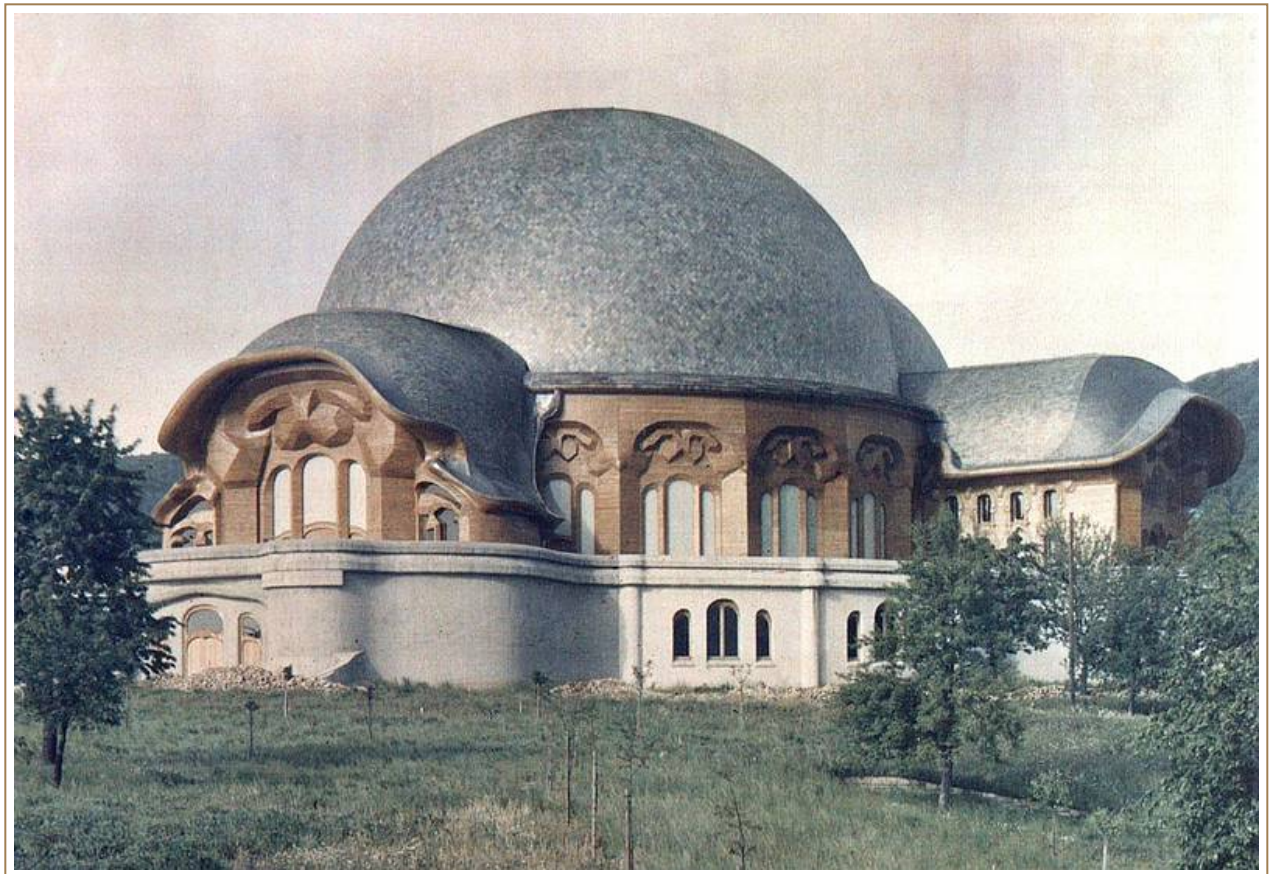


# The Supersensible World

Urs Schwanderner (1939–2010)

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*"Anthroposophy is a path of knowledge, to guide the spiritual in the human being to the spiritual in the universe. It arises in people as a need of the heart and feeling life. Anthroposophy can be justified only to the degree that it satisfies this inner need. It may be acknowledged only by those who find within it what they themselves feel the need to seek. Therefore, Anthroposophists are those who experience, as an essential need of life, certain questions on the nature of the human being and the universe, just as one experiences hunger and thirst."*

*Rudolf Steiner, Anthroposophical Leading Thoughts, 1924*

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*Anthroposophy shall be something which for a true Anthroposophist has power to change and transform his life, to carry into the Spiritual what is experienced nowadays only in unspiritual forms of expression.*

## 1: Preliminary Remarks

The basic truths from the entire field of spiritual science are to be given first. It is certainly in the nature of man to ask about the beginning and end of the world, about the purpose of existence and about the essence of God. But he who has in mind not (only) words and concepts for the intellect, but real knowledge for life, knows that he must not say things in a scripture that deals with the beginning of the knowledge of the spirit that belong to the higher levels of wisdom. It is only through the understanding of this beginning that it becomes clear how higher questions are to be asked. Whoever at present gives an account of supersensible facts should be clear about two things. The first is that our time needs the cultivation of supersensible knowledge; the other, however, is that today in spiritual life there is an abundance of ideas and feelings that make such a presentation appear to many as a wild fantasy and reverie. The present time needs supersensible knowledge, because everything that man learns about the world and life in the usual way stimulates a myriad of questions in him, which can be answered only by supersensible truths. For one should not be mistaken about this: what one can be told about the fundamentals of existence within the present spiritual current are for the more deeply feeling soul not answers, but questions concerning the great riddles of world and life. For a time, some may indulge in the opinion that in the "results of strictly scientific facts" and in the conclusions of many a contemporary thinker, they have given a solution to the riddles of existence. But if the soul goes to those depths into which it must go if it really understands itself, then what at first seemed to it like a solution appears to it only as a stimulus to the true question. And an answer to this question should not merely meet a human curiosity, but on it depends the inner peace and unity of the soul's life. The attainment of such an answer does not merely satisfy the urge for knowledge, but it makes man fit for work and equal to the tasks of life, while the lack of a solution to the corresponding questions paralyzes him mentally and finally also physically. Knowledge of the supersensible is not merely something for theoretical need, but for a true life practice. Therefore, precisely because of the nature of contemporary spiritual life, spirit knowledge is an indispensable field of knowledge for our time. [1]

The following words of Goethe beautifully describe the starting point of one of the ways in which the essence of man can be known: "As soon as man becomes aware of the objects around him, he considers them in relation to himself; and rightly so, for his whole fate depends on whether they please or displease him, whether they attract or repel him, whether they benefit or harm him. This quite natural way of looking at and judging things seems to be as easy as it is necessary, and yet man is thereby exposed to a thousand errors which often shame him and embitter his life. - A far more difficult day's work is undertaken by those whose lively drive for knowledge strives to observe the objects of nature in themselves and in their relations to one another: for they soon miss the standard which came to their aid when, as men, they regarded things in relation to themselves. They lack the standard of liking and disliking, of attraction and repulsion, of

benefit and harm. They should renounce this completely; as indifferent and, as it were, divine beings, they should seek and examine what is, and not what pleases. Thus the true botanist should not be moved by the beauty or the usefulness of the plants, he should examine their formation, their relation to the rest of the plant kingdom; and as they are all lured forth and shone upon by the sun, so he should look at and survey them all with an equal calm gaze and take the standard for this knowledge, the data of judgment, not from himself, but from the circle of things which he observes." - This thought expressed by Goethe directs the attention of man to three things. The first are the objects of which he constantly receives information through the gates of his senses, which he touches, smells, tastes, hears and sees. The second are the impressions which they make on him and which are characterized as his liking and disliking, his desire or loathing by the fact that he finds the one sympathetic, the other antipathetic, the one useful, the other harmful. And the third is the knowledge that he acquires about the objects as "as it were divine being"; it is the secrets of the working and existence of these objects that reveal themselves to him. Clearly these three areas separate in the human life. And man therefore becomes aware that he is interwoven with the world in a threefold way. - The first kind is something he finds, which he accepts as a given fact. Through the second kind, he makes the world his own affair, something that has meaning for him. The third kind he regards as a goal toward which he is to strive unceasingly. [2]

## Citations

[1] GA 9, page 13f (1961 edition, 214 pages).

[2] GA 9, page 24f (1961 edition, 214 pages).

## Sources:

GA 9: Theosophy. Introduction to Supersensible World Knowledge and Human Destiny (1904).

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## 2: Body - Soul - Spirit

Why does the world appear to man in this threefold way? A simple observation can teach this: I walk over a meadow covered with flowers. The flowers announce their color to me through my eye. This is the fact that I take for granted. - I rejoice in the blaze of color. Thereby I make the fact my own. I connect the flowers with my own existence through my feelings. After a year I walk over the same meadow again. Other flowers are there. New joy arises from them. My joy from the previous year will emerge as a memory. It is in me; the object that kindled it has passed away. But the flowers I see now are of the same kind as the previous year's; they have grown according to the same laws as those. If I have enlightened myself about this kind, about these laws, I find them in this year's flowers as I recognized them in the previous year's flowers. And I will perhaps thus ponder: The flowers of the previous year have passed away; my joy in them has remained only in my memory. It is only connected with my existence. But what I recognized in the

flowers of the previous year and recognize again this year, that will remain as long as such flowers grow. This is something that has revealed itself to me, but which is not dependent on my existence in the same way as my joy. My feelings of joy remain in me; the laws, the essence of the flowers remain outside of me in the world. Thus, man perpetually connects himself with the things of the world in this threefold way. It follows from this fact that man has three sides in his being. This and nothing else shall be indicated here provisionally by the three words body, soul and spirit. [1]

## Body

By body is meant here that by which the things of his environment reveal themselves to man, as in the above example the flowers of the meadow. By the word soul is meant that by which he connects things with his own existence, by which he feels pleasure and displeasure, joy and pain in them. As spirit is meant that which is revealed in him when he, according to Goethe's expression, regards things as "as it were divine being". - In this sense, man consists of body, soul and spirit. Through his body, man is able to connect with things for the moment. Through his soul he preserves in himself the impressions which they make upon him; and through his spirit that is revealed to him which things preserve themselves. Only if one looks at man according to these three sides, one can hope to get information about his essence. For these three sides show him in threefold different ways related to the rest of the world. Through his body he is related to the things that present themselves to his senses from outside. The substances of the outside world compose this body of his; the forces of the outside world also work in him. And as he observes the things of the outside world with his senses, so he can also observe his own bodily existence. But it is impossible to observe the mental existence in the same way. [2] Thus man is a citizen of three worlds. Through his body he belongs to the world which he also perceives with his body; through his soul he builds up his own world; through his spirit a world is revealed to him which is superior to the other two. Through bodily senses one gets to know the body of man. And the way of looking at it can be no other than the one by which one gets to know other sensually perceptible things. Like minerals, he builds his body from the substances of nature; like plants, he grows and reproduces; like animals, he perceives the objects around him and forms inner experiences in himself on the basis of their impressions. A mineral, a vegetable and an animal existence may therefore be attributed to man. [3] Just as the three forms of existence, the mineral, the vegetable and the animal, are attributed to the human body, so a fourth, the special human, must be attributed to it. Through his mineral form of existence man is related to all visible things, through his vegetable form to all beings that grow and reproduce; through his animal form to all that perceive their surroundings and have inner experiences on the basis of external impressions; through his human form he already forms a realm for himself in bodily relation. [4]

## Etheric Body

Within the apparent world, the physical human body is that in which man is equal to the mineral world. On the other hand, the physical body cannot be considered as that which distinguishes man from the mineral. For an unbiased observation it is above all important that death exposes that part of the human being which, when death has occurred, is of the same kind as the mineral world. The same substances and forces are active in the physical human body as in the mineral, but their effectiveness is put to a higher service during life. They do not act like the mineral world until death has occurred. There they appear as they must appear according to their own nature, namely as dissolvers of the physical body form. Thus in man there is a sharp distinction to be made between what is revealed and what is hidden. For during life the hidden must wage a continuous struggle against the substances and forces of the mineral in the physical body. When this struggle ceases, the mineral efficacy appears. - This points to the point where the science of the supersensible must begin. It has to look for that which leads the indicated struggle. And this is hidden for the observation of the senses. It is only accessible to supersensible observation. How the human being gets to the point where this "hidden" is revealed to him in the same way as the sensual appearances are to the ordinary eyes, will be discussed in a later part of this writing (see: Training). Here, however, shall be described what is revealed to the supersensible observation. Even if that which is hidden in the physical body and fights against decay can only be observed by the higher eye, its effects are clearly visible to the power of judgment, which is limited to the obvious. And these effects are expressed in the form or shape in which during life the mineral substances and forces of the physical body are assembled. This form gradually disappears, and the physical body becomes a part of the rest of the mineral world when death has occurred. The supersensible view, however, can observe as an independent member of the human being that which prevents the physical substances and forces during life from going their own ways, which lead to the dissolution of the physical body. Let this independent member be called the etheric body or life body. The word ether is to be applied to that which is accessible to the higher vision and which can be recognized by the senses only in its effects, namely by the fact that it is able to give a certain form or shape to the mineral substances and forces present in the physical body. And also the word "body" should not be misunderstood. For the designation of the higher things of existence one must use the words of the ordinary language. And these express only the sensual for the sensory observation. In the sensual sense, of course, the etheric body is nothing corporeal, no matter how fine one may imagine it to be. [5]

This etheric body is therefore a second member of the human being. For the supersensible cognition it has a higher degree of reality than the physical body. A description of how the supersensible cognition sees it can only be given in the following parts of this writing (see: Aura), when it will become clear in which sense such descriptions are to be taken. For the time being it may suffice to say that the etheric body intersperses the physical body everywhere (and even projects somewhat beyond it) and that it is to be regarded as a kind of architect of the latter. All organs are held in their form and shape by the currents and movements of the etheric body. The physical heart is based on an "ether heart", the physical brain on an "ether brain" and so on. The etheric

body is structured like the physical body, only more complicated, and in it everything is in lively confusion, where in the physical body there are separate parts. Man has this etheric body in common with the vegetable, just as he has the physical body in common with the mineral. All living things have their etheric body. [6]

## Astral Body

From the etheric body the supersensible observation ascends to another member of the human being. In order to form an idea of this limb, it points to the appearance of sleep, as it pointed to death in the case of the etheric body. All human creativity is based on the activity in the waking state, as far as the apparent comes into consideration. This activity, however, is only possible if man again and again fetches the renewal of his exhausted powers from sleep. Action and thought fade away in sleep, all pain, all pleasure sink for the conscious life. As if from hidden, mysterious wells, conscious forces rise from the unconsciousness of sleep when man awakens. It is the same consciousness that sinks down into the dark depths when we fall asleep and that rises up again when we wake up. That which awakens life again and again from the state of unconsciousness is, in the sense of supersensible knowledge, the third member of the human being. It can be called the astral body. An etheric body, which would be left to itself, would have to be permanently in the state of sleep. One can also say: it could only maintain a plant existence in the physical body. An awake etheric body is illuminated by an astral body. For the sense observation the effect of this astral body disappears when man sinks into sleep. For the supersensible observation it still remains; only it appears separated from the etheric body or lifted out of it. The sensory observation does not have to do with the astral body itself, but only with its effects in the revelation. In the same sense that man has his physical body in common with minerals, his etheric body with plants, he is of the same kind with animals in regard to his astral body. [7]

## Sentient soul

This name "astral", which means "shining like a star", comes from the fact that the supersensible visible image of it appears in the aura, whose luminosity has been compared to that of the stars. Here this part of the human being shall be called the body of sensation, as the third member of the human being. Within this body of sensation, the life of a human being appears. It expresses itself in pleasure and displeasure, joy and pain, in inclinations and aversions and so on. With a certain right one calls everything that belongs to it the inner life of a being. This organism closes itself in its feeling organs (for example) to the starry sky. I experience the joy and the feeling of admiration about the starry sky in myself. I carry this in me when the starry sky has long since withdrawn from my sensing eye. What I confront there as myself to the outside world, what leads a life in itself, is the soul. And insofar as this soul appropriates the sensations, insofar as it appropriates processes which are given to it from outside and transforms them into its own life, it is called sensation soul. This soul of sensation fills, as it were, the body of sensation; everything that it takes in from without, it transforms into an inner experience.

