



A READER'S JOURNAL

Rudolf Steiner
A Biography
by

Christoph Lindenberg

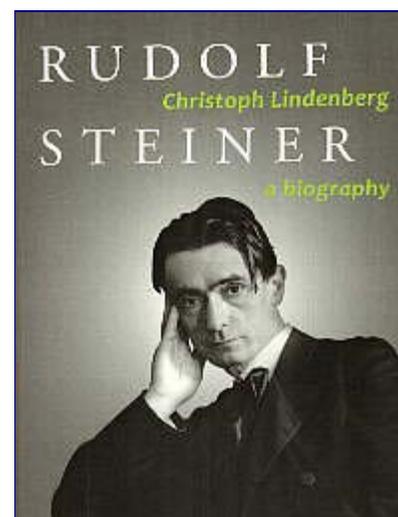
Introduction by Author

Translated from German by Jon McAlice

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A Book Review by Bobby Matherne ©2013

Chapter: Spiritual Science



The Foreword begins with this 1915 quote by Steiner, "I do not want to be revered! I want to be

understood." After reading over 200 of his books, I am still endeavoring to understand Steiner, and this daunting tome of 792 pages is part of that effort. After I met and had conversations with John McAlice, the man who translated this book from German into English, I decided that **I** would have to read his work, one, because it gives important insight into Steiner, and two, because most of the Steiner books I have read were translated into British English and this was an American translating it into my native language without all the quirks of *-our* endings of flavour, humour, and colour, and many others.

The author Christoph Lindenberg has done a masterful job, especially as he kept to his pledge to "abstain from any highly elevated esoteric interpretation", thus leaving us readers to make our own interpretations.

What I liked especially about this book was Lindenberg's mentioning at various phases of Steiner's life when he wrote a particular book or gave certain lectures. As the Steiner material arose piece-by-piece in this biography, I felt a pleasurable sense of place and time as I recognized each item from my previous reading of it.

When I took German in college, I heard it mentioned several times, that the German was precise and clear in ways that surpassed English. I have caught glimpses of that in my reading of German literature, but here in this biography is a German author who describes this process, first as he claims to describe and not judge, and second as he claims that Steiner can be understood.

[page ix] The way I understand the task of the biographer and the writer of history is not to judge but to understand and to describe spiritually. This does not mean that the writer abstains from every judgment; but where a judgment is expressed, the reader should be able to see that it is the writer's judgment, and not confuse it with the facts.

[page ix] I draw the courage to publish this work, not from my studies of the intellectual and historical environs in which Steiner's life took place, but quite simply from the fact Rudolf Steiner always expressed himself clearly and understandably in all the essential points. It is, therefore, necessary only to read exactly and to duplicate inwardly what is being spoken of in order to conceive of Steiner appropriately. I believe one does Rudolf Steiner a grave injustice by acting as if Steiner cannot ultimately be understood, believing that we must limit ourselves to presentiment and belief.

As the author quotes in his Introduction, Steiner said in his *Autobiography*, "I do not wish to relate private matters in this account of my life, except when they are connected in some way with my spiritual development." After reading this extensive biography, I can attest that everything that happened in Steiner's life was connected in some way with his spiritual development. Learning about his spiritual development is an excellent way to "conceive Steiner appropriately". I have heard that another large biography is soon to be published, and I expect that will also be a worthy read for students of Steiner. In the meantime, we are lucky to have an author of this biography who lets the "spiritual, soul, and outer facts speak for themselves, *leaving the interpretation of those facts to the reader.*"

The author makes the claim that Steiner was christened Catholic "due simply to the fact that the Catholic Church was at that time responsible for registering births and deaths" in area where he was born. I think one could equally say, "It was due simply to his karma." Attribution of reasons for something is a tricky business, and the same could be said for Steiner's becoming an altar boy (acolyte). From my own experience, it was an "accepted part of life" where I grew up, but I didn't become an altar boy. Clearly serving at Mass allowed Steiner's native clairvoyance to view the powerful spiritual realities present in the Consecration of the Host before Communion.

Steiner saw things that others couldn't see, but learned wisely, at an early age, to keep the things he saw that others didn't see to himself, until he had learned as much as possible about the things others saw.

Steiner's coming across the teacher's aide's geometry book and studying geometry on his own reminds me of a mathematics book in my high school library which ended with a section on calculus. Having no possibility of taking a course in calculus, I studied it and learned the basics of calculus on my own. To me calculus was a puzzle, an unanswered question, which I probed until I found some answers. Whenever I encountered something I didn't understand, I held it as an unanswered question and sooner or later, I found the answer, often out of my own but maturer understanding of the world. For example, two words from an adult magazine in my father's bedside magazine puzzled me, Iphiler and Shirt-Sharpener. I wasn't supposed to be looking through this magazine, so I couldn't ask my father or mother, and as I was the oldest in the family, my brothers weren't any help. In my twenties, it occurred to me that "Iphiler" was a droll way of spelling "Eye-Filler" and it was the name of the monthly photo of a beautiful female. Likewise I sorted out that the guy who was talking about his "Shirt-Sharpener" was referring to his wife who ironed his shirts and kept them looking sharp on him. Those unanswered questions remained with me for over a decade, and from the experience of holding those questions, I learned the power of the unanswered question. I came to observe how most people feel uncomfortable about holding a question unanswered and prefer to go immediately to some trivial answer in order to dispense with the question, usually with an offhand, "I know that." Steiner, on the other hand, held unanswered questions about geometry.

[page 8] They troubled him. In working with geometry, he found comfort in the face of the anxiety "caused by so many unanswered questions". Here he found a sense of self-former inner certainty.

When during my childhood anything that could be picked for free from nature was a boon. When blackberries were ripe, we often spent a day picking huge tubs of ripe berries, from which Mom made blackberry dumplings and blackberry preserves. Learning how to maneuver one's fingers past briars without getting stuck by the thorns helped me develop a manual dexterity which lives with me today. Our meals were almost as austere as Steiner's, often consisting of stewed mustard greens over rice.

[page 11] After a couple of hours of berry-picking, it was very satisfying to bring home a delicious contribution to the family's evening meal, which otherwise consisted of a piece of bread and butter or bread and cheese.

Steiner's early life as described in this next passage reminds one of Heinlein's famous character Robert Valentine Smith in his science fiction novel, "Stranger in a Strange Land" who possessed an inner process

of relating to people and the world called *grokking*.

[page 12] Much of what he encountered was strange or curious to him. This destiny, to remain in many ways a stranger in a strange land, held him back from becoming one with his surroundings, and from simply taking the incursion of modern civilization for granted. . . . Steiner thus grafted an inner world out of his own activity to a much greater degree than is usual among children. The price of this independence was loneliness.

Like Steiner, I have lived my life by the motto I fashioned in the 1970s: *Thus a Teacher, So also a Learner*. It is a marvelous motto as it contains no verbs, but a solid sense of wherever there is a learner, there is a teacher; in every learner a teacher, in the presence of a teacher, a learner appears, in the presence of a learner (a person ready to learn), a teacher will appear; the motto means all these things, yes, and even more.

[page 13] Even from the middle of his life, at a time when Steiner had long been a teacher, he continues to be a learner.

Steiner had a father and mother who helped him to attend college, something I never had. The best thing my father did, when I announced I would attend college, was not try to stop me. Since I shared one bedroom with four younger brothers, there was no way my mother could provide a quiet space for me to study at home and I went away to college.

[page 13] It was his father who made it possible for Steiner to attend high school and college; his mother made sure that he had the necessary quiet at home to study.

Going through Steiner's life as a student in Vienna reminded me in many ways of my own path through college where I focused on learning how the physical world operated. But early on in my first year of college, I found the Essays of Emerson in the college bookstore, bought it, and began to read each of Ralph Waldo Emerson's essays. I found the most resonance in his essay, "Self-Reliance"; it was my primordial experience of the presence of my "I" — as I came to understand later when reading Steiner. Other important statements by Emerson, among many: "Whoso would be a man would a nonconformist", "A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds", and so on. At 18 years old, I wasn't sure exactly how Emerson's words would shape my life, but the process begun then is still going on now, some decades later. When I first read Steiner's "Philosophy of Freedom", I recognized that the ideas that had been developing in me out of Emerson's famous essay had been forming my own *philosophy of freedom* and had taught me to know when to trust my own ideas in the face of opposition from all sides. At eighteen, I knew nothing else about Emerson and his position as a philosopher. How lucky I was to find Emerson. Fichte was apparently Steiner's Emerson.

[page 38] Upon returning to Oberlaa from his first visit to Vienna, he began immediately to read Fichte's *Science of Knowledge*. It is remarkable that without knowing anything about Fichte's work or his place in the evolution of philosophy, the eighteen-year-old Steiner managed to find this work. How could he have known that Fichte would provide him with the challenge that he sought?

When Steiner met Felix Koguski, the herb collector, he immediately felt "a deep affinity" (page 44) for Felix. This kind of affinity I consider to be a time wave from the future which we experience as an ineffable feeling which comes into us whenever we meet someone or something which will have an enormous effect on us for the rest of our lives. There was Felix, the Teacher appearing, exactly at the time when young Steiner was ready to learn about the secrets of nature and to meet the Master that Felix would introduce him to.

[page 47] Each evolutionary process has a double nature: a "coming into manifestation" and a "moving into the depths of inwardness." When manifest, the spirit is hidden; when hidden, the spirit is revealed. Evolution remains a riddle without an understanding

of this double stream. Most important, one must be able to differentiate between these two simultaneous streams in oneself. The stream of thinking cognition is always retrogressive: it begins in the present and strives toward an understanding of the causes and conditions of what has come into being. At the same time, one longs to grasp what is in the process of becoming. One tends to think about the future by extrapolating from the present and thus all too often projections are the mere representation of a naive causal construction. One forms a mental image of one stream of development, forgetting that this is but a reflection of a thought process.

For myself, I understand the double process this way: One stream is thinking or cognition which is based on what has arrived from the past, and thus cognition creates abstract logical constructions of the dead and gone past. With thinking we are able to grasp the past. The future cannot be grasped in this fashion by cognitive thinking, though many attempts are made to do so which will often trail off into polysyllabic babble. The future arrives in the second stream: as *a time wave from future* which arrives as a feeling state. Even though one might "long to grasp what is in the process of becoming" as Lindenberg writes above, one can only experience the feeling which enters one and allows one to make the right decisions, form the right conclusions, etc., all without using any reason. One is unable to grasp cognitively the process of becoming, the process of the entrance of future events, but one can feel the future arriving and it feels good as it "moves into the depths of inwardness.

"Light itself is invisible." Lindenberg writes on page 52. With the advent of photos and videos from outer space, we have experienced how outer space is completely dark, absent an object to stop the light and reflect some portion of it. The science fiction "Invisible Man" is shown to be an impossibility for the simple reason that a truly invisible man would be blind: unless the light contacts the back of a man's retina, he is unable to see. If the light does contact the retina, the retina will become visible, and the man will no longer be invisible. An invisible man would be as easy to spot as a deer in the headlights of a car at night. Lindenberg builds on the theme of light being invisible to discuss how light, though invisible, makes other things visible.

[page 52] Light can thus become for thinking a bridge between the sensory and the extrasensory. It selflessly, without announcing its own presence, makes other things visible, allows them to reveal themselves in a manner similar to that of thinking, which forgets itself when it contemplates things and elucidates their relationships. That thinking has access to the things of the world, and that it can contemplate them in peace from afar, is due to light among other things.

