes":

[page 87] In the Cosmos, space can even be empty of itself, so that at some point there is no space. . . but where the Sun is, there is even less than space. Suppose that here is the empty space of the Universe, and that in this empty space there is nothing, not even space, so that if you went there you would be sucked up and disappear. There is nothing there at all, nothing physical, not even space. It is the site of all that is spiritual. This is the nature of the Sun-existence about which the physicists would be so astonished. Only at the edge of this empty space is there something that begins to be as the physicists suppose. In the corona of the Sun there are incandescent gases, but within this empty space there is nothing physical, not even space! It is all purely spiritual.

"Think of the noblest organ of all — the human *heart*," Steiner tells us on page 26. In spiritual anatomy the other "organs might be depicted by sketching the Earth."

[page 29] But for the heart one would have to make a sketch of the whole Universe. The whole Universe is concentrated, compressed, in man. Man is in truth a microcosm, a stupendous mystery.

There is a flow from Love to Joy to Understanding between lifetimes and Steiner takes us backwards in time to show us that Understanding flows from Joy in a previous lifetime which flows from Love in an even earlier lifetime. First he asks us to consider a man with a remarkable ability to describe individuals or scenes, such a deep understanding does he have. What does one find in this man's previous life?

[page 30] And one finds that a man who understands the world around him was by nature capable of great *joy*, great happiness, in the preceding life. . . But this quality, too, was acquired in a still earlier life. How does a man come to have this joyousness, this gift of taking delight in his environment? He has it if in a still earlier earthly life he knew how to *love*. Love in one earthly life is transformed into joy, happiness; the joy of the next earthly life is transformed into warm understanding of the surrounding world in

the third life.

In another passage he points to the importance of reincarnation and karma in the evolution of humankind.

[page 50-51] What passes over from one epoch of world-history into another does not consist of abstract concepts; it is human souls themselves who carry onward the fruits of each epoch.

One of the objections people of the 21st Century may have with Steiner's works is the detailed way he describes the spiritual world, almost the way a naturalist might describe a meadow that he had visited. But Steiner is a naturalist of the spiritual world and he is reporting to us about a place that he has visited and has direct knowledge of.

[page 41-42] We do not expect our fellow-men on Earth to talk about a meadow in the way that pantheists or monists or would-be philosophers talk about the Godhead; we expect a detailed description of the meadow. And the same applies to the spiritual world. It must be possible to describe the concrete details. People to-day are still unaccustomed to this. Many who are not out-and-out materialists will accept generalities about the existence of a spiritual world and so forth. But when this spiritual world is described in detail they often become indignant because they will not admit that it is possible to speak in this way of the Beings and happenings of the spiritual world. If human civilization is not to fall into chaos, more and more will have to be said about the realities of the spiritual world. For earthly happenings too remain obscure when people have no understanding of what lies behind them.

One such person for whom generalities were fine, but the details confusing was Maurice Maeternick, who said in his book, *The Great Secret*, that he found Steiner's introductions to his books reasonable, but in the middle of the books found much that bewildered him. Steiner says, in one of his rare attempts at humor:

[page 65] We might vary slightly one of Lichtenberg's remarks, by saying: "When books and an individual come into collision and there is a hollow sound, this need not be the fault of the books!"

With that as prologue, let's examine what Steiner reveals happens to a man immediately upon his death:

[page 70-71] The world outside his body now becomes his field of experience and therewith what hitherto was inner world becomes outer world, what hitherto was outer world becomes inner world. We pass out of our personal existence into world-existence. The Earth — so it appears to Imaginative cognition — makes it possible for us to undergo death. The Earth is revealed to Imaginative cognition as the bearer of death in the Universe. Nowhere except on Earth is death to be found in any sphere frequented by man, whether in the physical or spiritual life.

In other words, this is what Christ came here to remind humans on Earth of by doing it himself. We are in the physical body, the body of death on the planet of death, to experience death, and to learn from the lifetime we spent on Earth between birth and death.

If one considers the two perspectives of karmic debt, one finds that a relationship with a person one newly meets may be a continuation of a previous karmic relationship or it may be the beginning of a new karmic relationship. Thus, if a man holds a gun at you, you might well ask him, "Is this a karmic debt you're settling?" And if he says "Yes!" your answer would be "Do what you must." If he says, "No." Then it's a karmic debt he's creating for himself, and your answer would be "Reconsider." Whichever way he or you respond, your karmic relationship will be played out, will be balanced.

Another objection to Steiner's writings might be made by women who in the 21st Century might object to

his writing mostly of the reincarnations of men, or to his focusing mainly on their male reincarnations. In a review of an earlier volume of this Karmic Relationships series, I mentioned how Steiner saw that the female incarnations during the Middle Ages, for example, tended to be active observers of life, rather than active participants, and from the soul knowledge added during that life, fructified the life of the next incarnation as a man. Here Steiner lays out for us that this situation was changing, even a hundred years ago at the turn of the 20th Century.

[page 103] You will realize that when examples of this kind are being given to-day, the male incarnations are the most likely to be conspicuous because in earlier epochs it was almost exclusively men who played any important part. Incarnations as women are intermediate. Today, when women are beginning to be important figures in historical life and development, the time is coming when female incarnations will be increasingly significant.

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