Thus it forms a whole with the body of sensation. It is therefore called the astral body together with the sensory body. A thorough knowledge, however, will have to distinguish the two. [8]

## Mind Soul

With the impressions that man receives from outside and with the feelings that he experiences through these impressions, he does not stop. He combines these impressions. Thus, overall pictures of what he perceives are formed in his soul. A person sees (for example) a stone fall; afterwards he sees that at the place where the stone fell, a cavity has formed in the earth. He connects both impressions. He says: the stone has hollowed out the earth. In this connection the thinking expresses itself. Within the feeling soul the thinking, the understanding soul lives up. Only through it, an image of this external world, regulated by itself, arises from what the soul experiences through influences from outside. Continuously the soul carries out this regulation of its external impressions.

And what it produces in this way is a description, determined by its nature, of what it perceives. That it is determined by its nature, results when one compares such a description with what is described. Two people can have the same object before them; their descriptions are different according to the inner natures of their souls. They combine their impressions in different ways. Through the descriptive thinking, however, the human being is also led beyond the mere self-life. He acquires something that reaches beyond his soul. It is a self-evident conviction for him that his descriptions of things stand in a relation with these themselves. He orients himself in the world by thinking about it. He experiences thereby a certain agreement of his own life with the order of the world facts. The soul of understanding thereby creates harmony between soul and world. In his soul man seeks truth; and through this truth not only the soul expresses itself, but the things of the world. In the connection with truth the soul grasps something that carries its value in itself. [9]

## Consciousness soul

And this value does not disappear with the own soul experience; just as it did not originate with it. There is an essential difference between the descriptions, in which the mind-soul merely abandons itself to its combinations, and the thoughts, in which it submits itself to the laws of truth. A thought which receives a meaning beyond the inner life by being permeated by these laws of truth may only be regarded as knowledge. As truth shines into the soul of understanding, it becomes the soul of consciousness. As in the body three members are to be distinguished: the physical body, the life (the etheric body) and the body of sensation (astral body), so in the soul the soul of sensation, the soul of understanding and the soul of consciousness. [10]

## Spirit and the three members of the soul

Also with regard to the perception of the sentient soul similar things must be said as before with regard to the etheric body. The bodily organs are "blind" to it. And so is the organ by which life can be perceived as life. But just as through this organ the etheric body is seen, so through a still higher organ the inner world of sensations can become a special kind of supersensible perception. The human being then not only senses the impressions of the physical and the life world, but he "sees" the sensations. Before a person with such an organ, the world of sensations of another being lies there like an "external reality". In order to prevent misunderstandings, it should be expressly stated here that the seer does not experience in himself the same thing that the other being has in himself as his content of the world of sensations. The latter experiences the sensations from the point of view of his inside; the seer perceives the revelation, an expression of the world of sensations. The soul of sensation depends on the etheric body for its effect, for from it it brings forth that which it is to make shine forth as sensation. And since the etheric body is the life within the physical body, the sentient soul is also indirectly dependent on it. (Thus, for example) only with correctly living, well-built eye corresponding color sensations are possible. Thus the corporeality has an effect on the sensation soul. This is therefore determined and limited in its effectiveness by the body. It lives within the limits drawn by the corporeality. - The body is thus built up from the mineral substances, animated by the etheric body, and it itself limits the sentient soul. Therefore, whoever has the above-mentioned organ for "seeing" the soul of sensation, recognizes it limited by the body. - But the boundary of the sentient soul does not coincide with that of the physical body. This soul protrudes beyond the physical body. One sees (therefore) from it that it proves to be more powerful than it is. But the power, by which the border is set for it, goes out from the physical body. Thus, between the physical body and the etheric body on the one hand, and the sentient soul on the other, there is another special member of the human being. It is the soul body or sensory body. One can also say that one part of the etheric body is finer than the rest, and this finer part of the etheric body forms a unity with the sensitive soul, while the coarser part forms a kind of unity with the physical body. But, as I have said, the sentient soul projects beyond the soul body. [11]

Just as with the body, the sentient soul also interacts with the thinking, the spirit. First of all, thinking serves it. Man forms thoughts about his sensations. Thereby he enlightens himself about the outside world. Man also does not blindly follow his drives, instincts and passions; his thinking brings about the opportunity through which he can satisfy them. What is called material culture certainly moves in this direction. It consists in the services which thinking renders to the soul of feeling. Immeasurable sums of thinking forces are directed towards this goal. It is thinking power that has built ships, railroads, telegraphs, telephones; and all this serves for the most part to satisfy the needs of the sentient soul. Man is related to the animal through the sentient soul. In animals, too, we notice the presence of sensations, drives, instincts and passions. But the animal follows these directly. This is also the case to a certain extent in the undeveloped human being. The mere sensation soul is therefore different from the developed higher soul member, which puts thinking into its service. This soul served by thinking is called the mind soul. One



could also call it the mind soul or the mind. The mind-soul penetrates the sensation-soul. He who has the organ to "look" at the soul, therefore, regards the mind-soul as a special entity in comparison with the mere sensation-soul. [12]

By letting the independent true and good come to life in his inner being, man rises above the mere sensory soul. The eternal spirit shines into it. A light arises in it that is imperishable. Insofar as the soul lives in this light, it is partaker of the eternal. It connects its own existence with it. What the soul carries in itself as true and good is immortal in it. - That which shines in the soul as eternal is here called consciousness soul. Thus, as in the body, one would have to distinguish also in the soul three members: the sensation soul, the understanding soul and the consciousness soul. And as from below the corporeality has a limiting effect on the soul, so from above the spirituality has a widening effect on it. For the more the soul is filled with the true and the good, the wider and more comprehensive becomes the eternal in it. For the one who is able to "see" the soul, the radiance that emanates from the human being, because his eternal expands, is just as real a reality as the light that radiates from a flame is real for the sensual eye. For the "seeing" the bodily man is considered only as a part of the whole man. The body lies as the grossest entity in the midst of others which interpenetrate it and themselves. As a life form the etheric body fills the physical body; projecting beyond this on all sides one recognizes the soul body (as) astral form. And again projecting beyond this is the soul of sensation, then the soul of understanding, which becomes all the greater the more it absorbs of the true and the good. These formations, in the midst of which the physical body appears as in a cloud, may be called the human aura. [13]

' I '

The fourth member of his being, which supersensible knowledge must ascribe to man, he now no longer has in common with the world of revelation surrounding him. Supersensible knowledge forms an idea of this further member of man's being by pointing out that even within the waking experiences there is still an essential difference which immediately becomes apparent when man directs his attention to the fact that in the waking state on the one hand he is continually in the midst of experiences which must come and go, and that on the other hand he also has experiences in which this is not the case. This becomes particularly clear when one compares the experiences of man with those of the animal. The animal experiences with great regularity the influences of the outer world and becomes conscious of hunger and thirst under the influence of warmth and cold, pain and pleasure, under certain regularly occurring processes of its body. Man's life is not exhausted with such experiences. He can develop desires, wishes, which go beyond all this. In the case of animals one would always be able to prove, if one were able to go far enough, where the cause of an action, of a feeling, is outside the body or in the body. This is by no means the case with man. He can produce desires and cravings, for the origin of which the cause is neither sufficient inside nor outside his body. Everything that falls into this area must be given a special source. And this source can be seen in the sense of supersensible science in the "I" of man. The ego can therefore be addressed as the fourth member of the human being. - If the astral body were left to

itself (as in the animal), pleasure and pain, feelings of hunger and thirst would take place in it; but what would not come about then is the sensation: there is an abiding in all this. Not the abiding as such is called "I" here, but that which experiences this abiding. In this area, one must define the terms very sharply, if misunderstandings are not to arise. The dawning of the "I-feeling" begins with the realization of something permanent and lasting in the change of inner experiences. - Just as the physical body disintegrates if it is not held together by the etheric body; just as the etheric body sinks into unconsciousness if it is not illuminated by the astral body, so the astral body would have to let the past sink again and again into oblivion if it were not rescued by the "I" into the present. What death is for the physical body, what sleep is for the etheric body, that is forgetting for the astral body. One can also say: life is inherent to the etheric body, consciousness to the astral body and memory to the "I". [14]

For the ego memory and forgetting mean something quite similar as for the astral body waking and sleeping. And just as sleep is necessary in order that the exhausted vital forces may be strengthened anew, so man must eradicate certain parts of his past from his memory if he is to face new experiences freely and without bias. But it is precisely from forgetting that he gains strength for the perception of the new. Think of facts like learning to write. All the details that the child has to go through in order to learn to write are forgotten. What remains is the ability to write. How would a person write if, each time he touched the pen, all the experiences that he had to go through in order to learn to write rose up in his soul as a memory? [15]

## 'I' and the Memory

Now the memory occurs in different stages. Already this is the simplest form of memory, when a person perceives an object and after turning away from the object he is able to reawaken the idea of it. The human being has formed this idea while perceiving the object. A process has taken place between his astral body and his ego. The astral body has made the outer impression of the object conscious. But the knowledge of the object would last only as long as the object is present, if the ego would not take the knowledge into itself and make it its possession. - Here at this point the supersensible perception separates the physical from the spiritual. One speaks of the astral body as long as one has in mind the origin of the knowledge of the present object. But that which gives duration to knowledge is called soul. At the same time one sees from what has been said how closely connected in man the astral body is with that part of the soul which gives duration to knowledge. Both are, so to speak, united to one member of the human being. Therefore one can (now) also call this union the astral body. Also, if one wants a more precise designation, one can speak of the astral body of man as the soul body, and of the soul, in so far as it is united with this, as the sentient soul.

The ego rises to a higher level of its beingness when it directs its activity to that which it has made its possession out of the knowledge of objects. This is the activity by which the ego detaches itself more and more from the objects of perception in order to work in

its own possession. The part of the soul to which this belongs may be called the understanding or mind soul. [16]

### **'I' as the ineffable name of God**

The actual essence of the I is independent of everything external; therefore its name can also not be called to it by any external. Those religious confessions, which have consciously maintained their connection with the supersensible perception, therefore call the designation "I" the "ineffable name of God". As the soul of sensation and the soul of understanding live in the outer world, so a third member of the soul dives into the divine when it reaches the perception of its own beingness. It is easy to get the misunderstanding that such views declare the I to be one with God. But they do not at all say that the I is God, but only that it is of the same kind and essence with the divine. Does anyone claim that the drop of water taken from the sea is the sea when he says that the drop is of the same essence or substance as the sea? If one wants to use a comparison, one can say: as the drop relates to the sea, so does the "I" relate to the divine. Man can find a divine in himself, because his very essence is taken from the divine. Thus, through this his third soul member, man attains an inner knowledge of himself, just as he receives a knowledge of the outer world through the astral body. That is why spiritual science can also call this third soul member the consciousness soul. And in its sense the soul consists of three members: the sensation soul, mind soul and consciousness soul, as the corporeal consists of three members, the physical body, the etheric body and the astral body. [17]

In the consciousness soul the real nature of the I is revealed. For while the soul loses itself in sensation and understanding to other things, it grasps its own beingness as consciousness soul. Therefore, this I cannot be perceived by the consciousness soul other than through a certain inner activity. With the perception of the I - with the self-contemplation - an inner activity of the I begins. [18]

Through self-consciousness man designates himself as an independent being, closed from all the rest, as "I". In the I, the human being summarizes everything that he experiences as a bodily and spiritual entity. Body and soul are the carriers of the I; in them it works. Like the physical body in the brain, the soul has its center in the ego. The human being is stimulated to sensations from outside: Feelings assert themselves as effects of the outside world; the will refers to the outside world, because it realizes itself in external actions. The ego remains completely invisible as the actual essence of man. Therefore, Jean Paul aptly calls the realization of the I an "event that occurred only in the veiled sanctum of man. For man is completely alone with his ego. - And this I is man himself. This entitles him to regard this I as his true beingness. He may therefore call his body and soul the "shells" within which he lives; and he may call them the bodily conditions through which he works. Never can the name "I" reach my ear from outside, if it is the designation for me. Only from within, only through itself can the soul call itself I. Thus, by saying I to himself, something begins to speak in him which has nothing to do with any of the worlds from which the shells mentioned so far are taken. [19]

The ego becomes more and more ruler over body and soul. - This is also expressed in the aura. The more the I is ruler over body and soul, the more structured, manifold, colorful is the aura. The effect of the ego on the aura can be seen by the "seeing". The I itself is also invisible to him: this is really in the "veiled holy of holies of man".