When the Russians began in earnest to create symphonic music in the 1830s, they resisted the German influence, which demanded starting from a sonata form. One composer, Modest Mussorgsky disdained that approach, saying, in effect, that German composers "have to reason their way to a conclusion, whereas we Russian composers start with a conclusion and might give reasons for it if pressed." (1) The two streams of experiencing the world are shown in the typical German and Russian composers. It is Immanuel Kant, the epitome of the German reasoning mind, who denied the possibility of intuitive comprehension. To my mind the very existence of the verb *intuit* can be taken as *prima facie* evidence that intuition exists and only the most hardened logical thinkers, like Kant, would deny its existence. On the other hand, as the epitome of the intuitive mind, Goethe, even though he was German, understood the spiritual roots of material phenomena. Steiner uses Goethe as a stepping stone and takes a further step, pointing to a way of knowing:

[page 64] [A knowing that can apprehend not merely what is sense-perceptible, but also what is purely ideal, by itself, separated from the sensory world. Now one can call a concept that is not taken from the sensory world by abstraction, but rather has a content flowing out of itself and only out of itself, an *intuitive concept* and knowledge of this concept an intuitive one. What follows from this is clear: *An organism can be*

apprehended only in an intuitive concept. Goethe shows, through what he does, that it is granted to the human being to know in this way.

This chapter titled, "Goethe: A Source of Hope" filled out for me exactly the kind of relationship between Steiner and Goethe which I had intuited from the type of men they each were. If you have an intuition, you can tell how good it is by the way events happen after your intuition. If I had reasoned this out, the reasoning types among you would have been swayed, but saying I intuited it will likely make you suspicious. Curious, it seems to me, that the *type of process* one uses to arrive at a conclusion would be treated as more important than whether one arrived at a proven correct thought, up until now.

For about twenty years I have been dancing with Rudolf Steiner in the way that he danced with Goethe in his own time. As Steiner put it:

[page 66] While I worked to interpret Goethe, he was always beside me in spirit, admonishing and continually reminding me that one who rushes too quickly along the spiritual path may attain a circumscribed experience of spirit but leaves behind the fullness of life, poor in the substance of reality.

That describes my own rushing along the spiritual path until I stumbled upon Steiner, and I soon discovered that I had a lot of work to do before I could even understand what he was talking about! Ten small books of his later, I liked what I had read so far, but I had not much of a clue what most of it meant. What an interesting unanswered question! If only I had had Google back then. So, when the Internet arrived, my first question was, "Who is Steiner and what should I be reading?" I was directed by some new friends to Steiner's classics, *Occult Science*, *Philosophy of Freedom*, *Theosophy*, and others, and soon we could dance together, Steiner and I, mostly without my stepping on his feet.

[page 76] Before Steiner began to write about Goethe's way of understanding the world, he had developed his own ideas about knowledge. Only later did he discover that the path of knowledge that Goethe practiced was alive in his epistemological understanding. Goethe's Theory of Knowledge was thus more of an exploration of Steiner's own thoughts than it was an interpretation of Goethe's understanding. This was clear to Steiner during his work on the book.

In my detailed study of Steiner's work, as it appears in my hundreds of reviews of his books and lectures, I might be accused of using Steiner's work as he did Goethe's work, as a chance to explore and to share my own thoughts about the world. Many of my original thoughts pre-date my first exposure to Steiner in the 1980s, but I see now they were part of my own preparation to meet him. Once I found Steiner's works, I felt no longer alone; I found confirmation in many ways. Soon I could speak out directly on thoughts that, but for Steiner, I might have kept to myself indefinitely.

Thoughts are a unique derivative of one's life, and as such should be considered as one's *primary property*(2), just as one would consider the land first discovered by an explorer that person's property. The land was there before the explorer, but his finding it gives him the right to be called the discoverer of the land. Thoughts exist as undiscovered country, available to anyone who happens upon them while wandering in the right direction, whether on purpose or not, and the first one to arrive there receives credit, not for creating the country, but discovering it, and receiving credit for being first to reveal it.

[page 79, italics added] An indefinite number of beings endowed with minds may be confronted by a single thought content. The mind thus perceives the thought content of the world like an organ of comprehension. There is only a single thought content of the world. Human consciousness does not constitute the ability to produce thoughts and store them up, as is generally believed, but rather the ability to perceive thoughts (*ideas*).

Steiner was later considered by many to be a reincarnation of St. Thomas Aquinas, and early evidence of

this was revealed in 1988 by a Catholic theologian, Wilhelm Neumann.

[page 90] According to Steiner, Neumann spoke to him explicitly about Aquinas only once. On November 9, 1888, after Steiner had given a lecture on Goethe's aesthetics, Neumann approached him and said, "The seeds for this lecture, they were already present with Thomas from Aquinas!"

If one had any doubt whether Steiner would have approved of the 2012 spate of protests which resulted in "Occupy" coalitions forming barricades of living quarters in various public spaces, this next passage should clarify his position.

[page 91, 92] . . . The fundamental stance of these papers, which supported economic liberalism, seemed to him [Steiner] to have a corruptive influence. He was very skeptical of those who took to the barricades for "progress"; his respect was given to what he experienced as upright and healthy.

Steiner seemed always to sense the questions that were in people's mind and shaped his lectures towards answering these questions. But when people brought explicit questions to him, his answers often elicited from him novel answers and approaches which no one expected. The Waldorf Schools arrived as an extended answer to a question from Emil Molt about whether a school based on Steiner principles could be created for the children of the workers in his Waldorf-Astoria Cigarette Factory in Stuttgart. To see the promulgation of another creative area, look at how eurythmy was first formed in answer to a question.

[page 101] Steiner, however, did not simply answer people's questions or take up tasks that others brought to him. He naturally also created new things and unexpected possibilities for which no one could have asked directly. Take, for example, the creation of eurythmy. He developed this new artistic form, which he had envisioned as early as 1908, beginning in 1912, after a mother came to him with the question of a possible training for her daughter. Eurythmy became thus an unexpected answer to an existential question. At the same time, it brought hidden laws of human speech to expression, which until then had slept unrecognized in the spiritual organism of human movement.

Steiner had written about Goethe that Art "interprets the secrets of the world, as does science in a different way. This is the view that Goethe held of art. Art was for him *one* revelation of the archetypal laws of the universe; science was for him the *other*".

[page 104] "Beauty is a manifestation of secret laws of nature, which would have otherwise remained forever hidden." These laws are not those that one discovers on other paths — for instance, scientific research — but rather such laws as can be experienced and brought to expression by a creative genius. One can easily recognize this in music, which has an innate lawfulness and yet creates a fully new world that doesn't exist outside of music. It was in this sense that Steiner began in 1912 to develop eurythmy, a completely new art form that strove to bring to expression hidden laws of language and music.

In Rosa Mayreder Steiner found someone with whom he could share the ideas filling him which later formed the basis of his classic work, [The Philosophy of Freedom\(3\)](#). He wrote, "She relieved me in part of the loneliness with which I lived at that time." (Page 113)

[page 114] (Mayreder)"His views concerning personal freedom resonated fully with what I strove for, and he helped me become clear about this in his first philosophical writings." . . .

Just before he moved to Weimar, Steiner visited she (sic) and her husband at their

summer cottage in Waidhofen. In his Autobiography, he recalls "a walk through the wonderful alpine forest, during which Rosa Mayreder and I discussed the true meaning of human freedom."

Steiner was keenly aware of the distinction between applied and theoretical science: the first strives to build things from nature to control the environment, the second strives to understand nature. He wrote about it this way:

[page 116] "It is something quite different to observe natural processes in order to place their forces at the service of a technology than it is to do so in order to gain a deeper understanding of the being nature. True science is only present when the spirit seeks to satisfy *its own* needs without any *outer reason*."

[page 117] (Lindenberg) One does come to the conclusion that modern science is perhaps, in fact, not science at all, but merely the theory of the control and exploitation of nature, its measurement and its use. One does not recognize the fact that knowledge and science are something quite different than the examination of nature, with the goal of discovering how it can be made useful — that science doesn't simply have the task of formulating the laws of nature mathematically, but that science can lead, as in Goethe's work, to seeing the *ideas* that are at work in nature. This is what Steiner attempted to articulate in philosophical terminology.

Sound and light waves are described by physics as objective vibrations and our senses are subjective recordings of them. Sounds are like footprints in the sands of time, but the objective nature of sound can never be captured; it remains only as sound. This is a major distinction between establishment science and science as understood by Goethe and extrapolated upon by Rudolf Steiner. This should be pondered carefully as the author summarizes it here:

[page 118] In actuality, one attempts in vain to find sound in the "vibrations" and the "waves." Popular opinion holds the vibrations, the waves, or the nerve processes to be the only objective reality. Our sense experiences — sound, color, smell, touch, and so on — are held to be merely subjective. One forgets, thereby, that it is through our senses alone that we become aware of the air, or of processes in the nerves. It is possible to see or touch a nerve. Our knowledge of the nerves, the atmosphere and so on rests on direct sense impressions. They form the primary reality, the point of origin of all our research. What science examines is thus not at all the source of our sense impressions. When one asks how the processes in our nerves are connected with our impressions of sound, he is examining the relationship between two different fields of perception. If one asks how movement is connected to sound, he is also examining the relationship between two different fields of perception. Scientific research, therefore, can never go "behind" the sense impressions, for even when researchers view the world through the lens of an electron microscope, they remain dependent upon their capacity to perceive, on sense impressions. The object of science is thus, inasmuch as it involves observation, the sum total of the perceived impressions. The world dissolves completely into perceptions. "*The perceived world is consequently nothing other than a sum of metamorphosed perceptions*".

Steiner dealt with time in this way, "Time is the sense-perceptible expression of the act of things taking place in an interdependent sequence."

[page 119] If one grasps the concept of time in this manner, there is no necessity to conceive of the essence or being enduring in time as a permanent, fixed material that one imagines behind the manifestations. Thus Steiner arrives at his third significant thesis: "The sense-based picture of the world is the sum of metamorphosing perceptions without any fundamental matter."

Our perceptions reside in our soul which is a realm no one else can visit. We may talk as if we all understand a perception in the same way, but we lack any way to prove that is the case and, absent proof, we settle for simple mutual agreement. I cannot give any other person my own experience of red. I can point to an object that is red, and the other person can agree that it is red, but neither of us can experience what the color is red is that the other person experiences. This conundrum was written about in an excellent book by Nicholas Humphrey recently, [Seeing Red, A Study in Consciousness](#).

Sights and colors confront us from objects just as sounds reach us from vibrating objects, odor from organic material — always there is a mediating substrate.

[page 123, 124] The human spirit is certainly dependent on there being a mediating substrate. But the substrate has only a secondary significance for spiritual content. Our spirit always turns its attention to what is meaningful; the sense-perceptible substrate is only of significance in that it serves to carry and mediate meaning.

In the second grade, I received a C- in conduct, and my mother was very upset. I do not recall exactly why I misbehaved in that teacher's class. I suspect that she had restricted my freedom in the classroom so much that I rebelled openly and drew a bad conduct grade for it. From then on, I dealt with boring teachers who insisted on attention during the rest of elementary and high school by doodling out of sight of the teacher, while making enough eye-contact to feign my interest when I was being taught stuff that I already knew. I made good grades in conduct, but only my visible-to-the-teacher behavior changed. Steiner had to work under such a petty dictator at the Weimar Goethean Archives.

[page 126, 127] Suphan, the director of the archive, is one of the pettiest of the petty. A truly philistine school master without any larger points of view. Wherever something free, independent and unshackled would develop, his disposition hangs on it like a lead weight. Naturally he can't help himself. . . . But whoever has to work with such a person feels himself to be continually crippled.

While enduring the repetitive and boring tasks of organizing the Goethean archives, Steiner fostered his own initiatives which led to his classic work on the Philosophy of Freedom.

[page 130, 131] In later years, audiences were often surprised by Steiner's knowledge of arcane relationships and otherwise unknown writers; an explanation for this remarkable knowledge is to be found in the research behind the *History of the Theory of Color*.

Readers of these footnotes who are interested in Anthroposophy can also discover methodological indications concerning the work with Anthroposophy, for instance:

Truths, which belong to a whole system of ideas, can usually be truly understood and valued only when examined in context. One recognizes then their deeper meaning, their esoteric meaning, which they cannot have when seen in isolation. This latter will only be grasped by those who learn to know the entire circle of corresponding views to which the idea belongs. Truths, which are understandable when standing alone, are called exoteric. The superficial tendency to tear esoteric truths out of their context and address them exoterically can lead to the most dangerous errors.

If we apply this to the years Steiner spent in Weimar, we can see that the work in the archive was but one aspect of his life and if viewed alone gives a skewed sense of what these years meant. In addition to his archival job, Steiner nurtured individual initiatives, in the center of which was the work on *The Philosophy of Freedom*. At the same time, he made many new friends. His life was not limited to his work as a scholar and writer. He led an active social life, and the society of friends and conversation with others was like

fresh air for him to breath. Still, the work in the archive was always there in the background. A gray wall, but still colossal.

His work done as a dissertation on Truth was later published as the book [Truth and Knowledge](#), and it paved the way for his later [Philosophy of Freedom](#). I was glad to find the original title of PoF, GA#4, slipped by editors and made it into the text on Page 136(4). I have seen already two or three alternate titles and I would hope this over-interpretation of an offhand comment made by Steiner about Americans understanding "freedom" differently will be forgotten and its original title will be soon returned. The Americans who understand "freedom" differently will not be reading this book or else they will quickly learn the meaning Steiner intends while reading the book. After all, *freedom* is the key subject of the book itself — why insult *freedom* by placing it in a subtitle role?

The central concept of GA#4 was formed when he was working on [Goethe's Theory of Knowledge](#).

[page 152] It is not by searching out this or that commandment of the guiding power of the world that he acts in accordance with its intentions but rather through acting in accordance with his own intentions.

Steiner expounds on individual action in a way redolent of Emerson in his essay, *Self-Reliance*, saying, "All rules and norms fail in the concrete situation. . . . all general rules and laws prove themselves to be worthless phantoms when a person finds oneself in a living reality. Laws are abstractions; actions, however, always take place under very specific, concrete situations. When faced with the necessity of action, we must weigh the different possibilities and choose the one that appears to us to be most practical. An individual person always faces a very specific situation and makes a decision based on the nature of the situation." (Page 156)

Any rule that is launched into existence immediately becomes obsolete by its own fixity. "What is" immediately becomes "what is past", necessarily so. Look at how many marriages fail because of the vows which are part of nearly every marriage ceremony. The couple agrees to the vows and then as the years roll on, they wonder why they feel trapped. The vows are like rules which place them into a box from which they cannot stray and that leads to a trapped feeling. Why not take vows which allow you two to stay out of the box in the first place? Then you would never feel trapped! Simply take the vow *to do X* and restate it to say, "We are not required to do X." Nothing keeps you from doing X which might be as simple as *to cherish the other person*. But you are *not* required to cherish, so cherishing remains a wonderful thing. The inverted vow is a vow you can both keep and remain outside the box of limiting expectations indefinitely(5).

Steiner wrote about his concept of freedom this way:

[page 157] "May nature daily destroy what we have built up, so that daily we may rejoice in creating anew! We wish to owe nature nothing, but ourselves everything!"

At age 32, I was at a turning point in my life. I had made a decision which would break up and re-arrange two marriages and affect the life of at least ten people. For this decision and the many subsidiary decisions along the way, I followed this guiding principle: *to make my decision based on what would be best for all the people involved*: my ex-spouse, our four children, my spouse-to-be, her two children, and her ex-spouse, etc. I somehow knew if my decision did not include all of the people involved, things would go wrong. Not everyone was happy over the changes, but looking back over the 40-plus years, things seem to have worked out for the best for everyone, so far as I can tell. I felt as though my "I" had penetrated this deed as Steiner describes in the passage below.

[page 161] If the "I" has really penetrated its deed with full insight, in conformity with its nature, then it also feels itself to be master. As long as this is not the case, the laws ruling the deed confront us as something foreign. They rule us; what we do is done under

the compulsion they exert over us. If they are transformed from being a foreign entity into a deed completely originating within our own "I," then the compulsion ceases. What compelled us has become our own being. The laws no longer rule over us; in us they rule over the deed issuing from our "I." . . . To recognize the laws of one's deeds means to become conscious of one's own freedom. Thus the process of knowledge is the process of development toward freedom.

How do we make decisions? I suggest there are three ways: *reason, react, and feel*. Our reasoning necessarily deals with things of the past, and can be very useful. Our reactions deal with things of the present. Our feelings are signals from the future.

About the future, I have always thought it was a poor memory which only received signals from the past, and eventually I found how signals from the future reach us: *via feelings*. When we see something for the first time which will become a part of our lives for a period of time in the future, all the good feelings we will have in that future through association with that thing or person comes to us as *a time wave from the future* (6) in the form of a feeling. The stronger and longer the good feelings will be in the future, the stronger the time wave of feeling which will arrive in the present. This is the origin of the process we colloquially call, "love at first sight", but it can involve a new piece of jewelry, a new automobile, a new job, basically anything. It happens to everyone, but not everyone notices these feelings and among those who do notice, most will slough off the feeling as being trivial and instead say that they relied upon their reasoning to make a decision to do this new thing. They will say this, even though for things involving the future, reasoning is a rather undependable way to make a decision. Why? Because reason uses data from the past, but a time wave of feeling provides us with direct data from the future in a very useable form: a feeling which warms us, whispers *Yes!* in our ears, and gives us instant confidence in a decision. A decision that delaying to wait for our reasoning to catch up with could postpone the thing we wanted until the opportunity to have it is gone forever.

We live in the information age, but how many people have a well-informed idea of what information is, i. e., how the process of informing itself works? Steiner lays it out for us:

[page 192] We must only pay attention to what happens within ourselves when we immerse ourselves by looking, listening, and sharing the experience of another, when we open ourselves completely to the world that surrounds us. We notice then that the world speaks within us, that the phenomena reveal themselves through us.

Rightly understood, this is the process by which we inform ourselves. We *form in* ourselves what we immerse ourselves in by looking, listening, and sharing the experience of another and all the things happening around us. That is the active process: *in-form*, a hyphenated word in its original form which has been flattened into a single word, *inform*, the word from which information is created. I discovered this process of in-forming through reading the adventures of W. G. Chesterton's detective, the good [Father Brown](#). In an amazing episode, he is seated inside a completely enclosed room with no windows, so the only senses he can depend upon are his hearing and the sensations of his own body as he replicated in himself the motions associated with the sounds he heard. A theft of expensive silver knives takes place and no one outside Father Brown (except the thieves) were aware that a theft had taken place! The process used by Fr. Brown to discover the theft and later the thieves is that described in the above passage by Steiner. He paid exquisite attention to the steps taken past his room from the kitchen to the banquet room, noticing a curious pause at certain times, and other important clues which he allows to form inside himself during his rapt attention, and gradually the phenomena of the theft revealed itself to him. Chesterton was apparently able to "live in the truth" the way Goethe and later Steiner did, and from his ability, he could write his Father Brown stories.

[page 192] Rudolf Steiner also understood Goethe in this sense. He wrote, "To know the truth means for [Goethe] to live in the truth. And to live in the truth is simply to watch,

when looking at each individual thing, what inner experience occurs when one stands in front of this thing". The sense-perceptible brings itself to expression in this manner in the ensouled physical human being, for each of us truly lives immersed in this world. The individual is formed and nourished by the world and is an integral part of the universe, not merely an observer. The human being is a microcosm able to share the experience of the macrocosm to various degrees.

Father Brown was able to allow the soul-spiritual nature to enter him of the people serving at the banquet, and he noticed the level of voices which changed as the cadence of their walking changed, among other things. One must become a good listener if one is to learn the soul-spiritual reality of a person in another room.

[page 192] For instance, if an individual listens to another person talk about his or her ideas and reconstructs them within the framework of one's own conceptual capacity, one remains within one's own world. If the individual, however, actively experiences the other with one's complete being and lets his or her voice, with its cadences and melody, work upon oneself, the other is experienced as an embodied, sense-perceptible being, and one feels how the other grasps the body with the forces of his or her soul. What is sense-perceptible becomes the direct revelation of the soul-spiritual nature of the other human being.

Steiner was aware of this process as early as 1887, calling it the *true communion of human beings*. He later became aware that few Western philosophers understood this process, especially Plato and Kant.

[page 193] Everything that can be perceived with the senses reveals itself as the direct expression of what is actually spiritual. With such knowledge, it is clear what is to be done and where one can help.

Ever notice that people who know little about the world can speak endlessly about what's wrong with the world, but rarely share anything of interest or value? It seems that the more we learn about ourselves, the more we can say about the world which is interesting and valuable. Like the world around Father Brown in the episode we mentioned above: the world is a mystery and we are the solution. Steiner says exactly that about the world mystery in the passage below.

[page 196] In Chapter 22 of his *Autobiography*, in which he describes the transformation of his soul, Steiner also writes extensively for the first time about his inner, meditative work.

Work of this nature proceeds slowly. The will awakens and ripens in an organic manner; a new ring is laid down each year. This quality of will is not one that exhausts itself in sudden outer action. Step by step, it lets a new individual come forth; cognition through the will is self-cognition, self-transformation. Steiner writes about it in his *Autobiography*. "I also thought: The whole world, except for the human being, is a mystery — the actual 'world mystery.' *And human beings themselves are the solution.* Consequently, I could think: The human being, at any moment, can speak of that universal mystery, but they can never say more of the answer than they have learned about themselves as human beings".

At age 36, Steiner experienced a shift of soul which liberated his will as he described above. For myself I remember my missionary zeal for each new field of study I undertook — wanting to share it with anyone who would listen, my excitement for every new company I went to work for — wanting everyone to come to work there, and so on. I was in the throes of my excitement and ambitions, and I ran wherever they took me. But, Lindenberg tells us that Steiner's liberated will took on real tasks, worthy ones, ones worthy of a full human being.

[page 198] The liberated will took on real earthly tasks. It didn't monomaniacally follow

self-envisioned goals. True will does not lose itself in missionary zeal. It listens to the world, it listens to the voice of destiny, and it learns to take hold of the tasks that the world brings to meet it. This quality of will needs a certain flexibility and cannot be trapped in the stubborn rigidity of the brutal idealist. The will that lets itself be led by destiny can unfold its own intentionality, because the tasks are never narrowly defined. This will does, however, always work with the people who are there. It does not complain that there aren't better, more perfect, more insightful colleagues to work with. This would be a waste of time. Led by the idea of moral imagination, it finds meaning in helping to bring forth the hidden fruits in those it encounters. Thus, the "shift of soul" in Rudolf Steiner's thirty-sixth year led to a turning point of destiny.

Steiner wanted a Threefold Society in which there would be no coercion at any level: the cultural sector would be independent of the political sector and of the economic sector. It was a great idea, but lacking a crucial element for its implementation: an operational definition of freedom. Such a definition would not arrive on Earth until 1968, some 40 plus years after Steiner's death. This definition, rightly understood and implemented, would allow for the *individual anarchism* which Steiner knew was necessary. He finally dropped that expression because, lacking a proper understanding and implementation of freedom, the idea of anarchy is a scary word, reminding everyone of the guillotine days of the French Revolution. Rightly understood, the word means simply "no rule", but it does not mean "no government". A government is not incompatible with *individual anarchism*, but would instead be essential. It would require a fully volitional government, a true government, in which no coercion exists at any level.

But Steiner did get a couple of things right about social evolution. About twenty years before the Russian Revolution and the lugubrious 70 years of their communist experiment, Steiner warned against the fail-prone political forms of communism and socialism in an article called "Freedom and Society".

[page 206] This article contains [two] quite pointed political opinions: "No socialist or communist political form can do justice to the natural inequality of people" (31); and "The worst form of rule is what the Social Democrats are striving to achieve" (31). Steiner's own social ideal, which he described at the time as individual anarchism, is expressed clearly in "Freedom and Society" without ever mentioning the word anarchy, a word that evokes wild associations.