But the I receives in itself the rays of the light, which shines as an eternal light in the human being. Just as man gathers the experiences of the body and the soul in the I, so he also lets the thoughts of truth and goodness flow into the I. The sensual phenomena reveal themselves in the I. The sensory phenomena reveal themselves to the I from one side, the spirit from the other. Body and soul give themselves to the I in order to serve it; the I, however, gives itself to the spirit so that it may fulfill it. The I lives in body and soul; but the spirit lives in the I. And what is of the spirit in the I is eternal. For the I receives its essence and meaning from that with which it is connected. In so far as it lives in the physical body, it is subject to the mineral laws; through the etheric body, it is subject to the laws of reproduction and growth; by virtue of the soul of feeling and understanding, it is subject to the laws of the spiritual world; in so far as it receives the spiritual into itself, it is subject to the laws of the spirit. What the mineral, what the laws of life form, comes into being and perishes; but the spirit has nothing to do with coming into being and perishing. [20]

## Ego and Spirit

The I lives in the soul. Even if the highest expression of the I belongs to the consciousness soul, it must be said that this I radiates from there and fills the whole soul, and through the soul expresses its effect on the body. And in the I the spirit is alive. The spirit radiates into the I and lives in it as in its "shell", as the I lives in body and soul as its "shells". The spirit forms the I from the inside to the outside, the mineral world from the outside to the inside. The spirit forming an I and living as I is called spirit-self (see under Manas), because it appears as I or self of man. The difference between the spirit-self and the consciousness-soul can be made clear in the following way: The consciousness soul touches the truth independent of all antipathy and sympathy, existing by itself; the spirit-self carries within itself the same truth, but absorbed and enclosed by the I; individualized by the latter and taken over into the independent entity of man. In that the eternal truth is thus made independent and united with the ego to an entity, the ego itself attains eternity. The spirit self is a revelation of the spiritual world within the I, as from the other side the sense sensation is a revelation of the physical world within the I. In the same sense as the revelation of the physical is called sensation, the revelation of the spiritual is called intuition. The simplest thought already contains intuition, because one cannot touch it with hands, one cannot see it with eyes: one must receive its revelation from the spirit through the ego. [21]

Through the intuitions the I of man, which lives in the soul, gets the messages from above, from the spiritual world, as it gets the messages from the physical world through the sensations. And thereby it makes the spiritual world just as much the life of its own soul as it makes the physical world by means of the senses. Just as the physical world can

only give the ego information about itself by building up a body out of its substances and forces, in which the conscious soul can live and within which it has organs to perceive the physical outside of itself, so also the spiritual world with its "spiritual substances" and its "spiritual forces" builds up a "spiritual body", in which the ego can live and perceive the spiritual through intuitions. And just as within the physical world the individual human body is built up as a separate entity, so within the spiritual world the "spiritual body". There is an inside and outside for man in the spirit world just as there is in the physical world. As man takes up the substances from the physical environment and processes them in his physical body, so he takes up the spiritual from the spiritual environment and makes it his own. The spiritual is the eternal nourishment of man. And as man is born of the physical world, so he is born of the spirit by the eternal laws of the true and the good. He is separated from the spiritual world which is outside him, as he is separated from the whole physical world as an independent being. Let this independent spiritual entity be called "spirit man" (see: Atma). When we examine the physical human body, we find in it the same substances and forces that exist outside of it in the rest of the physical world. It is the same with the spirit man. In him pulsate the elements of the outer spiritual world, in him are active the forces of the rest of the spiritual world. As in the physical skin a being is completed in itself, which is living and sentient, so also in the spiritual world. The spiritual skin, which closes the spiritual man from the unified spiritual world, makes him within it an independent spiritual being, which lives in itself and intuitively perceives the spiritual content of the world, - this "spiritual skin" shall be called spiritual shell or auric shell. But it must be noted that this spiritual skin expands continuously with the progressing human development, so that the spiritual individuality of man, his auric cover, is capable of an unlimited enlargement.

Within this spiritual shell lives the spiritual man. This is built up by the spiritual "life force" in the same sense as the physical body is built up by the physical life force. In a similar way as one speaks of an etheric body, one must therefore speak of an "etheric spirit" in relation to the spiritual man. Let this "etheric spirit" be called life spirit (see: Buddhi). [22]

The spiritual entity of man is thus divided into three parts: into the spirit-man, the life-spirit and the spirit-self. For the one who "sees" in the spiritual areas, this spiritual entity of man is a perceptible reality as the higher - actual spiritual part of the aura. He "sees" within the spiritual shell the spiritual man as life-spirit; and "he sees" how this life-spirit continually enlarges itself by taking in "spiritual food" from the spiritual outer world. And furthermore, he sees how through this intake the spirit-shell continually expands, how the spirit-man becomes larger and larger. In so far as this "becoming bigger" is "seen" spatially, it is of course only an image of reality. It is the difference of the spiritual entity of man from his physical one that the latter has a limited size, while the former can grow indefinitely. What is absorbed in spiritual nourishment has, after all, an eternal value. Therefore, the human aura is composed of two interpenetrating parts. The physical existence of man gives coloration and form to the one, his spiritual to the other. The ego gives the separation between the two, in such a way that the physical gives itself in its

own way and builds up a body, which lets a soul come to life in itself; and the ego gives itself again and lets the spirit come to life in itself, which now in its turn penetrates the soul and gives it the goal in the spiritual world. Through the body the soul is enclosed in the physical; through the spirit-man it grows wings for movement in the spiritual world. [23]

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### 3: The three worlds and the expansion of consciousness

If one wants to grasp the whole human being, one has to think of him as being composed of the mentioned components. The body is built up from the physical world of matter, so that this construction is ordered towards the thinking I. The body is permeated by life force and thus becomes the etheric body or extension of consciousness. It is permeated by life force and thus becomes the etheric body or life body. As such it closes itself to the outside in the sense organs and becomes the soul body. The soul of sensation penetrates it and becomes one with it (as astral body). The sentient soul does not merely receive the impressions of the outer world as sensations; it has its own life, which is fertilized by the thinking on the other side as well as (also) by the sensations on the one side. Thus it becomes the mind-soul. It can do this by opening itself upward to the intuitions as downward to the sensations. Thereby it is a consciousness soul. This is possible because the spiritual world forms the organs of intuition for it, just as the physical body forms the organs of sense for it. As the senses convey the sensations through the soul body, so the spirit conveys the intuitions to it through the organ of intuition. The spirit man is thereby connected with the consciousness soul in a unity like the physical body with the sensation soul in the soul body. Consciousness soul and spirit self (Manas) form a unity. In this unity the spirit man "lives" as life spirit (Buddhi), as the etheric body forms the bodily basis of life for the soul body. And as the physical body closes itself in the physical skin, so the spirit-man (Atma) in the spirit-shell. [1] In the soul the I flashes, receives from the spirit the impact and becomes thereby the carrier of the spirit man. Through this, man participates in the "three worlds" - physical, soul and spirit. He takes root in the physical world through physical body, etheric body and soul body and blossoms up into the spiritual world through the spirit self (manas), life spirit (buddhi) and spirit man (atma). But the stem which roots to one side, blossoms to the other, that is the soul itself. [2]

What there penetrates like a drop into the consciousness soul, that is called the spirit by spiritual science. Thus the consciousness soul is connected with the spirit, which is the hidden in all that is revealed. If man now wants to grasp the spirit in all revelation, he must do this in the same way as he grasps the I in the consciousness soul. He must turn the activity, which has led him to the perception of this I, towards the apparent world. In this way, however, he develops to higher levels of his beingness. He adds something new to the members of his body and soul (the above-mentioned spiritual members). [3]

#### Work on the soul

The next thing is that he also conquers himself that which lies hidden in the lower members of his soul. And this happens through his work on his soul, which starts from the ego. How man is conceived in this work becomes clear if one compares a man who is still completely given over to lower desires and so-called sensual pleasure with a noble idealist. The latter becomes the former when the latter withdraws from certain lower inclinations and turns to higher ones. He has thereby ennobled, spiritualized his soul from the ego. The ego has become master within the life of the soul. This can go so far that no

desire, no lust can take hold in the soul without the I being the force that makes the entrance possible. In this way the whole soul then becomes a revelation of the I, as it was before only the consciousness soul. Basically, all cultural life and all spiritual striving of the people consists of a work which has this rule of the I as its aim. Every presently living human being is involved in this work: he may want to or not, he may be conscious of this fact or not. Through this work, however, the human being ascends to higher levels. Through it man develops new members of his beingness. These lie as hidden things behind what is revealed to him. Not only can man, through the work on his soul, make himself the ruler of this soul from the ego, so that this soul drives out the hidden from the revealed, but he can also extend this work. He can reach over to the astral body. Thereby the ego takes possession of this astral body by uniting with its hidden essence. This astral body conquered by the ego and transformed by it can be called the spirit self. This is the same thing that is called "Manas" in reference to the Oriental wisdom. In the spirit-self a higher member of the human being is given, such a one which is present in it, as it were, germinatively, and which in the course of its work on itself comes out more and more. [4]

### Work on the etheric body

Just as man conquers his astral body by penetrating to the hidden forces which stand behind it, so in the course of development this also happens with the etheric body. The work on this etheric body, however, is more intensive than that on the astral body; for what is hidden in the etheric body is covered in two veils, while what is hidden in the astral body is only covered in one veil. The character and temperament of man change under the influence of the ego. However, this change is a slow one in relation to the change (of the astral body and its expressions). Now the forces which cause this change of character or temperament belong to the hidden region of the etheric body. They are of the same kind as the forces which rule in the realm of life, that is, the forces of growth, nourishment and reproduction. Every human being also works on this last change: he may be conscious of it or not. The strongest impulses working towards this change in ordinary life are the religious ones. If the ego allows the impulses which flow from religion to act upon it again and again, these form in it a power which works into the etheric body and transforms it in the same way as lesser impulses of life effect the transformation of the astral body. The religious confession has thereby something penetrating in the life of the soul; its influences strengthen more and more in the course of time, because they work in continuous repetition. That is why they acquire the power to affect the etheric body. - In a similar way the influences of true art work upon man. If through the outer form, through color and tone of a work of art he penetrates the spiritual substratum of the same with imagination and feeling, then the impulses which thereby the ego receives, in fact, also have an effect on the etheric body. If one thinks this thought through to the end, one can appreciate the immense importance of art for all human development. Only a few things are herewith pointed out, which provide the ego with the impulses to act on the etheric body. There are many such influences in human life which are not so obvious to the observing eye as those mentioned. But already from these it is evident that in man there is hidden another member of his beingness, which the ego is working out more and more. This member can be called the second of the spirit, namely the life spirit (see: Buddhi).



The expression "life-spirit" is therefore the appropriate one, because in what it designates the same forces are active as in the "life-body", the etheric body; only in these forces, when they manifest themselves as life-bodies, the human I is not active. But if they express themselves as life spirit, they are interspersed with the activity of the ego. [5]

Between the changes that take place in the astral body through the activity of the ego and those that occur in the etheric body, a firm boundary cannot be drawn. One merges into the other. When a man learns something and thereby acquires a certain faculty of judgment, a change has occurred in the astral body; but when this judgment changes the condition of his soul, so that he becomes accustomed to feel differently about a thing after learning than he did before, a change has occurred in the etheric body. [6]

The intellectual development of man, his purification and ennoblement of feelings and expressions of will are the measure of his transformation of the astral body into the spirit self; his religious experiences and many other experiences imprint themselves on the etheric body and turn it into the life spirit. In the ordinary course of life this happens more or less unconsciously, but the so-called initiation of man consists in the fact that through supersensible knowledge he is pointed to the means by which he can take this work in the spirit self and life spirit quite consciously in hand. These means will be discussed in later parts of this paper (see under: Training). [7]

### Work on the physical body

With the work on the astral body and the etheric body, however, the activity of the I is not yet exhausted. It also extends to the physical body. A hint of the influence of the ego on the physical body can be seen when certain experiences cause, for example, blushing or paling. Here the ego is indeed the initiator of a process in the physical body. When, through the activity of the ego, changes occur in man in relation to its influence in the physical body, then the ego is really united with the hidden forces of this physical body. With the same forces which cause its physical processes. One can then say that the I works through such activity on the physical body. We are not speaking here of a work on the material, as which the physical body appears, but of the spiritual work on the invisible forces, which make it come into being and again bring it to decay. In ordinary life man can become aware of this work of the ego on the physical body only with very little clarity. This clarity comes in full measure only when, under the influence of supersensible knowledge, man consciously takes the work in hand. Then, however, it becomes apparent that there is still a third spiritual member in man. It is the one which can be called the spiritual man in contrast to the physical man. In the Oriental wisdom this spiritual man is called the Atma. With regard to the spiritual man, one is easily misled by the fact that one sees in the physical body the lowest member of the human being and therefore finds it difficult to accept the idea that the work on this physical body should lead to the highest member in the human being. But precisely because the physical body hides the spirit active in it under three veils, the highest kind of human work belongs to it in order to unite the I with that which is its hidden spirit. Thus man presents himself to spiritual science as an entity composed of various members. [8]

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## 4: Reincarnation and the spiritual form of man

So far, the spirit and the soul have been considered only within the limits that lie between birth and death. One can certainly find many things within these limits, but one can never explain the human form from what lies between birth and death. This cannot build itself up from mere physical substances and forces directly (thus self-organizing). It can only descend from a form similar to itself, which results from what has reproduced. The physical substances and forces build up the body during life: the forces of reproduction let another come out of it, which can have its form, thus such a one, which can be carrier of the same life body or etheric body. - Every etheric body is a repetition of its ancestor. Only because it is this, it does not appear in every arbitrary form, but in that, which is inherited to it. The forces which made my human form possible lay in my ancestors. But also the spirit of man appears in a certain shape - where the word shape of course is meant spiritually. And the forms of the spirit are the conceivably most different with the individual people. Not two people have the same spiritual form. One has only to observe in this field as calmly and objectively as in the physical. One cannot say that the differences of people in spiritual respect are only due to the differences of their environment, their education and so on. No, this is not at all the case; for two people develop in quite different ways under the same influences of environment, education, and so on. Therefore, one must admit that they have started their life path with quite different dispositions. A proper observation shows that the external circumstances affect different persons in different ways through something that does not directly interact with the material development. For the really exact researcher in this field it is evident that what comes from the material dispositions can be distinguished from what arises from the interaction of the human being with the experiences, but can only be formed by the soul itself entering into this interaction. The soul stands there clearly in relation with something within the outer world, which, according to its nature, can have no relation to material

germinal dispositions. [Just as the physical similarity of human beings is clearly visible, so the difference of their spiritual forms is revealed to the unprejudiced spiritual eye. - There is an obvious fact by which this is expressed. It consists in the existence of the biography of a human being. Whoever thinks about the essence of biography will realize that in spiritual terms every human being is a species in itself. If now the species or genus in the physical sense is only comprehensible if one understands it in its conditionality through heredity, then also the spiritual entity can only be understood through a similar "spiritual heredity". [2]

As a physical human being, I am descended from other physical human beings, because I have the same form as the whole human species. So the characteristics of the genus could be acquired within the genus by heredity. As a spiritual human being I have my own "gestalt", like I have my own biography. So I can have this "gestalt" from nobody else than from myself. And since I did not enter the world with indeterminate but with determinate mental endowments, since by these endowments my path of life, as it is expressed in biography, is determined, my work on myself cannot have begun at my birth. I must have been present as a spiritual person before my birth. I certainly did not exist in my ancestors, because they are different from me as spiritual people. My biography is not explainable from theirs. I must be rather the repetition of such as spiritual being from whose biography mine is explainable. The other first conceivable case would be that I owe the formation of that what is content of my biography only to a spiritual life before the birth, respectively before the conception. But one would be justified to this idea only if one wanted to assume that what affects the human soul from the physical environment is similar to what the soul has from an only spiritual world. Such an assumption contradicts the really exact observation. For what is determinative for the human soul from this physical environment is such that it acts like something experienced later in physical life on something experienced in the same way earlier. In order to observe these relations correctly, one must acquire the view of how there are effective impressions in human life which have such an effect on the dispositions of the soul as standing before a deed to be performed in relation to what one has already practiced in physical life; only that such impressions just do not impinge on a thing already practiced in this immediate life, but on soul dispositions which can be impressed in the same way as the abilities acquired through practice. Whoever sees through these things comes to the idea of earth lives which must have preceded the present one. (A view which even today is a matter of course for a great number of people, especially outside Europe). One cannot stop thinking with purely spiritual experiences before this earth life. [3]

Physical body, etheric body and soul body make up a whole in a certain respect. Therefore the soul body is also included in the laws of physical heredity, by which the body receives its form. And since it is the most mobile, as it were the most fleeting form of corporeality, it must also show the most mobile and fleeting phenomena of heredity. Therefore, while the physical body is the least different only according to races, peoples, tribes, and the etheric body shows a greater deviation for the individual human beings, but still a predominant sameness, this difference is already a very great one with the soul

body. In it is expressed what is already felt as an external, personal characteristic of man. It is therefore also the carrier of what is inherited from this personal characteristic from the parents, grandparents and so on to the descendants. - It is true that the soul as such, as has been explained, leads a perfect life of its own; it closes itself off in itself with its inclinations and aversions, with its feelings and passions. But it is nevertheless effective as a whole, and therefore this whole also comes to expression in the sentient soul. And because the sensitive soul penetrates the soul body, fills it, as it were, the latter forms itself according to the nature of the soul, and it can then, as a carrier of heredity, transmit the inclinations, passions and so on from the ancestors to the descendants. [4]