In Steiner's utopian view, government can happen without authority, but no government in the history of the world has ever existed for long without authority and authority means inevitably coercion. With the smallest amount of coercion permitted, soon it will increase until it becomes a stranglehold on the people at every level. The use of the word "permitted" presupposes the existence of an authority which permits. It seems impossible to conceive of a society without an authority and thus one without coercion. Indeed it seems so. But, Steiner held out hope for such a society, even in these years before the turn of the twentieth century. It was only a hope, but it fell on the deaf ears of people hopelessly enured to coercion, as in fact we all have been taught is necessary and that a fearful anarchy is the only other option, have we not?

[page 206] Governments and societies, believing to be an end in themselves, must strive to control the individual regardless of whether they do it in a totalitarian manner, constitutionally, or as a republic. If they cease to see themselves as ends, but as means, they no longer need to emphasize the necessity of control. Then things will be arranged in such a manner that the individual can come fully into his own. The ideal will be no authority, no control.

What if everyone had control over their own lives and all the derivatives of their lives? These are the derivatives of a person's life: first, their life, second, their thoughts and ideas, and third everything else they acquire as a result of their thoughts and ideas. This idea of threefold control by each individual obviates the necessary for coercion and provides a way of building freedom, 100% freedom in any

society. This has not been done, but it has been shown to be possible based on the original ideas and concepts of Dr. Andrew Galambos begun in 1968 which are available in his first book, *Sic Iter Ad Astra*. Freedom cannot be fought for, he said, it can only be built, one person at a time, but once built, it can never be destroyed. And, freedom, once built, will bring forward the threefold society Steiner so earnestly envisioned and strove for; it will become a reality as the three folds of society will begin completely separate and remain so(7). Dictators in both countries and corporations will disappear permanently from the Earth.

One of the joys of reading this fine biography by Christoph Lindenberg is the chance it gives me to note the points in Rudolf Steiner's life when he wrote certain books or gave certain lectures. The dates given for the books and lectures were just numbers when I read the books and provided me no context for what was happening in Steiner's life when these were created. This biography valuably fills these lacunae. Here's an example: this book, *The Riddles of Philosophy*, GA#18, is mentioned on page 208, the first page of Chapter 20 titled "Time of Trial". This book contains references to the most famous philosophers of the pre-1901 world, truly a *tour de force* by Steiner. Have any of you, dear Readers, ever heard of the chicken and the egg paradox, "Which came first?" — if so, have you ever heard of the man who offered a solution to the paradox, Lorenz Oken (1779-1858)? Here it is, quoted from my review of GA#18, quoting Steiner's words:

[page 322, GA#18] Oken compares the stages of transformation of the insects with the other animals and finds that the caterpillars have a great similarity with worms, and the cocoons with crustaceous animals. From such similarities this ingenious thinker draws the conclusion that "there is, therefore, no doubt that we are here confronted with a conspicuous similarity that justifies the idea that the evolutionary history in the egg is nothing but a repetition of the history of the creation of the animal classes."

During this "time of trial" for Steiner, he went from his primary drink being alcohol to coffee. I remember that I switched about the time that I began studying Steiner's works, not that alcohol had been my primary drink, only a social gesture, but because to understand Steiner I needed the brain sand which coffee provides. Brain sand builds up in the brain, especially around the pineal gland, during heavy thinking, and it dissolves naturally again during sleep. The caffeine in coffee is especially efficacious in dissolving brain sand while awake and thus coffee is the drink favored by journalists and other writers. Tea is favored by conversationalists, another insight provided by Steiner.

One observer of Steiner offered this comment on him c. 1899:

[page 209] "He led a very worldly life. Under the influence of Otto Erich's alcoholic temptations, he spent a lot of time with him in shadier public houses" (Martens). This all stopped in 1899. From here on out, coffee became his main drink.

Lindenberg offers a wonderful view of the two sides of ahrimanic and luciferic thinking for me in this next passage below. There are so many aspects involved, that each new view is worthy of study. His view allows me to see how ahrimanic thinking concentrates on *Content* and luciferic thinking on *Process*. Content (which I prefer over Form) and Process are pervasive in our world, as pervasive and ahrimanic and luciferic thinking is. Every verb has a Content and Process side, e. g. *bicycle* can refer to the action of moving down a street on a bicycle, as in "I'm am bicycling now" (Process), or *bicycle* can be used to refer to an action in the past, as in "I bicycled yesterday" (Content). One is a live Process, the other is a dead Content. Verbs are usually Process and nouns usually Content, but it is possible for me to noun a verb or verb a noun, is it not? Content and Process refers to whether it is a dead nominalization or a it is a living action happening right now. The same thing *happens to happens*, makes sense?

[page 210] When Rudolf Steiner characterized this time of trial, he wrote of "Ahrimanic beings." Although it is possible to understand what he means by this out of the context, some explanation might be helpful. In the beginning of 1909, Rudolf Steiner first

described how spiritual insight recognizes two polar forces at work in the human being and the world. One of these, which strives to draw the human being away from the earth and the tasks connected with it, he names the "luciferic force"; the other, which strives to fetter human thought to earthly "facts," he names ahrimanic. While the ahrimanic forces place the individual on the solid footing of so-called facts, the luciferic forces liberate him from such bothersome details and lead him into the heights of self-experience. Both of these forces always appear together as powerful polarities for the human being. One could, for instance, characterize a machine as an ahrimanic construction, and the wishes and desires of those who use the machine as luciferic.

Trained as an academic scientist, I naturally considered thinking as a mental activity, and nothing more. It took me a lot of time studying Rudolf Steiner to understand the spiritual side of thinking. I had already learned from personal experience that my thoughts leaked out into world affecting other people out of my awareness, and I found that these thoughts were carried by spiritual beings. Here is a passage from Steiner's *Autobiography* :

[page 210] One without direct perception of the spiritual world will experience immersion in a trend of thinking merely as mental activity. But the experience will be essentially different for one who experiences the spiritual world directly. One enters a realm of spiritual beings who are intent on making this trend of thinking singularly dominant. This is a realm where one-sided knowledge results in more than abstract errors. Errors of the human world become in that realm living, spiritual interactions with certain beings. Later on I spoke of ahrimanic beings when I wanted to indicate this. The absolute reality of these beings is that the world must be a machine. Their realm is directly adjacent to that of the senses.

This next insight shared by Lindenberg is valuable to me because he reports how to hold ahrimanic beings at bay, to halt them in their tracks, and to keep their incursions to a minimum in one's life and work.

[page 213] The ahrimanic beings are held at bay when the human spirit retains sovereignty over observable facts and does not try to deny or distort them. The recognition of the independent nature of thinking counteracts their attempts to overstep the boundaries, which expresses itself in the mechanistic interpretation of society.

Memorize the above two sentences is what I recommend to you, dear Readers, they will enlighten you and lighten your load in the world from now on.

One of the ways we welcome, instead of keep at bay, ahrimanic spirits into our world is by our so-called manmade laws. The worse advice ever promulgated upon the people of this land of freedom, now called the United States of America, is that this is a government of laws and not men. Governments made of manmade laws, such as our so-called government is, cannot stand. Manmade laws are distortions of observable facts whereas natural laws are not distortions of observable facts. Only a government based solely upon natural laws can deserve to be called by the name *government* — it will provide true steering and feedback control processes which work to improve the lot of the most important parts of the control system, human beings! And all without coercion! What is coercion? It is the very thing which we have been taught, so carefully taught, in Social Studies, namely, that a *little force is necessary for government!* For an ahrimanic government, yes! And all the concomitant ills of every so-called government which has ever existed in the history of history, all of them were *ahrimanic governments* and all of their ills were and are due to that "little bit of coercion". A little bit of force is like a camel's nose under the tent, which, if it is not immediately removed, will result in a huge, ugly, smelly camel living inside the tent with your family. Steiner clearly understood that ahrimanic beings needed to be kept at bay and his threefold society was his attempt to do so, but the ahrimanic spirits of his time had their nose solidly under the tent.

The first sentence of the two sentences is the *more* important, and I call your attention to the word

distortion in it. When I studied NLP with Bandler and Grinder, before it was called NLP, they explained the three ways that we remove ourselves from observable facts:

1. **generalization**
2. **deletion**
3. **distortion**

As I wrote in my review of their first book, [The Structure of Magic](#): "In short, generalization is seeing something that *isn't there*, deletion is ignoring something that *is there*, and distortion covers all the other ways of skewing one's model of reality." There you have it: three prime ways we all have lost our sovereignty over observable facts, and by losing that, have invited ahrimanic beings into our world, up until now.

There is another important insight that I wish to call attention to from page 213. Much is made by ahrimanic thinkers that thinking comes solely from the brain. They might argue that this is the only observable source for thinking, which would be like a blind woman claiming that colors do not exist because she has never seen any colors.

[page 213] Whoever focuses attention on the essential nature of thinking, the inner activity, discovers that it is impossible to explain the content and the lawfulness of thinking through any other medium. Thinking explains itself. Whatever role the brain plays in the manifestation of thinking can also only be discovered by thinking. Thus thinking and the spirit that becomes apparent in thinking reveal themselves to be determining factors in the world.

Steiner describes a time in his life when he was around 22 years old and hovering at the edge of an abyss when he encountered a being named Christian Rosenkreutz. He writes of this experience without describing the event as being autobiographical.

[page 216] Being chosen by Christian Rosenkreutz takes place when a person arrives at a decisive moment in his life, at a crisis of destiny. Take for instance the example that a person is about to do something that would bring about his death A person follows a dangerous path, perhaps along the edge of an abyss without noticing it. It happens then that when he is perhaps just a few steps from the edge of the abyss that he hears a voice: Stop! And he stops without knowing quite why. It always occurs in such a way that one knows the voice has come out of the spiritual world.

In my studies of the Sufi mystics, I came across a wonderful set of stories known as the Tales of the Four Sufis or [Tales of the Four Dervishes](#), and I did a review of Amina Shah's book. A recurrent theme of the stories, which are intricately nested inside of other stories, was the appearance of the green-veiled horseman who appears to someone who is standing at the edge of a precipice, ready to end it all.

[page 35, Four Dervishes] Eventually, I came to a mountain. The idea suggested itself to me that I should climb it, and throw myself from the top, ending my existence and therefore an insupportable misery.

When I was about to cast myself upon the rocks below the mountain, someone touched my arm. I looked around and saw a horseman dressed in green, with a veil over his face. He said to me: 'Why try to destroy your life? Despair is unfaithfulness towards God. While there is breathing, there is hope. A few days from now, three dervishes will meet. Like you, they are entangled in difficulties; they have had problems and experiences like your own

The King of the country of Rum is named Azad Bakht. He, too, is in great distress. When he meets you four, the heart's desire of every one of you will be fulfilled!'

I caught hold of his stirrup and kissed it, saying: 'O Friend of God! What you have

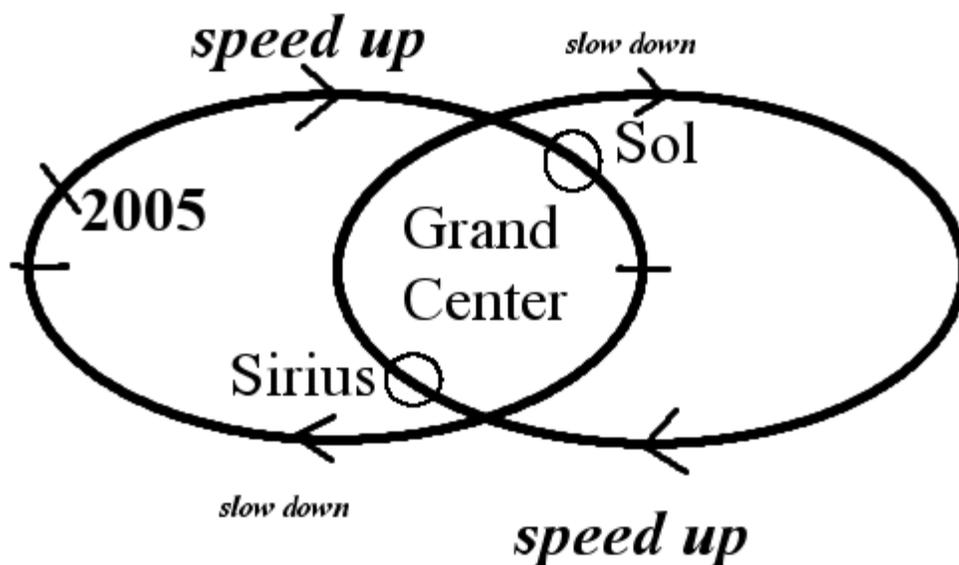
said has consoled me. Please tell me, in God's Name, who you are.'