If the human mind approaches such an experience, which is similar to another one, with which it was already connected, it sees something familiar in it and knows how to behave differently towards it than if it was facing it for the first time. This is the basis of all learning. And the fruits of learning are acquired abilities. - In this way, the eternal spirit is imprinted with the fruits of temporary life. - And do we not perceive these fruits? What is the basis of the aptitudes which have been set forth above as the characteristic of the spiritual man? But only in abilities for this or that, which man brings with him when he begins his earthly path of life. In a certain respect these abilities are quite similar to those which we can also acquire during life. Take the genius of a human being. It is known of Mozart that as a boy he was able to write down from memory a musical work of art once heard. He was only able to do this because he could see the whole thing at once. If one does not want to marvel at such abilities, which are based on predispositions, as miracles, then one must consider them to be fruits of experiences which the spirit self has had through a soul. They have been imprinted on this spirit-self. And since they were not implanted in this life, they were implanted in a previous one. The human spirit is its own species. And as man as a physical generic being inherits his qualities within the genus, so the spirit within its genus, that is, within itself. In one life the human spirit appears as a repetition of itself with the fruits of its previous experiences in previous lives. [5]

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## 5: Reincarnation and Karma

Thus, the soul's experiences are permanently preserved not only within the boundaries of birth and death, but beyond death. But the soul imprints its experiences not only on the spirit that shines in it, but also on the outer world through the deed. What the person performed yesterday is still present today in its effect. A picture of the connection of cause and effect in this direction is given by the parable of sleep and death. - Sleep has often been called the younger brother of death. I get up in the morning. My continuous activity was interrupted by the night. Now, under ordinary circumstances, it is not possible for me to resume my activity in the morning in any way. I have to tie in with what I did yesterday if there is to be order and coherence in my life. My deeds of yesterday are the preconditions of those which are incumbent upon me today. I have created my destiny for today with what I accomplished yesterday. I have separated myself from my activity for a while; but this activity belongs to me and it draws me back to itself after I have withdrawn from it for a while. My past remains connected to me; it lives on in my present and will follow me into my future. Just as man is newly created in the morning, so is the spirit of man when he begins his earthly path of life. [1]

But (also) the physical world, which the human spirit enters, is not a foreign scene for him. The traces of his deeds are imprinted in it. Something of this scene belongs to him. It bears the imprint of his being. It is related to him. As the soul once transmitted the impressions of the outer world to him, so that they become permanent to him, so it, as his organ, has converted the abilities given to it by him into deeds, which are likewise permanent in their effects. Thereby the soul has actually flowed into these deeds. In the effects of his deeds the soul of man lives on a second independent life. But this can give the cause to look at the life on the basis of how the fate processes enter into this life. Something happens to man. At first he is probably inclined to regard such an "incident" as one that enters his life "by chance". But he can become aware how he himself is the result of such "coincidences". Whoever looks at himself in his fortieth year of life and does not want to stop with the question about his soul being with an insubstantially abstract ego conception, may say to himself: I am nothing else at all than what I have become through that which has "happened" to me by fate until today. He will then look for his ego not only in his impulses of development coming from "within", but in that which intervenes in his life "from outside" in a formative way. In that which "happens to him", he will recognize his own self. If one surrenders oneself to such a realization in an unbiased way, then only one further step of really intimate observation of life is necessary for this, in order to see in what flows to one through certain experiences of fate something which grips the I from the outside in the same way as memory works from within, in order to let a past experience light up again. One can thus make oneself suitable to perceive in the experience of fate how a former deed of the soul takes the way to the I, just as in memory a former experience takes the way to the imagination when there is an external cause for it. Within the individual life on earth such a meeting is excluded for certain sequences of deeds, because this life on earth was predisposed to accomplish the deed. There lies in the accomplishment the experience. A certain consequence of the deed can meet the soul as little as one can remember an experience in which one still stands in it.

In this respect it can only be a matter of experiencing the consequences of the deed, which do not affect the ego with the dispositions it has in the earthly life from which it performs the deed. The view can only be directed to consequences of deeds from other earth lives. Thus one can - as soon as one feels: what apparently "happens" to one as an experience of fate is connected with the ego, like that which forms "from the inside" of this ego itself - only think that in such an experience of fate one has to do with consequences of deeds from earlier earth lives. One sees, to the (only) for the ordinary consciousness (of the today's European man) paradoxical assumption, the fate experiences of an earth life are connected with the deeds of preceding earth lives, one is led by an intimate life grasp led by thinking. This conception can get its full content only by the supersensible cognition: without this it remains silhouette-like. [2]

That I find in the morning the situation which I myself created on the previous day, the immediate course of events takes care of that. That I, when I incarnate again, find an environment, which corresponds to the result of my deeds from the previous life, is ensured by the relationship of my again incarnated spirit with the things of the environment. The physical body is subject to the laws of heredity. The human spirit, on the other hand, must embody itself again and again; and its law consists in the fact that it takes over the fruits of the previous lives into the following ones. The soul lives in the present. But this life in the present is not independent of the previous lives. The incarnating spirit brings its destiny from its previous embodiments. And this destiny determines the life. What impressions the soul will be able to have, what desires it will be able to satisfy, what joys and sorrows will accrue to it, what people it will meet: that depends on what the deeds were in the previous embodiments of the spirit. People with whom the soul was united in one life, it will have to find again in a following one, because the deeds which have been between them must have their consequences. As the one soul, also those connected with it will strive for its reincarnation in the same time. This fate created by man is called, with an old expression, his karma. And the spirit is under the law of reincarnation, of repeated earth lives. - Accordingly, the relationship between spirit, soul and body can also be expressed in this way: The spirit is imperishable; birth and death rule in physicality according to the laws of the physical world; the life of the soul, which is subject to destiny, mediates the connection of both during the earthly course of life. All further knowledge of the nature of man presupposes acquaintance with the "three worlds" themselves, to which he belongs. Of these the following shall be concerned. [3]

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## 6: Organs of higher perception

The consideration of man has shown that he belongs to three worlds. From the world of the physical corporeality the substances and forces are taken, which build up his body. He has knowledge of this world through the perceptions of his outer physical senses. He who trusts only these senses and develops only their perceptive faculty, cannot gain any information about the two other worlds, the spiritual and the mental. Whether a man can convince himself of the reality of a thing or being depends on whether he has an organ of perception for it, a sense. In order to avoid a misunderstanding, one must consider that here of "higher senses" is spoken only comparatively, in a figurative sense. As the physical senses perceive the physical, so the psychic and spiritual ones perceive the psychic and spiritual. Only in the meaning of "organ of perception" the expression "sense" is used. [1]

As the eye and ear develop in the body as organs of perception, as senses for the physical processes, so man is able to develop in himself soul and spiritual organs of perception, through which the world of the soul and the spiritual world are opened up to him. That the eye and the ear are perfectly developed in man is usually taken care of by the kind Mother Nature. They come into being without his help. He must work on the development of his higher senses himself. He must develop soul and spirit, if he wants to perceive the world of soul and spirit, as nature has developed his body. [2] The soul and spirit world are not beside or apart from the physical one, they are not spatially separated from it. Just as for the operated blind-born the previous dark world shines in light and colors, so to the soul and spirit awakened things, which before had appeared to him only physically, reveal their soul and spirit qualities. One often involuntarily imagines the "higher organs" as too similar to the physical ones. But one should realize that one is dealing with spiritual or mental entities in these organs. Therefore, one must not expect that what one perceives in the higher worlds is only a nebulously diluted materiality. As long as one expects something like that, one will not be able to come to a clear idea of what is meant here by "higher worlds". It would not be so difficult for many people, as it really is, to know something of these "higher worlds" - at first, however, only the elementary - if they did not imagine that it must be something refined physical again, what they are to perceive. Since they presuppose something like that, they usually do not want to recognize what it really is. They find it unreal, do not accept it as something that satisfies them, and so on. Certainly, the higher levels of spiritual development are difficult to reach; but that which is sufficient to recognize the essence of the spiritual world - and that is already a great deal - would not be so difficult to attain if one would first free oneself from the prejudice which consists in imagining the soul and the spiritual as a finer physical thing. Just as we do not fully know a human being if we only have an idea of his physical appearance, so we do not know the world that surrounds us if we only know what the physical senses reveal to us. And just as a photograph becomes comprehensible

and vivid to us when we get so close to the person photographed that we learn to recognize his soul, so too we can only really understand the physical world when we learn to know its soul and spiritual basis. Therefore, it is advisable to speak here first of the higher worlds, of the soul and spiritual, and only then to judge the physical from the spiritual-scientific point of view. It offers certain difficulties to speak about the higher worlds in the present cultural epoch. For this cultural epoch is above all great in the knowledge and mastery of the physical world. Our words have first received their coinage and meaning in relation to this physical world. But one must make use of these common words in order to link up with what is known. This opens the door to misunderstanding among those who want to trust only their outer senses. - After all, some things can only be expressed and hinted at by way of simile. [3]

### Soul world or astral plan

Just as the substances and forces that compose and govern our stomach, heart, lungs, brain, and so on, come from the physical world, so do our soul qualities, our drives, desires, feelings, passions, desires, sensations, and so on, come from the soul world. Man's soul is a member of this spiritual world, just as his body is a part of the physical world. If one first wants to indicate a difference between the physical world and the mental world, one can say that the latter is much finer, more mobile, more pictorial in all things and entities than the former. But one must remain clear about the fact that one enters a completely new world compared to the physical one when one comes into the spiritual one. So when one speaks of coarser and finer in this respect, one must remain aware that one is implying comparatively what is nevertheless fundamentally different. So it is with everything that is said about the soul world in words borrowed from physical corporeality. If one takes this into account, then one can say that the formations and beings of the soul world consist just as much of soul substances and are just as much directed by soul forces as is the case in the physical world with physical substances and forces. As the spatial extension and spatial movement are peculiar to the physical structures, so the irritability, the libidinal desire is peculiar to the soul things and entities. Therefore, the world of the soul is also called the world of desires or the world of "desire". These expressions are borrowed from the human soul world. It must therefore be stated that the things in those parts of the soul-world which lie outside the human soul are as different from the soul-forces in it as the physical substances and forces of the physical external world are from the parts which compose the physical human body. [4]

Drive, wish, desire are designations for the material of the soul world. This material is called "astral". If one takes more consideration of the forces of the soul world, one can speak of "desire essence". But one must not forget that here the distinction between "substance" and "force" cannot be as strict as in the physical world. A drive can be called "force" just as well as "substance". Who for the first time gets an insight into the soul world, for him the differences, which it shows from the physical, seem confusing. In the soul world different laws are valid than in the physical. Now, however, many soul-forms are bound to such of the other worlds. The soul of man, for example, is bound to the physical human body and to the human spirit. The processes that can be observed in it



are therefore influenced by the physical and the spiritual world at the same time. One must take this into consideration when observing the world of the soul; and one must not address as laws of the soul what comes from the influence of another world. - If, for example, a man sends out a wish, this is borne by a thought, a conception of the spirit and follows its laws. But just as one can determine the laws of the physical world by leaving aside the influences which, for example, man has on its processes, a similar thing is also possible with the spiritual world. An important difference of the mental processes from the physical ones can be expressed by calling the interaction in the former a much more internal one. In physical space, for example, the law of impact prevails: When a moving ivory ball strikes a stationary one, the latter continues to move in a direction that can be calculated from the movement and elasticity of the former. In the soul space the interaction of two entities which meet each other depends on their inner properties. They penetrate each other, grow together, as it were, if they are related to each other. They repel each other, if their essence contradicts each other. [5]

### **Sympathy and antipathy - the basic forces of the soul world**

In the physical space, for example, there are certain laws for seeing: One sees distant objects in perspective reduction. In the space of the soul, on the other hand, everything, near and far, appears to the observer in the distances which it has through its inner nature. It is one of the first things that one must acquire for orientation in the soul world that one distinguishes the different types of its formations in a similar way as one distinguishes solid, liquid and air- or gaseous bodies in the physical world. In order to come to this, one must know the two basic forces which are of primary importance here. We can call them sympathy and antipathy. How these basic forces act in a mental entity determines its nature. Sympathy is the force with which a soul-form attracts others, tries to merge with them, asserts its kinship with them. Antipathy, on the other hand, is the force with which soul-forms repel, exclude, with which they assert their peculiarity. To what extent (and in what mixture) these basic forces are present in a soul structure depends on what role it plays in the soul world. Three kinds of soul-forms have to be distinguished at first, depending on the working of sympathy and antipathy in them. And these types are different from each other in that sympathy and antipathy stand in them in quite definite mutual relations. Both basic forces are present in all three. An entity of the first kind attracts other entities of its environment by virtue of the sympathy that prevails in it. But apart from this sympathy, there is (also) antipathy in it at the same time, by which it repels what is in its environment. To the outside, such a structure will appear as if it were equipped only with forces of antipathy. But this is not the case. There is sympathy and antipathy in it. Only the latter is predominant. It has the upper hand over the former. Such entities play a selfish role in the soul space. They repel much around them and draw only a few affectionately to themselves. Therefore, they move through the soul space as unchanging forms. Through the power of sympathy, which is in them, they appear as greedy. The greed, however, appears insatiable at the same time, as if it could not be satisfied, because the prevailing antipathy repels so much that is accommodating that no satisfaction can occur. If one wants to compare the soul formations of this kind with something in the physical world, one can say: they correspond to the solid physical

bodies. This region of the soul's materiality is to be called the glow of desire. - That which is mixed with the souls of animals and men from this ardor of desire determines that in them which is called the lower sensual instincts, their predominant selfish instincts. - The second kind of soul formations is the one in which the two basic forces keep the balance, in which sympathy and antipathy work in equal strength. They face other entities with a certain neutrality; they act on them as relatives, without attracting and repelling them in particular. They draw, as it were, no firm border between themselves and the environment. They continuously allow other entities in the environment to act upon them; one can therefore compare them with the liquid substances of the physical world. And there is nothing of greed in the way in which such entities attract others to themselves. The effect that is meant here is, for example, when the human soul feels a color. If I have the sensation of the red color, then I receive first a neutral stimulus from my environment.