He said: 'I am Ali. My function is that whenever anyone is in trouble, I am there to succor him.' As soon as he had spoken, he disappeared.

Clearly the green-veiled horseman was a spiritual being as it disappeared into thin air. One can see that the Christian Rosenkretz process has deep roots which go back far into pre-Christian times among the ancient Sufi mystics. One might be surprised to learn how many of our very familiar jokes and stories also have their roots in short Sufi stories.[\(8\)](#)

The precipice that Steiner stood on was a crisis of faith. He said, "The Christianity that I had to find was not in any of the existing confessions." (Page 219) So he turned to study the spiritual origins of Christianity and his searching led first to this book, [Christianity as a Mystical Fact](#). Soon Steiner was giving lectures on the four evangelical Gospels and even adding a [Fifth Gospel](#) of his own based on his spiritual visions of Jesus's life, including a prominent event at 24 years old when Jesus received the only prayer he later gave us to pray, [The Lord's Prayer](#).

Lindenberg tells us that "Using a term out of one of the many Indian traditions, Steiner later spoke of this as the end of 'Kali-Yuga', the time of darkness." (Page 224) In the Great Year cycle of 25,000 years, the Iron Age is the Western name for the Kali-Yuga and it seems appropriate that the Kali-Yuga



bridge the time we know as the Dark Ages, about a thousand years ago. Recent studies of the Precession of the Equinoxes shows that it is likely the process is not due to a wobble of the Earth's axis, but instead due to a binary star companion around which the Earth revolves in an elliptical orbit which lasts 25,000 years. During this long orbit, the point at which the Sun rises during the Vernal Equinox appears to move along through the 360 degree background of stars (the complete zodiac) until it completes its orbit and starts over. Details of this discovery can be found in my review of Walter Cruttenden's book, [Lost Star](#), from which I quote my short passage below about the Iron Age (Dark Age) and the Bronze Age (Beginning of Enlightenment Age) which follows it and into which we are currently entering. The drawing I drew accepts the likeliest candidate for the Binary Companion as Sirius and shows where we are in 2013, speeding up slightly as we head for the Grand Center which corresponds to the Golden Age of myth.

[from Lost Star Review] In this drawing we show relative positions of Sol and Sirius as they newly enter the Grand Center or Golden Age. They are both speeding up as they approach each other as if eager to meet again after their long stay in the Dark Age of Iron (or Sand and Rocks of the Hamlet's Mill myth). The present year of 2005 is positioned as we come out of the Dark Ages. The copyright date of this book is listed as

2006 and also as Dwapara 306 according to Vedic tradition. Dwapara corresponds to the Bronze Age in other methods of reckoning. Swami Sri Yukteswar pointed to the motion of our Sun around another star back in 1894 as the cause of the Precession of the Equinox.

Moving on to 1901, Steiner gave a series of talks on the history of religion which were published in a book entitled [From Buddha to Christ](#) for which I wrote a short review back in 1993. What impressed me most during this early study of Steiner's works can be seen in this passage from my review:

[From Buddha to Christ] According to Steiner this entering of humankind into consciousness was what John the Baptist meant when he said, "the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." He meant that "the knowledge of the world in ideas and concepts is at hand". From then on man was directed to experience the whole world out of his own self-consciousness and intellect and no longer out of the dim clairvoyance of the past.

Owen Barfield directed my path to Rudolf Steiner by his work in the evolution of consciousness, and this statement by Steiner about how human evolution was moving from dim spiritual sight to full-blown consciousness during day-time intelligence very much impressed me. It was at this point in Steiner's life where he found a group of like souls in the *Kommenden* among which he could stop looking and start living. (Page 229)

[page 240] Among some of them there was a quality of listening present that empowered Steiner to continue. Some of them didn't merely want to listen to what he was saying; they strove to bring it to a level of individual experience that would inform their own efforts.

I understand that they were listening to Steiner's thoughts flying over to them on the wings of words, a process which I wrote up in a poem titled "On the Wings of Words". I wrote this poem in my review of this Steiner book, [Toward Imagination, GA#169](#), which is on-line where you can read it in its entirety. I was inspired to write it by Steiner's words from page 55 of GA# 169: "The kind words spoken to us have a direct effect on us, just as color affects our eyes directly. The love living in the other's soul is borne into your soul on the wings of the words. This is direct perception; there can be no question here of interpretation." I added to that, "Words, rightly understood, comprise the vehicle which transports the soul meanings from one person to another. There is much more carried by words than can be found in their dictionary meanings." This is connected to another insight that I wrote about in my Final Paper on [Teaching & Learning in the College Classroom](#) in a section called "The Live Lecturer in the Classroom". I describe how the direct perception of what one is teaching can be carried on words but perceived directly by students who have the quality of listening, such as those in Steiner's *Kommenden* group. It is also important that the teacher have prepared her lesson plan so well that she understands the subject fully, making it possible that her words to her students act merely as the carrier wave of the insights into the subject she is explaining to them. If the speaker and the listener are in tune, this direct transmission of knowledge is not only possible, it happens every time.

In the last chapter of [Mysticism at the Dawn of the Modern Age](#), GA# 7, now known as *Mystics after Modernism*, Steiner makes an interesting comment about the critics of Haeckel, "I am convinced that a view of nature like that of Ernst Haeckel becomes shallow when people approach it with a world of ideas that is already shallow." To me this reveals the process of his critics, whose own shallowness projects shallowness upon Haeckel. Projection, to me, means that we can only see in others what we already have in ourselves. The critics of Haeckel show us the basest example of the process of projection, whereas love is its highest example.

From my review of GA#7, I quote a passage that I feel is important. The process known as "ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny" is often understood only in the most shallow terms, as it likely was by the people who would criticized Haeckel for his insight, an amazing insight I would say.

[GA#7, RJM] Steiner tells us that the book of nature has a stronger effect on him than any holy book in this next passage when he explains the process in biology that we now know as "ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny."

[page 234, GA#7]I know of nothing in any "holy" book that reveals to me anything as sublime as the "dry" fact that, in the womb, every human fetus rapidly goes through a succession of all those forms through which its animal ancestors have evolved. Let us fill our mind with the magnificence of the facts our senses perceive, and we shall care little for the "miracles" which do not lie within the course of nature.

My own research into the evolution of consciousness shows me clearly that the process of "ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny" also applies to human consciousness. The practical aspect of this is that our children from birth go through the range of consciousness that humans progressed through over the period of evolution going back to pre-history times. There were times that humans possessed as a common ability what Steiner called "dim clairvoyance," which ability can be found in our children under three years old who still see spiritual beings, fairies and elves, but who quickly lose this ability as they reach about five years old. Five years old is called the Memory Transition Age in the science of doyletics because it is equivalent in the ontogeny of the growing child of the phylogenetic age at which humans transited from the Neanderthal stage of evolution (before the large cortex appeared, as indicated by their back-sloping foreheads) to the Cro-Magnon stage when the neocortex development began. Before the large cortex appeared, cognitive memory was not possible, only a primitive kind of "memory" which was permanent and lasted between reincarnations as a folk memory. After five years old, humans develop, for the first time, full-blown cognitive memories with sight and sound(9). With cognitive memory Cro-Magnons developed fully articulated speech which greatly augmented in expressiveness the primitive gesture-and-grunt speech of the Neanderthals.

If one wishes proof for the evolution of human consciousness, one need only look upon small children to view how earlier humans existed. The best portrayal of life at the interface of the Neanderthals with the newcomers of evolution the Cro-Magnons can be found in Jean Auel's amazing books. Anyone who finds nothing of interest *vis-à-vis* the evolution of consciousness in Auel's [Clan of the Cave Bear](#) series of novels can take their place alongside Haeckel's critics as shallow thinkers, in my opinion. For further information about my research in this field see my essay, [Childhood of Humanity](#).

Returning to the critics of Haeckel, they seem to represent the ultimate type of skeptic, one who "resembles a plant rejecting its own colorful flower because it feels complete with its green leaves, and therefore regards anything more as 'illusory appearance!'" (Slight paraphrase from Page 18 of [Christianity as a Mystical Fact](#), GA#8.)(10)

On page 243 Steiner is quoted from 1904 saying, "Purely 'historical research' can discern about as much about 'mystical facts' as one can discover about a great poet in a dissection." This caused me to laugh as I imagined Ducky Mallard, the Medical Examiner of the TV Show, *NCIS*, who loves to talk to his dissections, saying to a great poet splayed out on his morgue's examination table, "Let's see, dear man, if I can locate where all your iamb's are stored."

From the end of the chapter in GA#8, "The Mysteries and Mysteriosophy" on page 19, a magnificent passage begins with these words:

[page 243] To comprehend merely the things of the world around, leads only to a denial of God. On the evidence of the senses, God does not exist anymore than he does for the intellect that interprets sensory experience. God lies spellbound in the world.

Once more we encounter the Haeckel critic-types, and this time Steiner opts for the nuclear option to blast

them to new senses, the very senses they disdain and declare do not exist. I would like to summarize the two-page long quote as a poem for this review and allow you to locate the page-long quote for yourself in either GA#8 on page 19 or page 244 of this Biography. Remember: Steiner is saying that God lies spellbound in the world *for the materialistic thinker*.

**For the materialistic thinker
God lies spellbound in the world,
He lies as if in an enchanted grave.
He can only come alive in Man's soul,
From which He is released into the world.
Man's soul is like a Mother which,
When impregnated with the divine seed from Nature,
Becomes palpably the offspring of God,
The hidden Father, who then releases
His Son to be born into Man out of his own soul.**

[page 21, GA#8] Initiatory knowledge is thus an actual event in the cosmic process. It is the birth of a divine child — a process just as real as any natural process. The great secret of the *mystai* [Initiates] was precisely this, that they creatively release the divine child in themselves.

In the Biography's chapter, "The Theosophical Society," Steiner makes it clear that his goal as the leader of the German Section in Berlin was not tendentious, i.e., he had no axe to grind, but that he aimed to help "students of the spirit" find their individual path of development. (Page 257) He suggested in a letter that what was best might be the enemy of what was good. "The best thing would be something completely new, with no connection to what is already there. But I do believe that we can perhaps bring about the best solution even within the framework of the Theosophical Society." (Page 256) One can get hints that, even in the earliest years, Steiner saw the Theosophical Society as a vehicle for introducing his completely new view of spirituality into the world. Eventually the sheath of Theosophy would be torn away and Anthroposophy would begin to live on its own.

Steiner's path was not easy. He attempted to introduce practical exercises "to help his students of the spirit find the path of development" and this galled the older members and they arranged meetings and prevented Steiner from presenting his "Practical Karma Exercises," keeping the theosophical movement in Germany to its theoretical inclinations. Only much later, in 1924, did Steiner reveal the reactions he got to his first attempts to give these karma exercises in a lecture to the German Section, "the persons who at the time were present at the founding received a terrible shock when they saw the title, still now I could describe to you the astral waves of anxiety that appeared in these older gentlemen." (Page 261) Steiner could not proceed as he wished because he found that "in Germany there was too strong a tendency toward dogma, to a *mere* intellectual grasp of the doctrines." (Page 262)

He began a newsletter named *Luzifer*, and in one of his articles he wrote the following:

[page 267] "But above the altar upon which the true mystic lays his sacrifice was written in all the times of which we know in letters of flame the highest law: *Nature is the greatest guide to the Divine; and the conscious search of human beings for the sources of wisdom shall follow the tracks of her sleeping will.*"

Steiner wanted not merely to offer theoretical insight, but also to provide detailed practical exercises which would allow each person to confirm the insight. Lindenberg writes about Steiner:

[page 26] Resolutely he followed this hidden law of those who truly understand: The spiritual world does not reveal itself to those who merely seek insight. An ongoing communion with the spiritual world is only for those who place their spiritual gifts in the service of human development and world evolution. Inspiration graces those who are

actively engaged.

Steiner was a practical man and saw that showing people how to fish was more important than offering them a fish to stave off starvation.

[page 287] Steiner tried to make this clear in one example. He described the importance of charitable social institutions, and then went on to show that these institutions, when taken alone, intensify feelings of egoism and in the long run contribute to misery and poverty. Then he added, "These words may be taken at face value. One can only help individual people by giving them bread. One can only provide a large group of people with bread when one helps them gain a new outlook on life."

As early as 1907 Steiner wrote about the nature of the atom as being formed of non-material forces, and if this is so, then all that we see as matter is simply the outer manifestation of spirit which lies behind it. The idea that matter could be frozen light is embodied in Einstein's 1905 equation, $e=mc^2$. In a lecture in Berlin, he said:

[page 313] It will become clear that what we see and hear is in fact real and that it is pure fantasy to think of a world of matter behind what we see and hear. This world of matter will turn to dust and decay. What is behind it will be acknowledged. What is and can be experienced will come into the foreground. One will recognize that an atom can be nothing else than frozen electricity, frozen warmth, frozen light. And one will have to go even further, to the recognition that it is concentrated, formed spirit that we find in everything. . . . Everything that is matter is spirit — is the outer manifestation of spirit.

In 1908, Marie von Sivers (who later became Marie Steiner) took over the job of getting competent stenographers and editors for recording Rudolf Steiner's lectures. It is thanks to her that we have credible records for almost all of his some 6,000 lectures. In that same year, Steiner's benchmark classic volume, [An Outline of Occult Science, GA#13\(11\)](#).

[Page 339] Rudolf Steiner . . . explained how what is present as the essence in the individualized Adam-soul accompanies humanity as a true creative force and permeates and rejuvenates each individual each night. Then he goes on to describe how this being works into the healing forces of the human being . . . [healing forces] that allow us to awake refreshed in the morning.

This passage inspired me to write the following poem about the Adam Soul as a farmer who tends to our soul each night.

Adam Soul by Night

Adam is the farmer
who tends his garden in the night.

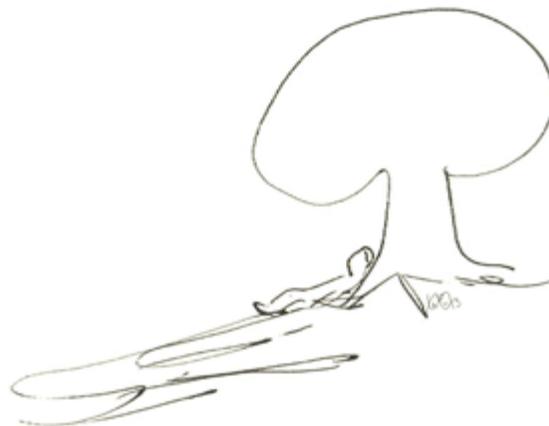
He waters the wilted plants
He pulls away the strangling weeds
He aerates the soil with his hands
and restores the plants to life.

Adam is the gardener
who tends our soul in the night.

He refreshes our tired limbs
He pulls away the strangling thoughts

He re-sync's our pulse and breath
and restores our body to life.

Adam — the farmer and gardener of our soul
—
Rests under the Tree of Life
when his work is done.



In the chapter "The Mystery Plays" Lindenberg points out how dramas were originally deeds, actions, and happenings and were connected with the Indian word, *karma*, which also signified deeds. Thus deed and destiny, drama and karma could be seen as flowing together on the stage of life. Together with the phrase *a wink of fate* which I encountered on pages 245 and 392, I assembled a brief poem inspired by the text on pages 344 and 345.

A Wink of Fate

*Our soul life operates without reason —
it rides on a time wave from the future.*

We know it is soul life
when the fleeting meets the fleeting in passing
and
creates in us a *frisson*
leaving behind a fleeting thought,
A wink of Fate,

a glimpse of the spiritual event
in which Deed & Destiny, Karma & Drama
dance past our soul
and
open the door
to our future.

Since people will ask me what a poem means, I often think about how I might answer that question, but I am always aware that a poem is like a bump that happens to us in life (Page 272), a wink of fate, perhaps, *it always happens before we know it*, because knowing comes after it happens. This short poem is a paean to the process of poem-writing itself.

& For This

If I had to know what it meant
Before I wrote it
I wouldn't have written it.
Same for this,
& for this
&this
&.

After reading Steiner's four Mystery Plays, I still didn't realize they were based on Goethe's *Fairy Tale* that affected Steiner so deeply. This next passage reveals how the building of the Goetheanum itself was inspired by the [Mystery Plays](#) which Steiner wrote when he began to stage the Fairy Tale, and the project turned into a Mystery Play. After writing four of these plays, the idea for constructing a theater for the

plays evolved into building a center for spiritual learning which would include a theater suitable for the mystery plays. (Page 347)

Steiner began to foresee that our human ability to see the etheric world would grow so much that, by 1933, it would become a common experience to see the etheric Christ. This would mark the time of the end of the Kali Yuga (Iron Age) and the beginning of the Bronze Age. He wanted to ensure that the new ability would be recognized and fostered so that "human ignorance does not brutally trample these tender seeds to death." (Page 348)

Christian Morgenstern, a poet friend of Steiner's was near death when he was taken to see two of the Mystery Plays, and he wrote to an actor friend who did not understand them:

[page 380] Steiner dramas are not *plays*, they *mirror* spiritual worlds and truths. Although burdened with much of the baggage of an early work, a beginning, they usher in a new epoch of the arts. This epoch is still far away; centuries could pass before there are enough people who want this spiritual art that in every city mysteries of this kind can be offered and received — but here in the Portal is the historical beginning, here we are present at their birth.

Later Marie Sivers staged a reading of Morgenstern's poems at a time when he could be present, and Rudolf Steiner's words of introduction seem a most fitting tribute for a poet's life.

[page 380] From November 22 to 24, Christian Morgenstern was able to travel to Stuttgart, where Steiner was lecturing. On November 24, Marie von Sivers gave a matinee performance of Morgenstern's poems. Rudolf Steiner gave the introduction in a manner quite characteristic for him. "For each poet, there is something in the world that is sacred, something that no one else can approach the way he can. For the gods have created for each such soul a lonely, isolated place in the cosmos from which all others are excluded unless the poet himself leads them there."

The building of the Goetheanum was a tremendous undertaking and Rudolf Steiner produced a unique design for the main building as well as the outbuildings which house the art studio, boiler house, and transformer house. When I visited Dornach in February of 2013, my friend Bradford Riley explained how the boiler was designed as an outbuilding to keep Ahriman from the main building. Its smokestack has the design of a truncated rose stem with artistic thorns, but where the rose itself should be, the steam rises from the boiler and one had to imagine that the rose had

been removed to the spot of the main building where its etheric form has bloomed into the Goetheanum itself. The transformer building looked itself like a transformer, a tall rectangular blue building on a corner street off the main property. Many of the surrounding homes bear a resemblance to the organic architecture of the Goetheanum, which hovers above the Dornach area as the Parthenon does over Athens. The twenty minute walk up the hill from Dornach is a spiritual exercise in itself. It should be a life's goal of students of Rudolf Steiner to make a pilgrimage to the Goetheanum, and if one is lucky, one will arrive there with a few dozen other pilgrims to engage in drama, sculpture, speech, singing, eurythmy, and other artistic endeavors as I did, for it is a certainly a magnificent venue for that.



During my stay there I resided in the Kloster-Dornach(Click [link](#) to see Photos of Dornach, Kloster, and Goetheanum), directly across the street from the railway and bus depot. From my third floor window, I could see the Goetheanum even before I walked up to the hill for the first time. The Kloster had a deep-relief sculptured wall which commemorated the famous battle of 1499, the last battle that



the Swiss Confederation had to fight for its independence from Germany, the battle which gave the name "Bloody Hill" to spot where the Goetheanum would be built. For over 400 years, no one wanted to build upon that hill, so it remained the only undeveloped spot in Dornach, but Steiner saw it through the eyes of Aristotle looking up at the Parthenon being built in Athens and knew the Goetheanum was destined to be there, perhaps to redeem the hill from the bloody battle, finally.

During the early years of planning for the building, Steiner went to Oslo, Norway where he gave his lectures which we know as [The Fifth Gospel](#) and revealed hitherto unknown episodes in the life of Jesus. Especially notable is the one at age 24 when Jesus was pushed upon an ancient altar and a great spirit, the Bath Kol, overcame him and revealed to him a

great prayer from the spiritual world. It came to him in reverse order, appropriate to the spiritual world version of it where everything is reversed. It turned into the only prayer Jesus would ask us to pray, the one that begins with the words, "Our Father." The Lord's Prayer.

When Marie von Sivers grew ill in early 1911, Steiner postponed his regular activities to help her recover. He had depended upon her so much, and she had apparently needed a rest. Here was a "wink of fate" which also gave Steiner time for his own inner work and time to finish a book he was working on. It was about this time that he wrote his book, [The Spiritual Guidance of the Individual and Humanity](#), one of the earliest of his books that I read and reviewed back when my reviews were much shorter than now due to my then shallow knowledge of Steiner's teachings.

In 1914 he gave the lectures in [Inner Reading and Inner Hearing](#), GA#156, in which he explained the importance of allowing the etheric body to flow naturally in the human being. He said on page 81 about eurythmy — "It will emerge that in their movements human beings are really an intermediary link between the cosmic letters, the cosmic sounds, and what we ourselves use in the human sounds and letters in our poetry." (Page 81, GA#156)

[page 425] In brief, we can define eurythmy as the fulfillment of what the human ether body naturally requires of the human being.

At one point in GA#156 he says that teaching writing to children under seven is similar to breaking their arms and legs because the actions of writing interfere so much with the flow of their etheric bodies. Today, one needs one's children enrolled in a Waldorf School based on Steiner's pedagogy to prevent this assault on them by premature writing. It seems strange to me that people who consider themselves highly intelligent would begin teaching their children to write prematurely at ages 4, 5, and 6 and brag about it to their peers.

The Great War, as WWI was called at the time, caused all kinds of delays in the building of the Goetheanum and hobbled Steiner's own spiritual teaching efforts. Lindenberg remarks, "He recognized that a German victory would have been impossible, because the spiritual competence to work productively with the consequences of such a victory was missing in Germany." (Page 443) I suspect that a similar reason lay behind the USA's defeat in Vietnam and Russia's defeat in Afghanistan. My own observation about war in general is that, "In war, even the victors are defeated." One need only visit the battlefield of Gettysburg to understand how that is so.

One of the basic principles of anthroposophy is that we not only live in our body, but we live in our karma. How can we know this to be true? Steiner learned it by observing people around him, sensing that they had acquired talents in a previous lifetime, "when a strong impression resonates further and becomes a sort of living memory, in which all the important outer aspects of a person's life disappear and what is usually thought to be 'unimportant' begins to speak clearly." (Page 447)

[page 452] A human being does not only consist of what appears in earthly form, but has also a suprasensory aspect, which lives in the period between death and birth. We come to an image of the whole human being only if we include this suprasensory being, which evolves himself as he wanders time and again through the cosmic spheres from incarnation to incarnation.