Only when the pleasure of the red color is added to this stimulus, then another soul effect comes into consideration. What causes the neutral stimulus are soul formations which stand in such an alternating relationship that sympathy and antipathy keep each other in balance. One will have to call the soul materiality, which comes into consideration here, a completely pictorial, flowing one. An expression applicable to it might be: flowing irritability. - The third stage of soul-forming is that in which sympathy has the upper hand over antipathy. The antipathy causes the selfish selfishness; this, however, takes a back seat to the inclination towards the things of the environment. Think of such a structure within the soul space. It appears as the center of an attractive sphere, which extends over the objects of the environment. Such formations must be called desire-materiality in particular. Through the existing antipathy, which is only weaker than sympathy, attraction works in such a way that the attracted objects are to be brought into the own sphere of the entity. The sympathy thereby receives a selfish keynote. This desire-materiality may be compared to the gaseous or aeriform bodies of the physical world. As a gas strives to expand in all directions, so the desire-materiality spreads out in all directions. Higher levels of soul-materiality are characterized by the fact that in them the one basic force completely recedes, namely antipathy, and only sympathy proves to be the actually effective. Now this can assert itself first within the parts of the soul-formation itself. These parts mutually attract each other. The power of sympathy within a soul-formation is expressed in what is called pleasure. And every diminution of this sympathy is unpleasure. Dislike is only a diminished pleasure, as cold is only a diminished warmth. Pleasure and displeasure is that which lives in man as the world of feeling - in the narrower sense. Feeling is the weaving of the soulish within itself. A still higher stage is occupied by those soul-forms whose sympathy does not remain decided in the realm of self-life. [6]

## Regions of the soul world

Through these kinds of soul-materiality the diversity of the soul-forms unites to a common soul-world. As far as antipathy comes into consideration, the soul-form strives for something else for the sake of its own life, in order to strengthen and enrich itself through the other. Where antipathy is silent, the other is accepted as revelation, as manifestation. A similar role as the light in the physical space plays this higher form of soul-materiality in

the soul-space. It has the effect that a soul entity absorbs the existence and being of the others for their own sake, as it were, or one could also say that it lets itself be irradiated by them. By drawing from these higher regions, the soul beings are awakened to the true life of the soul. Their dull life in the "darkness" opens outwardly, shines and radiates even into the soul space; the sluggish, dull weaving within, which wants to close itself off through antipathy when only the "substances" of the lower regions are present, becomes power and activity which emanates from within and pours outwardly in a flowing manner. The flowing irritability of the second region acts only when the entities meet. Then, however, one flows over into the other. But touch is necessary here. As a plant withers in the cellar, so the soul-formations without the soul-substances of the higher regions enlivening them. Soul light, active soul power and the actual soul life in the narrower sense belong to these regions and communicate from here to the soul beings.

Three lower and three upper regions of the world of the soul are thus to be distinguished; and both are mediated by a fourth, so that the following division of the world of the soul results:

1. region of the ardor of desire;
2. region of the flowing irritability;
3. region of desires;
4. region of desire and dislike;
5. region of the light of the soul;
6. region of the active soul force;
7. region of the life of the soul.

These seven divisions of the soul world do not represent separate regions. Just as solid, liquid and gaseous interpenetrate each other in the physical, so do ardor of desire, flowing irritability and the forces of the desire world interpenetrate each other in the soul world. And as in the physical the heat penetrates the bodies, the light irradiates them, so it is the case in the spiritual with desire and dislike and with the soul-light. And a similar thing takes place for the active soul force and the actual soul life. [7]

## Citations

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- [3] GA 9, page 94ff (edition 1961, 214 pages)
- [4] GA 9, page 96f (edition 1961, 214 pages)

- [5] GA 9, page 97f (edition 1961, 214 pages)  
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## 7: The soul after death

The soul is the link between the spirit of man and his body. [1] Death, considered as a fact of the physical world, means a change of the body's functions. With death, the body ceases to be the mediator of the soul and the spirit. Furthermore, it shows itself (as a corpse) completely subjected to the physical world and its laws (in its dissolution). If now the spirit has separated from the body, it is still connected with the soul. And as during the physical life the body chained it to the physical world, so now the soul to the spiritual world. - But in this spiritual world is not to be found his very own being. It should only connect him with the field of his creation, with the physical world. In order to appear in a new embodiment with a more perfect form, he must draw strength and fortification from the spiritual world. But he has been entangled in the physical world through the soul. He is bound to a soul being, which is permeated and colored by the nature of the physical, and he has thereby received this direction himself. After death the soul is no longer bound to the body, but only to the spirit. It now lives in a spiritual environment (and) only the forces of this world can therefore still have an effect on it. And to this life of the soul in the world of the soul the spirit is also bound at first. It is bound to the same as it is bound to the body during the physical embodiment. When the body dies is determined by its laws. In general it must be said that the soul and the spirit do not leave the body, but it is released from the body when its powers can no longer work in the sense of the human organization. The relationship of soul and spirit is the same. The soul will release the spirit into the higher, into the spiritual world, when its forces can no longer work in the sense of the human soul organization. At that moment the spirit will be liberated, when the soul has handed over to dissolution that which it can experience only within the body, and retains only that which can live on with the spirit. This remaining, what can be experienced in the body, but can be imprinted as fruit in the spirit, connects the soul with the spirit in the purely spiritual world. [2]

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## 8: Kamaloka

In order to get to know the destiny of the soul after death, therefore, its process of dissolution must be considered. It had the task to give the spirit the direction to the physical. At the moment when it has fulfilled this task, it takes the direction towards the spiritual. Without the coloring it has received through the connection with the physical, it would immediately after disembodiment follow the mere laws of the spiritual-emotional world and would not develop any further inclination towards the sensual. And this would be the case if at death man had completely lost all interest in the earthly world, if all cravings, desires and so forth had been satisfied which attach themselves to the existence he has left. But as far as this is not the case, what remains after this direction clings to the soul. In order not to get into confusion, one must carefully distinguish between that which chains man to the world in such a way that it can also be compensated in a following embodiment, and that which chains him to a certain, to the respective last embodiment. The former is balanced by the law of fate, karma; the latter, however, can be stripped from the soul only after death. It is natural that the more the soul was bound to the physical, the longer the time (of this so-called Kamaloka) will last. It will be short for a person who was not very attached to the physical life, and long for a person who was completely attached to this life, so that at death many desires, wishes and so on still live in the soul. The easiest way to get an idea of the state in which the soul lives in the next time after death is to consider the following. Take a rather blatant example for this: the pleasures of a gourmet. He has his pleasure in the tickling of the palate by the food. The pleasure, of course, is not something physical, but something spiritual. In the soul lives the pleasure and also the desire for the pleasure. But for the satisfaction of the desire the corresponding physical organ, the palate and so on, is necessary. After death, the soul has not immediately lost such a desire, but it no longer has the physical organ, which is the means to satisfy the desire. The state of burning deprivation lasts until the soul has learned to no longer desire what can only be satisfied by the body. And the time spent in this state may be called the place of desires. [1]

### 1st Region: Embers of Desire

The various religious systems that have included an awareness of these conditions in their teachings know this "place of desires" under the name of "purgatory," "purification fire," and so on.

The lowest region of the world of souls is that of the embers of desire. Through it, after death, everything is eradicated from the soul that it has in the grossest selfish desires connected with the lowest bodily life. For through such desires it can experience an effect from the forces of this region of the soul. The unsatisfied desires, which have remained

from the physical life, from the point of attack. By the impossibility of satisfaction the greed is increased to the highest. The burning desires gradually consume themselves; and the soul has learned that in the extinction of such desires lies the only means of preventing the suffering that must come from them. During the physical life satisfaction occurs again and again. Thus the pain of burning greed is covered by a kind of illusion. After death, in the "purification fire", this pain appears quite undisguised. Natures with few desires pass through this state without noticing it, because they have no relation to it. It must be said that the longer the souls are influenced by the ardor of desire, the more they have become related to this ardor through their physical life; therefore, the more they need to be purified in it. One must not call such purification a suffering in the same sense as one would have to feel similar things in the world of the senses only as suffering, because the soul demands its purification after death, because only by this an imperfection existing in it can be erased. [2]

## **2nd region: Lust and Unlust - other higher regions of the soul world**

The region of lust and unwillingness imposes special tests on the soul. As long as it dwells in the body, it participates in everything that concerns this body. The weaving of desire and displeasure is linked to it. During physical life, man feels his body as his self. What is called self-feeling is based on this fact. After death the body is missing as an object of this feeling of self. The soul, to which this feeling has remained, feels therefore like hollowed out. A feeling, as if it had lost itself, afflicts it. This persists until it is recognized that the true man does not lie in the physical. The effects of this fourth region therefore destroy the illusion of the physical self. Thus it has overcome what before strongly chained it to the physical world, and it can fully develop the powers of sympathy which go outward. It has, as it were, come away from itself and is ready to pour itself sympathetically into the general world of the soul. [3] The seventh region, that of the actual soul-life, frees man from his last inclinations towards the sensual-physical world. Each preceding region absorbs from the soul that which is related to it. The soul has fulfilled its previous earth task, and what remained of this task as a fetter for the spirit has been released after death. By overcoming the earthly remnant, the soul has returned to its element. One can see from this description that the experiences of the spiritual world, and thus also the states of the spiritual life after death, gain an appearance that is less and less resistant to the soul, the more the human being has stripped himself of that which clings to him from the earthly connection with the physical corporeality as an immediate kinship with it. - Depending on the preconditions created in the physical life, the soul will belong longer or shorter to one or the other region. Where it feels kinship, it remains until this is extinguished. Where there is no kinship, it passes over the possible influences without feeling. [4]

## **Citations**

[1] GA 9, page 109ff (1961 edition, 214 pages)

[2] GA 9, page 113f (edition 1961, 214 pages)

[3] GA 9, page 115f (edition 1961, 214 pages)

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## 9: World of the spirit or Devachan

Now before the spirit can be observed on its further wandering, the area itself must be observed first which it enters. It is the "world of the spirit" (see: Devachan). This world is so dissimilar to the physical one that one has to use similes to describe it. Everything that is described here is so dissimilar to the physical world that it can only be described in this way (at all). [1] Above all it must be emphasized that this world is woven out of the material - also the word "material" is of course used here in a very inauthentic sense - out of which the human thought consists. But as the thought lives in man, it is only a shadow image, a shadow of his real being. As the shadow of an object on a wall relates to the real object which casts this shadow, so the thought which appears through the human head relates to the entity in the "spirit land" which corresponds to this thought. Now, when the spiritual sense of man is awakened, he really perceives this thought entity. In this world now first the spiritual archetypes of all things and beings are to be seen, which are present in the physical and in the mental world. Think of the picture of a painter existing in the spirit before it is painted. Then one has a likeness of what is meant by the expression archetype. In the real world of the spirit such archetypes are present for all things, and the physical things and entities are after-images of these archetypes. - If he who trusts only his outer senses denies this archetypal world and claims that the archetypes are only abstractions which the comparative intellect obtains from sensual things, this is understandable; for such a one cannot perceive in this higher world; he knows the world of thoughts only in its shadowy abstractness. He does not know that the spiritual observer is as familiar with the spiritual beings as he himself is with his dog or his cat and that the world of archetypes has a far more intense reality than the sensual-physical one. However, the first insight into this "spirit land" is even more confusing than the one into the spiritual world. For the original images in their true form are very dissimilar to their sensual after-images. But they are equally unlike their shadows, the abstract thoughts. - In the spiritual world everything is in perpetual moving activity, in ceaseless creation. A rest, a staying in one place, as they exist in the physical world, does not exist there. For the archetypes are creating entities. They are the workmasters of everything that comes into being in the physical and spiritual world. Their forms are rapidly changing; and in every archetype lies the possibility of assuming innumerable special forms. They let, as it were, the special forms sprout out of themselves; and no sooner is one produced than the archetype prepares to let another one sprout out of itself. And the archetypes are more or less related to each other. They do not act in isolation. One needs the help of the other for its creation. Innumerable archetypes often

work together so that this or that entity comes into being in the spiritual or physical world. Besides what is to be perceived by "spiritual seeing" in this "spirit land", there is something else here, which is to be regarded as an experience of "spiritual hearing". [2]

As soon as the "clairvoyant" ascends from the soul-land into the spirit-land, the perceived archetypes also become sounding. (But) this sounding is a purely spiritual process. It must be imagined without all thinking of a physical sound. The observer feels like in a sea of "tones". And in these tones, in this spiritual sounding, the entities of the spiritual world express themselves. In their sounding together, their harmonies, rhythms and melodies, the primal laws of their existence, their mutual relations and affinities are expressed. What in the physical world the mind perceives as a law, as an idea, that presents itself to the "spiritual ear" as a spiritual-musical. The Pythagoreans therefore called this perception of the spiritual world "music of the spheres". In the following descriptions of the spirit land, the references to this "spiritual music" shall be omitted for the sake of simplicity. One has only to imagine that everything which is described as an "image", as a "luminous thing", is at the same time a sounding thing. To every color, to every perception of light corresponds a spiritual sound, and to every interaction of colors corresponds a harmony, a melody and so on. Where the primal images are spoken of in the following, the "primal tones" are therefore to be added. Other perceptions are also added, which may be similarly called "spiritual tasting" and so on. [3]

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## 10: Stages in the world of spirit or Devachan

In the spirit world, too, one has to keep a number of levels or regions apart in order to orient oneself. Here, too, as in the world of the soul, the individual regions are not layered one on top of the other, but interpenetrating and interspersing each other. The first region contains the archetypes of the physical world, in so far as this is not endowed with life. The archetypes of the minerals are to be found here, furthermore those of the plants; these however only insofar as they are purely physical; thus insofar one does not take into consideration the life in them. Likewise one meets here the physical animal and human forms. This region forms the basic structure of the spirit land. It can be compared with the solid land of our physical earth. It is the continental mass of the spirit land. Its relation to the physical world can only be described comparatively. One gets an idea of it



approximately by the following: One imagines some limited space filled with physical bodies of the most manifold kind. And now one thinks away these physical bodies and in their place hollow spaces in their forms. The formerly empty interspaces, however, are imagined to be filled with the most manifold forms, which stand in manifold relations to the former bodies. This is how it looks in the lowest region of the world of archetypes. In it the things and beings, which are embodied in the physical world, are present as "hollow spaces". And in the interspaces the moving activity of the archetypes and the spiritual music takes place. Now, during the physical embodiment, the hollow spaces are filled, so to speak, with physical substance. Whoever looked into the space with physical and spiritual eye at the same time would see the physical bodies and in between the moving activity of the creating archetypes. The second region of the spirit land contains the archetypes of life. But this life forms here a perfect unity. As a liquid element it flows through the world of the spirit, as it were as blood pulsating through everything. It can be compared with the sea and the waters of the physical earth. Its distribution, however, is more similar to the distribution of blood in animal bodies than to that of seas and rivers. Flowing life, formed of thought-matter, so one could call this second stage of the spirit-land. [1]