If we are unable to remember a previous incarnation, is there some way to find out about it? Yes, it is not easy to explain using reason, but the resonance one feels when one meets a new person is an indication of some connection with them in a previous lifetime. But there is one physical aspect of our body in this lifetime, the shape of our skull, which forms as a result of our limbs in a previous lifetime. Lindenberg explains what Steiner was said about the skull:

[page 454] What he means is that just as one knows when one sees a shell that it once housed a living creature, one can also see in the forms of the skull the forces of the individual from the last incarnation.

When I first read Steiner talking about how our limbs in this incarnation form our head in the next incarnation, I was led to think about how automobiles have evolved over the past century. Every new model provides us with a feature or two on the dashboard which in the previous model was located at the periphery of the vehicle. Go back to the first autos, to start the engine, one had to go to the front of the motor and turn a manual crank. Soon a starter motor was incorporated into the dashboard area where a foot pedal, a key switch, or a pushbutton would start the motor. The first headlights were actual lamps with flames which had to be lit by hand, and now a button turns the electric lights on from the dashboard area, sometimes automatically when it gets dark outside. In just the past few years, checking tires for low pressure no longer requires one to get out of the car as a pressure light warns of low pressure. A dozen or so sensors of oil pressure, engine temperature, etc, are now fed to digital displays on the dashboard. The analogy to the human being is that the dashboard represents the head of the human being and the automobile's external sensors, controls, and actuators are like the limbs of the human being. We evolve our automobiles between model years the way we as humans evolve between lifetimes.

[page 455] In the inner forces — note: *inner* forces — of our heads, we have the formative result of what was prepared within the rest of our organism, with the exception of the head, in our past life; and in what is being formed in the rest of our bodily organism now, we have the seeds of the formation of our heads in our next lives.

During several chapters of talking about a book called *Anthroposophy* that Steiner was working on, I wondered why the book never got published and now I discover that it had, but only half of the intended book, and by a name that was familiar to me because I had read and reviewed it, [Anthroposophy — A Fragment](#), GA#45. When I reviewed this book, I realized why faith is necessary when humans are in an

evolutional phase such as we are in now: it is necessary because we have no direct perception of the spiritual world, such as people in previous times had.

[GA#45 RJM] Human beings can suppose what might happen in a spiritual world, they can presuppose its existence, which is called *faith*, but they cannot test for the existence of the spiritual world using material world senses, any more than computer software can test for the existence of the central processing unit that runs all of its instructions(12).

Why was this book published unfinished? Steiner answered the question in a letter in 1911:

[page 458] Thus it has happened, for instance, that the first half of my Anthroposophy (A Fragment) has been printed since last November, yet I have not been able to continue it, because it was impossible to bring the truths that have presented themselves to me spiritually to paper. Yet I know from the spiritual world that this work should be published as soon as possible.

During the same year, 1911, Steiner gave the lectures for the book [An Occult Physiology, GA# 128](#). In my review I talk about the spleen as our digestive system's equivalent of the shocker absorber for an automobile's body.

In 1914, his lectures for [Approaching the Mystery of Golgotha, GA#152](#) were published and in the lecture in Pforzheim "he describes the deeds of Christ before the Mystery of Golgotha, how Christ had in earlier times three times infused the archetype of the human being that accompanied humanity through its evolution, each time making possible new formative aspects." (Page 462)

[page 86, GA#152] The pouring forth of the Christ impulse happened for the first time in the Lemuria, when Lucifer threatened the upright nature of the human being. It happened a second time in the Atlantean age, when human beings were snatched away from the danger that threatened their speech through the fact that speech is expression from within outward. There was a danger of speech lapsing into disorder. Towards the end of the Atlantean age, a third intervention occurred through Christ's interpenetration of the being who later became Jesus of Nazareth. Through this act, the gift of speech, insofar as it became a sign for external things, was saved from danger.

The fourth danger concerned thinking, the inner representation of thoughts. Human beings are saved from this danger through penetrating with their thoughts such forms as that which has flowed out through the Mystery of Golgotha into the spiritual sphere of the Earth and which can live within us, if we are willing and have prepared ourselves through spiritual science.

Lindenberg writes on page 462, "Only during this lecture did Rudolf Steiner speak the four mantric metamorphoses from the beginning of the Gospel of St. John." I puzzled over what he meant until I located this passage directly below the above one on page 86:

[page 86, GA#152] We are far enough along in the development of humanity that the first words of the Gospel of John may be expressed in another form:

**In the beginning is the thought
And the thought is with God,
And a divine thing is the thought,
In it there is life,
And life should become the light of my "I."
And may the divine thought shine in my "I,"
So that the darkness of my "I" may grasp**

The divine thought.

Steiner goes on to develop three more versions of this passage, recommending the fourth one.

[page 90-91, GA#152] It is good to often think the following:

**In the beginning was the force of memory
The force of memory shall become divine
And a divine thing shall the force of memory become,
Everything that arises in the "I"
Shall become such
That it is a creation from memory imbued with Christ,
with the Divine
In it there shall be life,
And in it there shall be radiant light
Which from thought that remembers
Shines into the darkness of the present
And may darkness, as it is at present,
Comprehend the light of memory become divine.**

What will be the practical result when the "light of memory becomes divine"? He explains here:

[page 463] Steiner described the future effect of the Christ impulse on memory.

"He is not yet in them. When the time comes and he is within them, when the impulse of Christ does not only live in human understanding, but when it flows forth over the entirety of human memory, then one will no longer have to learn history through external documents, because the forces of memory will expand. Christ will live within these memories."

When this day comes, we will have arrived at a similar stage of ancient humanity when writing appeared in the world for the first time. It was a necessary skill humans had to invent because their memories had devolved to the state where they had to write down long epics such as Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* because few people could still recite them fully. This new invention made the recording of history possible in writing for the first time. Before that there was only a recitation of oral history possible. We are in the future returning to this form of memory, which was then an unconscious ability of pre-history humans, and our memory in its new form will become a fully conscious ability with Christ's help. I have often been attracted to what Plato wrote about writing in his *Phaedrus*, and quote it here, from my review of [The Notebooks of Samuel Butler \(1835-1902\)](#):

Plato wrote in his work, *Phaedrus*, "For this invention [writing] will produce forgetfulness in the minds of those who learn to use it, because they will not practise their memory. Their trust in writing, produced by external characters which are no part of themselves, will discourage the use of their own memory within them." Either writing was the cause of this loss of memory, as Plato hints, or writing was adaptation to the loss of memory. The latter is how I understand it, and one can only decide in one's own mind which one it was. To me, Plato was railing against the "dying of the light" in himself and was forced to express his displeasure using the very invention he was caviling against.

Steiner is revealing that this ancient process of memory is returning and with it, we can expect the process of writing to record events, that has fulfilled humanity's requirements for memory since Plato's time, will become unnecessary. The remainder of the quotation from *Phaedrus* on writing is enlightening, "You have invented an elixir not of memory, but of reminding; and you offer your pupils the appearance of truth, not truth, for they will read many things without instruction and will therefore seem to know many things, when they are for the most part ignorant and hard to get along with, since they are not wise, but only

appear wise." We are beset everywhere in this nascent twenty-first century by people who have memorized things and appear to be wise, but are not. This is the process which will change when memory returns to humankind and wisdom will be prized once again as a human achievement.

As this Biography moves into the wartime era, one prominent statement about Steiner stuck out for me, "Steiner, who never cast his vote in an election and who fervently supported human rights and the well-being of the workers, was not a believer in democracy in the modern sense of the word. Being able to vote had no meaning for him; he was concerned with individual freedom. He looked upon any form of ruling power skeptically." (Page 470) Ruling presupposes coercion and anyone who is busy building freedom will be too busy to vote for those who coerce because coercers destroy individual freedom. Coming to this conclusion required a lot of studying of Volitional Science for me, and I was not surprised to find Steiner back in 1915 had already come to that conclusion.

As I mentioned earlier, I went through an upheaval in my life in the mid-1970s, and was forced to make a lot of decisions which impacted several families and the normal scales of good and bad actions were no help at all to me. I found it helpful to be constantly pondering this question to myself, "What is the best for everyone affected by my decision?" This was an enormous amount of effort, but it worked for me. I mention this again because I found Steiner reports using a similar process himself.

[page 480] "My action will be 'good' if my intuition, steeped in love, finds its right place within the intuitively experience-able world continuum; it will be bad if this is not the case".

In a farewell address to Dornach friends before setting out to wartime Germany in 1919, Steiner said, "Today is not the time to ask at each opportunity about this or that detail. Whoever asks constantly about the details just wants to continue along the old path." (Page 494) This was an amazing insight, one that is best remembered, especially when dealing with obdurate people. *Details only exist in the past.* The future is full of details to be added, details which we cannot ask about or discuss, only *create*. Details are *maps of the known territory*, and cannot represent the whole territory, especially since the territory is changing constantly, and a creative person changes along with the territory at each stage of development. Details go into the documentation of the result, *not* into the plans for a project, which plans are necessarily broad-brush strokes.

During his stay in Stuttgart, Germany Steiner was asked to help Emil Molt to found a school for the children of his factory workers at the Waldorf-Astoria Cigarette Factory. From this request, the Waldorf School system was formed in 1919. Steiner from the beginning of this effort was always on the side of the children. He seemed to see them as canvases upon which the art of the teacher was displayed. One can only blame errors in an artwork on the artist. He was called in to advise when teachers had problems with misbehaving children.

[page 516] In situations like this, Rudolf Steiner was always an advocate for the children; he usually understood the mischief and tomfoolery, poor performances and lack of interest quite well, and he reminded the teachers of their responsibilities as well as pointed out their failures. In many missteps of the students, he recognized errors on the part of the teachers.

Below is another confirmation of what I wrote about in my essay on [Teaching & Learning in the College Classroom](#) in the section called "The Live Lecturer in the Classroom".

[page 520] Under in-depth lesson preparation Steiner did not include only the factual preparation of the content. This was something, in his opinion, fairly easy; sometimes he gave teachers a course that lay beyond the boundaries of their own expertise asking, for instance, a natural scientist to teach history. He was more concerned that the lesson content truly come to life in the teachers. Teachers had to be convinced and enthusiastic about what they presented. Everything depended on such enthusiasm, born of a sense of

the significance of what was to be presented. Teachers who lived with what they were bringing to a class created — whether they tried to or not — expectations that served to give the students guidance. Students perceive from the soul how earnestly a teacher lives with the subject and behave accordingly.

A teacher must focus on the process as well in the content of what is being taught. Any teacher who is reading material which they don't fully understand will lose the attention of their pupils and little if any content will transfer to them. One cannot dump learning into a child's head like one does old newspapers into a dumpster. The learning transfers from the teacher's mind directly to the student's mind. If there is garbage in the teacher's mind, it is transferred as directly as knowledge would transfer if knowledge were present.

In a similar vein, anthroposophy is the process to be used by teachers, not the content to be taught. Critics of Waldorf Schools miss this crucial point or else they would have nothing to criticize.

Good teachers offer children a living picture of the subject they are teaching because they have that living motion picture running in their mind as they speak the words which propel them along their lesson-plan. Steiner demonstrated this process to them as illustrated by his own words, "I do my best to let a living picture of what a Waldorf lesson is like come about through my lectures. It appears that there is a good deal of understanding." When I took the Ph. D. level course in College Teaching, our teacher, Dr. Paulsen, like Dr. Steiner, gave us a living picture of what it is like to teach a college course. His process of teaching comprised that living picture for us.

When Emil Molt approached Steiner with his idea for a commercial venture, Steiner wisely replied, "I have to say, I am not as worried about obtaining capital . . . As I am about finding the people who will be able to work with it in appropriate ways." (Page 530) In my opinion, there is no problem with capitalism, but there are good capitalists and bad capitalists and people who raise a hue and cry against capitalism focus only upon the bad capitalists.

During the opening of the first Goetheanum, Steiner admitted a certain lack of enthusiasm. It was as if he had to remain focused on the future goal of the building rather than the building itself, as if a time wave from the future had come to him as a feeling. "Later, after the Goetheanum had burned, he admitted that something in him had 'resisted ceremoniously opening the Goetheanum himself on the occasion of the higher education courses'.." (Page 549) There was even a prediction made in a newspaper (whose name can be translated into English as *The Flare-Tower*) that the Goetheanum would burn down.