In this element lie the creative elemental forces for everything that appears in physical reality as animate beings. Here it is shown that all life is a unity, that the life in man is related to the life of all his fellow creatures. The third region must be called the archetypes of all soul. Here one finds oneself in a much "thinner" and finer element than in the first two regions. Comparatively it can be called the air region of the spirit land. Everything that goes on in the souls of the other two worlds has its spiritual counterpart here. All sensations, feelings, instincts, passions and so on are present here once again in a spiritual way. The atmospheric processes in this circle of air correspond to the sufferings and joys of the creatures in the other worlds. The yearning of a human soul appears here like a soft blowing; like a stormy breeze a passionate outburst. Whoever can form ideas about what comes into consideration here, penetrates deeply into the sighing of any creature, if he directs his attention to it. The archetypes of the fourth region do not refer directly to the other worlds. They are, in a certain respect, entities which govern the primal images of the three lower regions and mediate their coming together. They are therefore engaged in the ordering and grouping of these subordinate archetypes. Accordingly, a more comprehensive activity emanates from this region than from the lower ones. The fifth, sixth and seventh regions differ essentially from the preceding ones. For the entities in them supply the primal images of the lower regions with the impulses for their activity. In them one finds the creative powers of the archetypes themselves. Whoever is able to ascend to these regions makes acquaintance with the intentions which underlie our world. Here, like living germinal points, the archetypes still lie ready to take on the most manifold forms of thought beings. If these germinal points are led into the lower regions, then they swell up, as it were, and show themselves in the most manifold forms. The ideas, through which the human spirit appears creatively in the physical world, are the reflection, the shadow of these germinal thought beings of the higher spiritual world. The observer with the "spiritual ear", who ascends from the lower regions of the

spirit land to these upper ones, becomes aware of how the sounding and tinting is transformed into a "spiritual language". He begins to perceive the "spiritual word", through which for him now not only the things and entities announce their nature through music, but express it in "words". They tell him, as one can call it in spiritual science, their "eternal names". One has to imagine that these thought-germ-beings are of composite nature. From the element of the world of thoughts, as it were, only the germinal shell is taken. And this encloses the actual life nucleus. With this we have reached the border of the three worlds, for the nucleus comes from still higher worlds. When man, according to his components, was described in a preceding section, this life nucleus was indicated for him and the life spirit and spirit man were named as his components. Similar life-cores are also present for other entities. They originate from higher worlds and are transferred to the three indicated in order to accomplish their tasks in them. [2]

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## 11: The Human Being in the world of spirit between incarnations

When the human spirit has passed through the "world of souls" on its way between two embodiments, then it enters the "land of spirits" to remain there until it is ripe for a new bodily existence. The meaning of this stay in the "land of spirits" can be understood only if one knows how to interpret the task of the life pilgrimage of man through his embodiments in the right way. While man is embodied in the physical body, he works and creates in the physical world. And he works and creates in it as a spiritual being. What his spirit conceives and forms, he imprints on the physical forms, the physical substances and forces. Thus, as a messenger of the spiritual world, he has to imprint the spirit on the physical world. Only by embodying himself can man work in the physical world. He must accept the physical body as his instrument, so that he can work through the physical on the physical and so that the physical can work on him. But what works through this physical corporeality of man is the spirit. From this the intentions, the directions for the work in the physical world go out. - As long as the spirit works in the physical body, it cannot live as a spirit in its true form. It can, as it were, only shine through the veil of physical existence. The human thought life belongs in truth to the spiritual world; and as it appears in the physical existence, its true form is veiled. One can also say that the thought life of the physical human being is a shadow image, a reflection of the true spiritual entity to which it belongs. Thus, during the physical life, the spirit interacts with the earthly body world on the basis of the physical body. Now, even if one of the tasks of

the human spirit lies precisely in its effect on the physical body world, as long as it progresses from embodiment to embodiment, it could by no means fulfill this task accordingly if it lived only in the bodily existence. For the intentions and aims of the earthly task are no more formed and won within the earthly embodiment than the plan of a house comes into being on the building site where the workers work. Just as this plan is worked out in the architect's office, so the aims and intentions of earthly work are formed "in the land of spirits." - The spirit of man must live in this land again and again between two embodiments, in order to be able to approach the work in the physical life, equipped with what he brings with him from there. Just as the architect, without working the bricks and mortar, makes the house plan in his workroom according to the laws of architecture and other laws, so the architect of human creativity, the spirit or the higher self, must form the faculties and aims in the spirit land according to the laws of this land, in order to then transfer them to the earthly world. Only if the human spirit stays again and again in its own realm, it will also be able to carry the spirit through the physical-bodily tools into the earthly world. - On the physical scene man gets to know the qualities and forces of the physical world. There, while creating, he gains experience of what demands the physical world makes on the one who wants to work in it. There he gets to know, as it were, the properties of the material in which he wants to embody his thoughts and ideas. He cannot suck the thoughts and ideas themselves out of the material. Thus the earthly world is at the same time the scene of creation and learning. Then, in the spirit land, what is learned is transformed into living ability of the spirit. [1]

One can continue the above comparison to make the matter clearer. The architect works out the plan of a house. This is executed. Thereby he makes a sum of the most manifold experiences. All these experiences increase his abilities. When he works out the next plan, all these experiences flow into it. And this next plan appears enriched in comparison with the first one by all that has been learned in the previous one. So it is with the successive human lives. In the intervening periods between embodiments, the spirit lives in its own realm. It can devote itself entirely to the demands of spiritual life; freed from physical corporeality, it educates itself on all sides and works into this its education the fruits of the experiences of its previous courses of life. Thus his gaze is always directed to the scene of his earthly tasks, thus he always works to follow the earth, in so far as this is the place of his activity, through the development necessary to it. He works on himself in order to be able to render his services in the earthly change according to the condition of the earth at each embodiment. This is, however, only a general picture of the successive courses of human life. And the reality will never agree with this picture completely, but only more or less. The circumstances can bring it with them that a following life of a human being is much more imperfect than a preceding one. But on the whole and on a large scale such irregularities balance themselves out again within certain limits in the successive courses of life. [2]

## Citations

[1] GA 9, pp. 128ff (1961 edition, 214 pages). [2] GA 9, pp. 131f (1961 edition, 214 pages).

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GA 9: Theosophy. Introduction to Supersensible World Knowledge and Human Destiny (1904).

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### 12: Incarnation preparation in the world of spirit

The formation of the spirit in the spirit-land takes place by man's settling into the various regions of that land. His own life merges with these regions in appropriate succession; he temporarily takes on their characteristics. They thereby permeate his being with their being, so that the former can then work strengthened with the latter in the earthly. - In the first region man is surrounded by the spiritual archetypes of earthly things. During his life on earth he gets to know only the shadows of these archetypes, which he grasps in his thoughts. What is merely thought on earth is experienced in this region. Man walks under thoughts, but these thoughts are real entities. What he perceived with his senses during his life on earth now affects him in his thought form. But the thought does not appear as the shadow which hides behind the things, but it is living reality which produces the things. Man is, as it were, in the thought-workshop in which earthly things are shaped and formed. For in the land of the spirit everything is vital activity and activity. Here the world of thoughts is at work as a world of living beings, creating and forming. One sees there how that is formed which one has experienced in the earthly existence. As in the physical body one experiences the sensual things as reality, so now as spirit one experiences the spiritual forces of formation as real. Among the thought beings that are present there is also the thought of one's own physical corporeality. One feels raptured from this. Only the spiritual entity is felt as belonging to oneself. And if one becomes aware of the discarded body, as in the memory, no longer as physical, but as a thought being, then already in the contemplation its belonging to the outer world becomes apparent. One learns to regard it as something belonging to the outer world, as a member of this outer world. Consequently, one no longer separates one's corporeality from the other external world as something more closely related to one's own self. One feels a unity in the entire outer world including one's own bodily embodiments. Thus one looks here at the archetypes of the physical-bodily reality as at a unity to which one has belonged oneself. One therefore gradually learns to know one's kinship, one's unity with the environment through observation. One learns to say to it: That which spreads out here around you, that was you yourself. - But this is one of the basic ideas of the old Indian Vedanta wisdom. The "wise man" already appropriates during his life on earth what the other experiences after death, namely to grasp the thought that he himself is related to all things, the thought: "That is you." (Tat Tvam Asi of the Vedantists ). In earthly life this is an ideal to which the thought-life can indulge; in the land of spirits it is an immediate fact which becomes ever clearer to us through spiritual experience. And man himself becomes more and more aware in this land that he, according to his very nature, belongs to the spirit world. He perceives himself as a spirit among spirits, as a member of the primordial spirits, and he will feel within himself the

primordial spirit's word: "I am the primordial spirit." The wisdom of Vedanta says: "I am Brahman" that means I belong as a limb to the primordial being from which all beings originate. - One sees: what is grasped in earth life as a shadowy thought and where all wisdom aims at, that is directly experienced in the spirit land. Yes, it is thought during the life on earth only because it is a fact in the spiritual existence. [1]

Thus, during his spiritual existence, man sees the conditions and facts in which he stands in the midst of during his life on earth from a higher vantage point, as it were from the outside. And in the lowest region of the spirit land he lives in such a way opposite the earthly conditions, which are directly connected with the physical bodily reality. - Man is born on earth into a family, into a nation; he lives in a certain land. His earthly existence is determined by all these conditions. Because of the circumstances in the physical world, he finds this or that friend. He does this or that business. All this determines his earthly living conditions. All this meets him now during his life in the first region of the spirit land as a living thought entity. He lives through it all again in a certain way. But he lives through it from the active-spiritual side. The family love he has practiced, the friendship he has shown, come alive in him from within, and his faculties are increased in this direction. That in the human spirit which works as the power of family love, of friendship, is strengthened. In this respect he later re-enters earthly existence as a more perfect man. It is, so to speak, the everyday conditions of earthly life which ripen as fruits in this lowest region of the spirit land. And that part of man whose interests are completely absorbed in these everyday circumstances will feel related to this region for the longest part of his spiritual life between two embodiments. - The people with whom one has lived in the physical world, one finds again in the spiritual world. Just as everything falls away from the soul that was its own through the physical body, so also the bond that links soul and soul in physical life breaks away from the conditions that have meaning and effectiveness only in the physical world. But beyond death everything continues - into the spiritual world - what was soul of the soul in the physical life. It is natural that words, which are coined for physical conditions, can only inaccurately represent what is going on in the spiritual world. But if this is taken into consideration, then it may be called quite correct when it is said: the souls belonging together in the physical life find themselves again in the spiritual world in order to continue their living together there in a corresponding way. - The next region is the one in which the common life of the earthly world flows as a thought entity, as it were as the liquid element of the spirit land. As long as one observes the world in physical embodiment, life appears bound to individual living beings. In the spirit land it is detached from this and flows through the whole land, as it were, as life-blood. There is the living unity that is present in everything. During the earthly life also only a reflection of it appears to the human being. And this is expressed in every form of reverence that man pays to the whole, to the unity and harmony of the world. The religious life of man is written from this reflection. Man becomes aware of the extent to which the comprehensive meaning of existence does not lie in the transient, in the individual. He regards this transient as a "likeness" and image of an eternal, a harmonious unity. He offers religious cult acts to it. - In the spirit land appears not the reflection, but the real form as a living thought entity. Here man can really unite with the unity he has

worshipped on earth. The fruits of the religious life and all that is connected with it come forth in this region. The ability to recognize oneself as a member of a whole is formed here. The religious sentiments, everything that has already striven in life for a pure, noble morality, will draw strength from this region during a large part of the intermediate spiritual state. And man will be reincarnated with an increase of his faculties towards this direction. [2]

## Citations

[1] GA 9, pp. 132ff (1961 edition, 214 pages)

[2] GA 9, pp. 134ff (1961 edition, 214 pages)

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## 13: The "social life" in the world of spirit

Whereas in the first region of the spirit land one is with the souls with whom in the preceding physical life one was related by the nearest bonds of the physical world, in the second region of the Devachan one enters the realm of all those with whom one felt one in a wider sense: by a common worship, by common confession, and so on. It must be emphasized that the spiritual experiences of the preceding regions remain during the following ones. Nor do the regions of the spirit land lie apart like divisions; they interpenetrate, and man experiences himself in a new region not because he has "entered" it externally in any form, but because he has acquired within himself the inner faculties to perceive that within which he was previously imperceptive. The third region contains the archetypes of the psychic world. Everything that lives in this world is present here as a living thought entity. One finds there the archetypes of the desires, the wishes, the feelings and so on. But here in the spirit world there is nothing of selfishness attached to the spiritual. Just as all life in the second region, in this third all desires, wishes, all lust and unwillingness form a unity. The desire, the wish of the other is not different from my desire and wish. The sensations and feelings of all beings are a common world, which includes and surrounds all the rest, as the physical circle of air surrounds the earth. This region is, as it were, the atmosphere of the spirit land. Everything will bear fruit here that man has accomplished in earthly life in the service of commonality, in selfless devotion to his fellow human beings. For through this service, through this devotion, he has lived in a reflection of the third region of the spirit land. The great benefactors of the human race, the devoted natures, those who perform the great services in the communities, have acquired their ability to do so in this region, having acquired in previous lives the entitlement to a special kinship with it. [1]

It is evident that the described three regions of the spirit land stand in a certain relation to the worlds standing under them, to the physical and the spiritual world. For they contain the archetypes, the living thought beings, which assume physical or spiritual existence in these worlds. The fourth region is the "pure spirit land". But also this one is not in the full sense of the word. It differs from the three lower regions in that in these the archetypes of those physical and spiritual conditions are encountered which man finds in the physical and spiritual world before he himself intervenes in these worlds. The relations of everyday life are connected with the things and beings that man finds in the world, but through him in the world are the creations of the arts and sciences, of technology, of the state, and so on, in short, everything that he incorporates into the world as original works of his spirit. To all this, without his intervention, no physical images would exist in the world. The original images of these purely human creations are found in the fourth region of the spirit land. - What man forms in scientific results, in artistic ideas and designs, in thoughts of technology during the earthly life, bears its fruits in this fourth region. From this region, therefore, artists, scholars, great inventors draw their impulses during their stay in the spirit land and increase their genius here, in order to be able to contribute to the further development of human culture to a greater extent during a reincarnation. - One should not imagine that this fourth region has a meaning only for particularly outstanding people. It has such a meaning for all human beings. Everything that occupies man in physical life beyond the sphere of everyday life, desires and wills, has its original source in this region. If man did not pass through it in the time between death and a new birth, he would have no interests in a further life which would lead beyond the narrow circle of the personal conduct of life to the general human. - It has been said above that also this region cannot be called in the full sense the pure spirit land. This is the case because the state in which people have left the cultural development on earth plays into their spiritual existence. They can enjoy in the spirit land only the fruits of what was possible for them to accomplish according to their talent and according to the degree of development of the people, state and so on, into which they were born. [2]

## Citations

[1] GA 9, page 137f (1961 edition, 214 pages)

[2] GA 9, page 138ff (edition 1961, 214 pages)

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## 14: Higher realms in the world of spirit

In the still higher regions of the spirit land, the human spirit is now freed from every earthly fetter. It ascends into the pure spirit land, where it experiences the intentions, the goals, which the spirit has set for itself with the earthly life. Everything that is already realized in the world brings the highest goals and intentions to existence only in a more or less weak imitation. Every crystal, every tree, every animal and also everything that is realized in the realm of human creation - all this only gives afterimages of what the spirit intends. And man during his embodiments can only link up with these imperfect after-images of the perfect intentions and aims. Thus, however, within one of his embodiments he himself can only be such an after-image of what is intended with him in the realm of the spirit. What he actually is as spirit, therefore, only comes to light when he ascends to the fifth region of the spirit land in the intermediate state between two embodiments. What he is here is really himself. That is that which receives an external existence in the manifold embodiments. In this region the true self of man can live itself out freely in all directions. And this self is therefore that which in every embodiment always appears anew as the one. This self brings with it the faculties which have been formed in the lower regions of the spirit-land. It thus carries over the fruits of the earlier courses of life into the following ones. It is the bearer of the results of former embodiments. In the realm of intentions and goals, then, is the self when it lives in the fifth region. Just as the architect learns from the imperfections that have come to him, and just as he incorporates into his new plans only that which he has been able to transform from these imperfections into perfections, so the self strips off from its results from previous lives in the fifth region that which is connected with the imperfections of the lower worlds, and fertilizes the intentions of the spirit land with which it now lives together with the results of its previous lives. It is clear that the power that can be drawn from this region will depend on how much the self has acquired during its embodiment of such results that are suitable to be included in the world of intentions. The self which during the earthly existence has sought to realize the intentions of the spirit through a lively thought life or through wise, laborious love, will acquire a great entitlement to this region. That which is completely absorbed in everyday circumstances, which has lived only in the transitory, has sown no seeds that can play a role in the intentions of the eternal world order. Only the little that it has worked beyond the interests of the day can unfold as fruit in these upper regions of the spirit land. But one should not think that here above all such comes into consideration what brings "earthly fame" or similar. No, it is just that which in the smallest circle of life leads to the consciousness that everything has its meaning for the eternal course of existence. One must become familiar with the thought that man must judge differently in this region than he can do in physical life. If, for example, he has acquired little that is related to this fifth region, there arises in him the urge to imprint upon himself for the following physical life an impulse which will cause this life to proceed in such a way that in the fate or karma of the same the corresponding effect of the deficiency will come to light. What then appears in the following life on earth as a sorrowful fate, from the point of view of this life.

The human being finds in this region of the spirit land that it is absolutely necessary for him.



Since man lives in the fifth region in his actual self, he is also lifted out of everything that envelops him from the lower worlds during the embodiments. He is what he always was and always will be during the course of his embodiments. He lives in the rule of the intentions which exist for these embodiments and which he incorporates into his own self. He looks back on his own past and he feels that everything he has experienced in the same is incorporated into the intentions he has to realize in the future. A kind of memory for his earlier courses of life and the prophetic foresight for his later ones flash up. - One sees: that which has been called here the spirit-self (Manas) lives in this region, as far as it is developed, in its reality appropriate to it. It forms itself and prepares itself in order to enable itself in a new embodiment to carry out the spiritual intentions in the earthly reality. If this spirit self has developed so far during a series of stays in the spirit land that it can move completely freely in this land, then it will seek its true home more and more here. Life in spirit will become as familiar to it as life in physical reality is to earthly man. The points of view of the spirit world henceforth also act as the authoritative ones, which it makes its own, more or less consciously or unconsciously, for the following earthly lives. The self can feel itself as a member of the divine world order. The barriers and laws of earthly life do not touch it in its innermost being. The power for everything it does comes from the spiritual world. The spiritual world, however, is a unity. Whoever lives in it knows how the eternal created the past, and he can determine the direction for the future from the eternal. The view over the past widens to a perfect one. A person who has reached this stage gives himself goals to carry out in a next embodiment. From the spirit land he influences his future so that it runs in the sense of the true and spiritual. During the intermediate state between two embodiments, man is in the presence of all those exalted beings before whose gaze the divine wisdom lies unveiled. For he has climbed the level on which he can understand it. In the sixth region man will accomplish in all his actions that which is most appropriate to the true nature of the world. For he cannot seek what is pious to him, but only what should happen according to the right course of the world order. The seventh region of the spirit land leads to the border of the three worlds. Here man faces the "nuclei of life" which are transferred from higher worlds into the three described ones in order to accomplish their tasks there. If man is at the border of the three worlds, he thus recognizes himself in his own life nucleus. This entails that the riddles of these three worlds must be solved for him. [1]

In the physical life the abilities of the soul, through which it has the experiences described here in the spiritual world, are not conscious under the ordinary conditions of life. They work in their unconscious depths on the bodily organs which bring about the consciousness of the physical world. This is exactly the reason why they remain imperceptible for this world. Also the eye does not see itself, because in it the forces work, which make other visible. If one wants to judge to what extent a human life running between birth and death can be the result of preceding earth lives, then one must consider that a point of view situated within this life itself, as one must take it at first naturally, does not provide a possibility of judgement. For such a point of view, for example, an earth life could appear as sorrowful, imperfect, and so on, while it must appear precisely in this form for a point of view lying outside this earth life itself, with its

sorrow, in its imperfection, as the result of earlier lives. By entering the path of knowledge (see: training) the soul detaches itself from the conditions of the life of the body. It can thereby perceive in the image the experiences which it undergoes between death and a new birth (see: Life between Death and a New Birth). Such perception gives the possibility to describe the processes of the spirit land in such a way as it was done here sketchily. Only if one does not neglect to keep in mind that the whole condition of the soul is different in the physical body than in the purely spiritual experience, one will see the description given here in the right light. [2]

## Citations

[1] GA 9, page 140 (1961 edition, 214 pages)

[2] GA 9, page 144f (edition 1961, 214 pages)

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## 15: Earth man and the effects of the three worlds

The entities of the soul world (astral plan) and the spirit land (devachan) cannot be the object of external sensual perception. The objects of this sensual perception are to be added to the described two worlds as a third one. Also during his bodily existence man lives simultaneously in the three worlds. He perceives the things of the sensual world and acts on them. The entities of the world of the soul affect him by their forces of sympathy and antipathy; and his own soul excites waves in the world of the soul by its inclinations and aversions, by its wishes and desires. The spiritual essence of things, however, is reflected in his thought-world; and he himself, as a thinking spirit-being, is citizen of the spirit-land and comrade of all that lives in this region of the world. - From this it is evident that the sensual world is only a part of that which surrounds man. From its general environment this part stands out with a certain independence, because the senses can perceive it, which leave out of consideration the soul and spiritual, which likewise belongs to this world. Just as a piece of ice floating on the water is the substance of the surrounding water, but is distinguished from it by certain properties, so the sense things are the substance of the surrounding world of soul and spirit; and they are distinguished from these by certain properties which make them perceptible to the senses. They are - half figuratively spoken - condensed spirit- and soul-forms; and the condensation causes that the senses can get knowledge of them. Yes, as the ice is only a form in which the water exists, so the sense things are only a form in which the soul and spirit beings exist. If one has understood this, then one also understands that, as water can pass into ice, so the spirit world can pass into the soul world and the soul world into the sense world. From this point of view it is also clear why man can think about sensual things. Only because the things of the world of senses are nothing else than the condensed spiritual entities,

the human being, who elevates himself to these spiritual entities by his thoughts, can understand the things in his thinking. The sense things originate from the spirit world, they are only another form of the spirit entities; and when man thinks about things, his inner being is only directed away from the sense form and toward the spiritual archetypes of these things. To understand a thing by thought is a process which may be compared to that by which a solid body is first made liquid in fire, that the chemist may then examine it in its liquid form. [1]

In the various regions of the spirit-land the spiritual archetypes of the sensuous world are manifested. In the fifth, sixth and seventh regions these archetypes are still found as living germinal points, in the four lower regions they form themselves into spiritual entities. The spirit of man perceives these spiritual images in a shadowy reflection, when he wants to obtain the understanding of sensual things by his thinking. How these things have condensed to the sensuous world, that is a question for him who strives for a spiritual understanding of his environment. [2]

## Citations

[1] GA 9, pp. 145ff (1961 edition, 214 pages)

[2] GA 9, page 148 (1961 edition, 214 pages)

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## 16: World of spirit as elementary realms for man, animal, plant and mineral

First of all, for the human sense view, this environment is divided into the four clearly separated stages: the mineral, the plant, the animal and the human. The mineral kingdom is perceived by the senses and comprehended by the mind. If one makes a thought about a mineral body, then one has to do with a double: with the sense thing and with the thought. According to the (above) one has to imagine that this sense thing is a condensed thought being. Now a mineral being acts on another in an external way. It touches it and moves it; it heats it, illuminates it, dissolves it and so on. This external mode of action is to be expressed by thoughts. Man thinks about how the mineral things act on each other externally according to the law. Thereby his individual thoughts expand to a thought picture of the whole mineral world. And this thought-image is a reflection of the archetype of the whole mineral world of the senses. It is to be found as a whole in the spiritual world. In the plant kingdom the phenomena of growth and reproduction are added to the external effect of one thing on another. The plant has within itself the power to give itself its living form and to produce this form in a being of its own kind. And between the formless nature of the mineral substances, as they appear to us in the gases, in the

liquids and so on, and the living form of the plant world, the forms of the crystals stand in the middle. In the crystals we have to look for the transition from the formless mineral world to the living formative ability of the plant kingdom. - In this outwardly sensuous process of formation - in the two kingdoms, the mineral and the vegetable - we have to see the sensuous condensation of the purely spiritual process which takes place when the spiritual germs of the three upper regions of the spirit-land form themselves into the spiritual forms of the lower regions. The process of crystallization corresponds in the spiritual world as its archetype to the transition from the formless spirit germ to the formed entity. If this transition is condensed in such a way that the senses can perceive it in its result, it presents itself in the world of the senses as a mineral process of crystallization. - Now also in the plant life a formed spirit germ is present. But here the living ability to form is still preserved in the formed being. In the crystal the spirit germ has lost its ability to form. It has lived itself out in the created form. The plant has form and in addition also still formative ability. The property of the spirit germs in the upper regions of the spirit land has been preserved for the plant life. The plant is thus form like the crystal, and in addition still formative power. Apart from the form which the primeval beings have assumed in the form of the plant, there is another form working on it which bears the imprint of the spirit beings from the upper regions. In the plant, however, only what lives out in the finished form is perceptible to the senses; the forming entities that give this form its vitality are present in the plant kingdom in a sensually imperceptible way. The sensual eye sees the small lily of today and the larger one after some time. The forming power, which works the latter out of the first, this eye does not see. This forming power entity is the sensual-invisible weaving part in the plant world. The spirit germs have descended one level to work in the realm of forms. In spiritual science one can speak of elementary kingdoms. If one calls the primeval forms, which do not have a form yet, the first elementary kingdom, then the ones working as the work masters of the plant growth are members of the second elementary kingdom. - In the animal world, sensation and instinct are added to the abilities of growth and reproduction. These are expressions of the spiritual world. A being endowed with them belongs to this world, receives impressions from it and exerts effects on it.

Now every sensation, every instinct, which arises in an animal being, is brought out of the underground of the animal soul. The form is more permanent than the sensation or the instinct. One can say, as the changing plant form relates to the rigid crystal form, so the sentient life relates to the more permanent living form. The plant is, so to speak, absorbed in the formative power; during its life, it is always adding new forms. First it forms the root, then the leaves, then the blossoms and so on. The animal concludes with a form that is complete in itself and develops within it the changeable life of feeling and instinct. And this life has its existence in the spiritual world. The sensations and the drives are for the animal the formless, which develops in always new forms. In the end they have their archetypal processes in the highest regions of the spirit-land. But they operate in the spiritual world. Thus, in the animal world, in addition to the power beings which, as sensuous-invisible ones, direct growth and reproduction, others are added which have risen still one step lower into the spiritual world. In the animal kingdom formless beings

are present as the masters of work, which cause the sensations and urges, and which clothe themselves in spiritual shells. They are the actual builders of the animal forms. In spiritual science the area to which they belong can be called the third elementary kingdom. In addition to the abilities mentioned for plants and animals, man is endowed with the ability to process sensations into ideas and thoughts and to regulate his instincts by thinking. The thought, which appears in the plant as form, in the animal as soul force, appears with him as thought itself, in its own form. The animal is soul; the human being is spirit. The spirit being has descended still one step lower. In the animal it is soul-forming. In man it has moved into the sensuous material world itself. The spirit is present within the human sensual body. And because it appears in the sensual dress, it can appear only as that shadowy reflection which the thought represents of the spirit being. The thought is the form which the formless spiritual being takes in man, as it takes form in the plant and soul in the animal. Thus man has no elementary kingdom building him up outside himself, in so far as he is a thinking being. His elementary kingdom works in his sensual body. Only in so far as man is a form and a sentient being, the elementary beings of the same kind work on him as work on the plants and animals. In the animal the spirit feels itself as soul; it does not yet grasp itself as spirit. In man the spirit recognizes itself as spirit, though - through the physical conditions - as a shadowy reflection of the spirit, as thought. [In this sense the threefold world is divided in the following way:

1. The kingdom of the original formless beings - first elementary realm
2. The kingdom of the form-creating beings - second elementary realm
3. The kingdom of the spiritual beings - third elementary realm
4. The kingdom of the created forms - crystal forms
5. The kingdom which becomes sensually perceptible in forms, but in which the form-creating beings work - plant realm
6. The kingdom, which becomes sensually perceptible in forms, but in which the form-creating and the soul-acting entities also work - animal realm
7. The kingdom, in which the forms are sensually perceptible, but in which the form-creating and soul-acting entities still work and in which the spirit itself forms itself in the form of the thought within the world of the senses - human kingdom

This shows how the basic components of the human being living in the body are connected with the spiritual world. The physical body, the etheric body, the feeling soul body and the mind soul are to be regarded as archetypes of the spirit world condensed in the world of the senses. The physical body comes into being by the fact that the archetype of man is condensed up to the sensual appearance. Therefore, one can also call this physical body a being of the first elementary kingdom condensed to sensual manifestation. The etheric body arises from the fact that the form thus created is kept

mobile by an entity which extends its activity into the sensuous realm, but does not itself become sensuously perceptible. If one wants to characterize this entity completely, one must say that it first has its origin in the highest regions of the spirit land and then forms itself in the second region into an archetype of life. As such an archetype of life it works in the sensual world. In a similar way, the entity that builds up the sentient soul body has its origin in the highest regions of the spirit world, forms itself in the third region of the same into the archetype of the soul world and works as such in the sensual world. The soul of understanding, however, is formed by the fact that the original image of the thinking human being is formed into a thought in the fourth region of the spirit world and as such works directly as a thinking human being in the sense world.