[page 558] The October 1920 edition of *Der Leuchtturm*, a newspaper published by Karl Rohm, predicted the burning of the Goetheanum. "Spiritual sparks like streaks of lightning snaking toward the wooden mousetrap — there are enough of them at hand and Dr. Steiner would have been very clever to be able to calm the waves and prevent a real spark from one day bringing the glory of Dornach to an infamous end." Steiner remained aware of these things and knew well that the hidden threats had to be taken seriously since the mood had been so badly poisoned by the frenzy of attacks on the anthroposophic work.

In an unfortunate turn of phrase, the author or translator said in the very next sentence, "A number of Steiner's colleagues took up the torch. . ." — surely a less-suggestive metaphor was called for here, since a torch may have been used by the arsonist who burned down the first Goetheanum.

Anthroposophy is a science, a spiritual science indeed, but it is not a religion. Steiner says this in no uncertain terms and any reader of this Biography should be aware of his position *vis-à-vis* religion.

[page 569] No one should be turned away from his religious life through Spiritual Science. Thus one cannot assert that Spiritual Science is a religion . . . Spiritual Science will simply include the totality of the world in its explorations, including history and

what has entered historical development as spirituality. That for this reason religion is also examined does not in any way contradict what I have just mentioned.

That there are Christian Community churches based on anthroposophical principles does not belie Steiner's claim above. People came to him for advice on how to form a church based on these principles and he agreed to help them so long as their efforts were independent of the Anthroposophical Society.

Steiner had experienced the Catholic Mass as a child, serving as an altar boy, and reported that he was able to see divine spirits hovering around the Host during its consecration in preparation for Holy Communion. But as an adult he was faced with Protestants for whom rites were mostly unknown during church services. One man, in particular, Christian Geyer, was reluctant to participate. "For this gifted speaker, it was in no way clear why one would want to place a ritual rather than a sermon in the center of the service." (Page 576) Nevertheless, it was Steiner who suggested the name, Christian Community, which was adopted for the new Christian church based on anthroposophical principles.

St. Michael, St. George, and Michael the Archangel puzzled me before I began studying Steiner's works, and now I know why: all three are names for the same being. Exactly how or why the Archangel Michael came to be known as St. Michael and St. George is not at all clear to me, but I suspect that somehow St. George is the Anglican version of St. Michael, though I have no evidence to support that hunch. Michaelmas is one of the cardinal or hinge-points of the calendar, coming as it does on September 29 each year and marking the autumn season with its mass or tide as Eastertide and St. John's Tide marks Spring and Summer, and Christmas marks winter. After my study of the various Archangels, all of whom are named in such a way that the -el suffix is pronounced separately, I have come to spelling the ruling archangel of our time this way, Mi-cha-el, so it will be pronounced like its brethren, *Mee-Ka-El*, or Mi-cha of God, which is what the -el means, *of God*.

[Becoming the Archangel Michael's Companions](#), GA#217 and [The Archangel Michael, His Mission and Ours](#), GA#67 are two books devoted to Mi-cha-el which provide good backgrounds to the important role of the Archangel in human history and all of our lives today. He is always shown as holding some evil creature (often a dragon) at bay, ready to dispatch it with his sword. Often his foot is on the writhing dragon or snake, a symbol for how we must be ever vigilant and prepared to slay the forces of evil in our world. In GA#67, its last lecture, Steiner writes:

[page 593] But the dragon must be conquered. The only way he can be conquered is if we become aware that Michael, Saint George, also comes from without. Michael, Saint George, who comes to the battle in this way is nothing other than true spiritual knowledge.

One can hear Neil Diamond's famous pop song singing about how to reach Mi-cha-el, "Hands reaching hands, reaching out, touching Him, touching me. . ." as we read Steiner's words below:

[page 598] "An approach to science, the anthroposophic approach that is able to spiritualize the earthly, spatial powers of discernment, to raise these into the suprasensory, works upward. It stretches, in a certain sense, its hands upward to grasp the hands of Michael reaching downward from above. For it is here that a bridge can be built between human beings and the gods."

Any of you reading the chapter "The Goetheanum Fire" would do well to also read this fine book by the Kirchner-Bockholts, [Rudolf Steiner's Mission and Ita Wegman](#), or if that is not available to you, being out-of-print, read my review of the book to get a view of the amazing syzygy of events tying together the Temple of Diana at Ephesus, the Parthenon of Athens, and the first Goetheanum at Dornach. Just a personal note here: after visiting both the Parthenon and the Goetheanum with a year of each other, I was taken by the ability to see both structures from the streets of the cities they hover over. Clearly what Aristotle saw from the streets of Athens, the Parthenon being constructed, resonated in Rudolf Steiner when he saw the Burning Hill of Dornach and decided to build a modern temple there.

Being able to distinguish process and content is essential to understand how the best plans of mice and men can go awry, and to help others decode how what they are saying diverges from what they are doing. Take this passage in which Steiner speaks of a failed conference in Stuttgart and his words make it clear to me that he understood this distinction better than the conference participants. I will mark with a (C) the Content usage and with (P) the Process usage of a word.

[page 620] The Stuttgart contingent had high hopes for this conference. Yet in spite of their good will (C), it will certainly not lead to anything real(P). For this "good will" (C) is not the spiritual force of the will(P), but rather the notion (illusion, (C)) that one has the will(P). These personalities have great capacities — which come to expression, for instance, in the Waldorf teachers; in many ways, they even have a certain genius — but of the nature of the will (P) [they have] only the "mental image (C) of the will." They end up saying, "We have 'good will' (C), but we don't understand what we should do(P)." Truthfully, they should be saying, "We have an excellent understanding of what we should do (C), but we don't have the will to do it(P)."

The Christmas Conference of 1923 brought the Anthroposophic Society into existence thanks to the strong will of Rudolf Steiner, who had previously stood on the sidelines and at this conference took over as President of the Society.

[page 674] Four weeks after the conference, he wrote in the newsletter, "Anthroposophy can only thrive as a living thing. The essence of its being is life. It is life flowing from the spirit. Hence it needs to be fostered by the living soul, in warmth of heart." And shortly thereafter: "Essential to Anthroposophy are the truths that through it become evident; essential to the Anthroposophical Society is the *life* that is cultivated in it."

Once again we spot *truths* as Content and *life* as Process in his statement. For example, I can give you some Content, Karl Nielsen's symphony *Inextinguishable*, but only by listening to the symphony will you experience the Process, the *life* which one experiences while listening to the symphony.

Codices are dead maps of dogmatic statements, and Steiner wanted none of that in his Society.

[page 674, 675] Rudolf Steiner called the social tendencies that hindered life sectarianism and dogmatism. One of the peculiarities of the states is that he explicitly lists these two enemies of anthroposophical life: "The Anthroposophical Society is averse to any kind of sectarian tendency" and "A dogmatic approach in sphere whatsoever does not belong in the Anthroposophical Society."

It seems to me that Steiner was saying in effect, "My karma has run over my dogma." The dogma is dead stuff and deserves no place in this Society. To have an attitude of soul, there must be a place left for wonder, otherwise one can be left saying in chagrin: "No wonder, no soul."

[page 675] Steiner included these two provisions in the statutes based on the bitter experiences of the past years. Sectarianism expressed itself in a lack of interest for the surrounding world, the lack of openness for the world, an attitude of soul that had finished wondering about the world before it had been truly experienced. . . . True interest in the world cannot exist without the love for what is revealed in the world. It feels itself to be one with the world.

This spirit of being one with the world is alive today — I can attest to that from my February, 2013 visit to the Goetheanum with a group of Mi-cha-lic students from all around the world. Every one we met was interested in us and made us feel welcome. We participated in discussions, in sculpture, in drama productions, in speech lessons, in group singing, in a walk to Parsifal's Cave in the surrounding area, and in community meals. We were almost continuously in Process with just enough Content to shape our next

activity. We were alive . . .

One final note from an answer Rudolf Steiner gave in a questionnaire which asked him, "Which vocation seems to you to be the best?" To which he answered, "Any vocation in which one's entire energy will be used to the fullest." Certainly he found that vocation and has enriched the lives immensely of those who have found him.

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

Footnote 1.

Source of quote: Bob Greenberg Lecture Series "The Symphony", Teaching Co.

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**Footnote 2.**

The concept of *thoughts as primary property*, first promulgated by Dr. Andrew Galambos as the basis of his Volitional Science, is an essential concept necessary to attaining the goals of Steiner's Threefold Society, rightly understood. See [Sic Iter Ad Astra](#). On page 172 of this Biography, Steiner writes that his ideas on freedom match with those of Max Stirner in his book, *The Individual and His Property*. This given, it seems rather strange to me the current aversion to using property for one's individual tapping of ideas from the "single thought content" that is otherwise available to everyone; this aversion seems to be especially true of Apops today. (Apop a shorthand for the anthroposophically inclined.)

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

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Footnote 3.

Also known as *Intuitive Thinking as a Spiritual Path*. I personally dislike this as new title for *Philosophy of Freedom*. Use it as a subtitle perhaps, but not *vice versa*. It is particularly distracting here where Rosa and Steiner discuss the "true meaning of human freedom" and in the Page 131 passage which is explicitly about freedom.

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

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**Footnote 4.**

Page 136 quote: "Among other things, Steiner developed in these conversations the ideas of his *Philosophy of Freedom(sic)*, which he was working on at the time." Page 151 shows the three titles it has been published under in a footnote. For myself, I might call it a *Philosophy of Self-Reliance*, which of course would be likewise misconstrued by many Americans.

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

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Footnote 5.

In 1978, I wrote the clauses of the 21st Century Marriage Contract which you can read here: <http://www.doyletics.com/21stcmc.htm>. Thirty-five plus years later my wife and I have never violated these rules: never required the other to obey us, never required the other to cherish us, never required the other to do anything in secret, and so on.

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

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**Footnote 6.**

> This insight is embodied in *Matherne's Rule #36 Remember the future. It hums in the present.* Read more about its origin and usefulness here:

<http://www.doyletics.com/mrules.shtml#mrn36>.

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

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Footnote 7.

Unfortunately, I have yet to meet someone who has studied Rudolf Steiner's works *and* has also taken Andrew Galambos's V50 and V201 courses, so my words will likely fall upon deaf ears and create loud objections. So be it. I have heard a lot of those. There are tens of thousands of people around the world who have paid dearly to take Dr. Galambos' courses in Volitional Science, both while he was alive and in person, and over audio tape from contractors when they were unable to take the lectures from him live. It is possible to find his beginning course transcribed in his first book and also on audio tape. Freedom can only be built one person at a time. The elegance and robustness of Dr. Galambos' concepts awaits your pleasure.

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

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**Footnote 8.**

In his [Art of Being](#) Hazrat Inayat Khan, a Cambridge-educated Sufi, explains the spirituality of the Sufis. In my review I relate a Sufi story about Nasruddin, the famous Sufi trickster. It was Nasruddin about whom another story was told: he was searching for his key under a street light because there was more light there than in the house where he dropped it.

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

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Footnote 9.

This is likely due to the hippocampus coming fully on-line as it acts as the gateway of cognitive memory entering the cortex.

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

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**Footnote 10.**

Skeptics of this ilk have chosen to designate the [doyletics.com](#) website as "Loon of the Month", no doubt preferring their green leaves to the colorful flowers of the evolution of human consciousness.

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Footnote 11.

This is another title which has gotten changed in recent decades, replacing the word "Occult" with "Esoteric", probably because the descriptive word "occult" which simply means "hidden" has recently taken on negative connotations. Personally **I** see this change as an affectation and counter-productive to a true student of the spirit.

[Return to text directly before Footnote 11.](#)

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**Footnote 12.**

For the my further development of this analogy, read my full review of [Anthroposophy — A Fragment](#), GA#45.

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