Thus man stands within the sense world; thus the spirit works on his physical body, on his etheric body and on his sentient soul body. This is how this spirit appears in the mind soul. - On the three lower members of man, therefore, the archetypes in the form of entities co-operate, which in a certain way are externally opposed to him; in his mind-soul he himself becomes a conscious worker in himself. - And the entities which work on his physical body are the same which form the mineral nature. In his etheric body there are working entities of the kind that live in the plant kingdom, in his sentient soul body those that live in the animal kingdom in a way that is imperceptible to the senses, but which extend their activity into these realms. Thus the different worlds work together. The world in which man lives is the expression of this interaction. [2]

If one has understood the sensual world in this way, then also the understanding for beings of another kind opens, than those are, which have their existence in the mentioned four realms of nature. An example of such entities is what is called national spirit, folk spirit. This does not appear directly in a sensual way. It lives itself out in the sensations, feelings, inclinations and so on, which are observed as common to a people. It is an entity that does not embody itself sensuously; but as man forms his body sensuously, so it forms its own from the material of the soul world. This soul body of the people's spirit is like a cloud in which the members of a people live, whose effects appear in the souls of the people concerned, but which does not originate from these souls themselves. Whoever does not imagine the people's spirit in this way, for him it remains a shadowy thought-image without essence and life, an empty abstraction. - And a similar thing could be said with regard to what is called Zeitgeist. Yes, thereby the spiritual view is widened over a multiplicity of others, of lower and higher entities, which live in the environment of man, without him being able to perceive them sensually. [3]

## Citation

[1] GA 9, page 148uf (1961 edition, 214 pages)

[2] GA 9, page 153ff (edition 1961, 214 pages)

[3] GA 9, pp. 154f (1961 edition, 214 pages)

## Sources

## 17: Higher spiritual beings and elemental spirits

Those who have spiritual perception perceive such beings and can describe them. To the lower kinds of such beings belong all what the perceivers of the spiritual world describe as salamanders (elemental beings of fire), sylphs (elemental beings of air), undines (elemental beings of liquid), gnomes (elemental beings of solid). It should not need to be said that such descriptions cannot be considered as images of the reality on which they are based. If they were, then the world meant by them would not be a spiritual, but a coarse-sensual one. They are (thus) illustrations of a spiritual reality, which can be represented just in this way, by parables. If he, who wants to accept only the sensual seeing, regards such entities as outgrowths of a wild fantasy and superstition, then this is quite understandable. For sensual eyes they can of course never become visible, because they have no sensual body. The superstition does not lie in the fact that one regards such beings as real, but that one believes that they appear in a sensual way. Beings of such a form participate in the building of the world, and one meets them as soon as one enters the higher areas of the world which are closed to the bodily senses. Superstitious are not those who see in such descriptions the images of spiritual realities, but those who believe in the sensual existence of the images, but also those who reject the spirit, because they think they have to reject the sensual image. - Also such beings are to be recorded, who do not descend to the soul world, but whose cover is woven only from formations of the spirit land. Man perceives them, becomes their comrade, if he opens the spiritual eye and the spiritual ear for them. - Through such an opening man understands many things which without it he can only stare at without understanding. It becomes bright around him; he sees the causes of what takes place in the world of the senses as effects. He grasps that which, without the spiritual eye, he either denies altogether, or towards which he must be content with the saying: "There are more things in heaven and on earth than your scholastic wisdom can dream of." [1]

### Citations

[1] GA 9, page 156f (1961 edition, 214 pages)

### Sources

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## 18: Sleep

One cannot penetrate the essence of waking consciousness without observing that state which man undergoes during sleep; and one cannot approach the riddle of life without contemplating death. [1] When man sinks into sleep, the coherence in his limbs changes. That which lies on the resting place of the sleeping man contains the physical body and the etheric body, but not the astral body and the ego. Because the etheric body remains connected with the physical body during sleep, the life effects continue. For at the moment when the physical body would be left to itself, it would have to disintegrate. For an unbiased judgment, the opinion that in sleep the astral body with all pleasure and suffering, with the whole world of imagination and will, is destroyed, can of course not be taken into consideration. It exists in a different state. For the human ego and the astral body not only to be filled with pleasure and suffering and all the other things mentioned, but also to have a conscious perception of them, it is necessary that the astral body be connected with the physical body and etheric body. In waking it is this, in sleeping it is not. For the observation in the outer world the astral body disappears in sleep; the supersensible perception has to follow it in its life until it again takes possession of the physical body and etheric body on awakening. Even if the astral body does not experience any ideas during sleep, even if it does not experience pleasure and suffering and the like: it does not remain inactive. On the contrary, just in the state of sleep a lively activity is incumbent upon it. [2] The physical body can receive the form and shape it has for man only through the human etheric body. But this human form of the physical body can only be preserved by such an etheric body, which in turn is supplied with the corresponding forces by the astral body. The etheric body is the builder, the architect of the physical body. But it can form in the right sense only if it receives the stimulus for the way in which it is to form from the astral body. In the astral body are the models according to which the etheric body gives its form to the physical body. While awake, the astral body is not filled with these models for the physical body, or at least only to a certain degree. For during waking the soul puts its own images in the place of these models. When man directs his senses to his surroundings, he forms images in his imagination, which are the images of the world surrounding him. These images are at first disturbances for those images which stimulate the etheric body for the preservation of the physical body. Only then, if man could by his own activity supply his astral body with those images which can give the right stimulation to the etheric body, such a disturbance would not exist. In the human existence this disturbance plays an important role. And it expresses itself in the fact that during waking the models for the etheric body do not work in their full power. The astral body performs its waking work within the physical body; during sleep it works on it from the outside. [3]

As the physical body is embedded in the physical world to which it belongs, so the astral body belongs to its own. Only it is torn out of this world by the waking life. One can visualize what is going on with a comparison. Think of a vessel with water. A drop is nothing separate within this whole mass of water. But take a small sponge and suck with it a drop out of the whole mass of water. This is what happens to the human astral body when it awakens. During sleep he is in the same world as he is. It forms something that



belongs to it in a certain way. When awakening, the physical body and the etheric body absorb it. They fill themselves with him. They contain the organs through which he perceives the outer world. But in order to come to this perception, he must separate himself from his world. But from this world of his he can only receive the models which he needs for the etheric body. - Just as the physical body, for example, receives the food from its surroundings, so the astral body receives the images of the world surrounding it during the state of sleep. In fact, it lives outside the physical and the etheric body in the universe. In the same universe out of which the whole man is born. In this universe is the source of the images through which man receives his form. He is harmoniously incorporated into this universe. And he lifts himself out of this comprehensive harmony during waking in order to come to the outer perception. In sleep his astral body returns to this harmony of the universe. On awakening from it, he introduces so much power into his bodies that he can again dispense with dwelling in the harmony for some time. The astral body returns to its home during sleep and on awakening brings newly strengthened forces into life. The external expression of the possession which the astral body brings with it on awakening is found in the refreshment which a sound sleep gives. [4]

## Citations

- [1] GA 13, page 80 (edition 1962, 444 pages)
- [2] GA 13, page 82ff (edition 1962, 444 pages)
- [3] GA 13, page 85f (edition 1962, 444 pages)
- [4] GA 13, page 87f (1962 edition, 444 pages)

## Sources

GA 13: Occult Science - An Outline (1910).

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## 19: Dreaming

Dreaming is an intermediate state between waking and sleeping. What the dream experiences present to a sensible contemplation is the colorful jumble of a world of images, which nevertheless also contains something of rule and law. Rising and flowing away, often in confused succession, seems to show this world at first. In his dream life, man is unbound from the law of waking consciousness, which chains him to the perception of the senses and to the rules of his power of judgment. And yet the dream has something of mysterious laws, which are attractive and appealing to the human imagination and which are the deeper cause of the fact that one always likes to compare the beautiful play of imagination, as it is the basis of artistic feeling, with dreaming. One need (indeed) only remember some characteristic dreams, and one will find this confirmed. A man dreams, for example, that he chases away a dog lunging at him. He wakes up and finds himself unconsciously pushing off a part of the bedspread that has settled on an unfamiliar part of his body and has therefore become a nuisance to him. What does the dream life make of the sensually perceptible process? What the senses

would perceive in the awake state, the sleep life initially leaves completely in the unconscious. But it holds on to something essential, namely the fact that man wants to ward something off from himself. And around this it spins a pictorial process. The images as such are echoes from the waking daily life. The way they are taken from this has something arbitrary. The dream creates images; it is a symbolist. [1]

One sees: immediately, when the senses cease their activity, a creative element asserts itself for the human being. It is the same creative, which is also present in full dreamless sleep and which represents that state of soul, which appears as a contrast to the awake state of soul. If dreamless sleep is to occur, the astral body must be withdrawn from the etheric body and the physical body. During dreaming it is separated from the physical body in so far as it no longer has any connection with its sense organs; but it still maintains a certain connection with the etheric body. The fact that the processes of the astral body can be perceived in images comes from its connection with the etheric body. At the moment when this connection ceases, the images sink into the darkness of unconsciousness, and the dreamless sleep is there. The arbitrary and often absurd nature of the dream images is due to the fact that the astral body, because of its separation from the sense organs of the physical body, cannot relate its images to the correct objects and processes of the external environment. Particularly clarifying for this fact is the observation of such a dream, in which the ego splits, so to speak. For example, if someone dreams that he as a pupil cannot answer a question put to him by the teacher, while immediately afterwards the teacher himself answers it. Because the dreamer cannot use the organs of perception of his physical body, he is not able to relate the two processes to himself as the same person. So also in order to recognize himself as a permanent I, the equipment with external organs of perception belongs for the human being first. Only then, if man had acquired the ability to become aware of his I in another way than through such organs of perception, the permanent I would be perceptible for him also outside of his physical body. The supersensible consciousness has to acquire such abilities. [2]

## Citations

[1] GA 13, page 89f (edition 1962, 444 pages)

[2] GA 13, page 91f (edition 1962, 444 pages)

## Sources

GA 13: Occult Science - An Outline (1910).

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## 20: Death and the after-death experiences

Death also occurs through nothing else than through a change in the connection of the members of the human being. That, too, which in relation to it the supersensible observation yields, can be seen in its effects in the manifest world; and the unbiased

power of judgment will find the communication of the supersensible knowledge confirmed by the observation of the outer life here also. But for these facts the expression of the invisible in the visible is less apparent. While at the transition into sleep the astral body only detaches itself from its connection with the etheric body and the physical body, but the latter remain connected, the separation of the physical body from the etheric body occurs with death. The physical body is left to its own forces and must therefore decay as a corpse. For the etheric body, however, a state has now occurred with death in which it never was during the time between birth and death. It is now united with its astral body without the physical body being present. For the etheric body and the astral body do not separate immediately after the onset of death. They hold together for a while by a force, which is easily understandable that it must be present. If it were not present, the etheric body could not separate from the physical body. For it is held together with the physical body: this is shown by sleep, where the astral body is not able to tear apart these two members of the human being. This power comes into effect at death. It detaches the etheric body from the physical one, so that the former is now united with the astral body. Supersensible observation shows that this connection is different for different people after death. The duration is measured in days (about 3 days). - Later the astral body also detaches from its etheric body and goes its way without it. During the connection of the two bodies the human being is in a state through which he can perceive the experiences of his astral body. As long as the physical body is there, with the detachment of the astral body from it, work must immediately begin from the outside to refresh the worn-out organs. When the physical body is detached, this work ceases. But the power, which is used on it when the human being is asleep, remains after death, and it can now be used for other things. It is now used to make perceptible the own processes of the astral body. [1]

### **Life tableau as the first night-death experience**

During the connection of the human being with his physical body, the outer world comes into consciousness in images; after the discarding of this body, what the astral body experiences becomes perceptible, if it is not connected with this outer world by any physical sense organs. At first it has no new experiences. The connection with the etheric body prevents it from experiencing anything new. What he does have, however, is the memory of the past life. The still existing etheric body lets this appear as a comprehensive, life-full painting (see under: Life Tableau). This is the first experience of man after death. He perceives the (whole) life between birth and death as a series of pictures spread out before him. During (the) life the memory is present only in the waking state, when man is connected with his physical body. It is present only insofar as this body allows it. Nothing is lost to the soul from what makes an impression on it during life. If the physical body were a perfect tool for this purpose, it would have to be possible at every moment of life to conjure up its entire past before the soul. With death this obstacle ceases. As long as the etheric body remains, there is a certain perfection of memory. But it fades away in the measure in which the etheric body loses the form which it had during its stay in the physical body and which is similar to the physical body. This is also the reason why the astral body separates from the etheric body after some time. It can

remain united with the etheric body only as long as its form corresponding to the physical body lasts. - During the life between birth and death a separation of the etheric body occurs only in exceptional cases and only for a short time. For example, when a person puts a strain on one of his limbs, a part of the etheric body can separate from the physical one. A limb in which this is the case is said to have "fallen asleep". And the peculiar feeling that one then experiences is caused by the separation of the etheric body. The supersensible observation can see in such a case how the corresponding part of the etheric body moves out of the physical one. If a human being experiences a quite unusual shock or something like that, such a separation of the etheric body can occur for a large part of the body for a very short time. This is the case when a person suddenly sees himself close to death, for example, when he is drowning or when he is threatened with death on a mountain trip. What people who have experienced such things tell is indeed close to the truth and can be confirmed by extrasensory observation. They state that in such moments their whole life has appeared before their soul as in a large memory picture. The excellent criminal anthropologist Moritz Benedikt, who is an important researcher in many other fields of natural research, tells in his memoirs of a case he experienced himself, that once, when he was close to drowning in a bath, he saw his whole life in front of him as if in a single picture.[2]

In the first time after death the experienced past appears summarized in a memory painting. After the separation from the etheric body, the astral body is now alone on its further migration. It is not difficult to see that everything remains in the astral body which it has made its own through its own activity during its stay in the physical body. The ego has to a certain extent developed the spirit self (Manas), the life spirit (Buddhi) and the spirit man (Atma). As far as these are developed, they receive their existence not from what is present as organs in the bodies, but from the ego. And this I is just that being which needs no external organs for its perception. And it also does not need such organs in order to remain in possession of what it has united with itself. One could object: Yes, why is there no perception of this developed spirit-self, life-spirit and spirit-man in sleep? It is not present because the I is chained to the physical body between birth and death. Even if it is outside this physical body in sleep with the astral body, it remains closely connected with it. For the activity of its astral body is turned towards this physical body. Thereby the I with its perception is referred to the outer sense world, thus cannot receive the revelations of the spiritual in its immediate form. Only through death does this revelation reach the ego, because it is freed from its connection with the physical and etheric body. At that moment another world can light up for the soul, in which it is drawn out of the physical world, which in life fetters its activity to itself. [3]

### **Purification time in the Kamaloka**

The next experiences after death are different from those during life in one more respect (than the purification described above). During the purification (or Kamaloka) the human being lives backwards, so to speak. He goes through again all that he has experienced in life since birth. From the processes that immediately preceded death, he begins and experiences everything again up to childhood in backward order. And in doing

so, everything that did not arise from the spiritual nature of the I during life appears to him spiritually. Only he also experiences all this now in a reversed way. For example, a person who died in his sixtieth year and who, out of an angry upsurge, inflicted physical or mental pain on someone in his fortieth year, will experience this event again when he reaches the place of his fortieth year in his retrograde migration of existence after death. Only there he will not experience the satisfaction which he got in life by the attack on the other, but the pain which was inflicted by him on this other. Only that of such a process can be perceived as painful after death, which has arisen from a desire of the ego, which originates only from the outer physical world. In truth, the ego harms not only the other through the satisfaction of such a desire, but itself; only this harm remains invisible to it during life. After death, however, this whole damaging world of desires becomes visible to the ego. And to every being and every thing the ego then feels attracted, on which such a desire has been ignited, so that it can be extinguished again in the "consuming fire" just as it has arisen. Only when man has arrived at the time of his birth in his backward migration, all such desires have passed through the purification fire, and from now on nothing prevents him from full devotion to the spiritual world. He enters a new stage of existence. Just as he discarded the physical body at death, and soon afterwards the etheric body, so now that part of the astral body decays which can live only in the consciousness of the outer physical world. For supersensible cognition there are thus three bodies, the physical, the etheric and the astral. The time when the latter is cast off from man is marked by the fact that the time of purification is about the third of that which elapsed between birth and death. For the supersensible observation in the human environment there are continuously astral likenesses, which are thrown off by people who pass from the state of purification into a higher existence. [4]

After the purification a completely new state of consciousness occurs for the ego. Whereas before death the external perceptions had to flow to it so that the light of consciousness could fall on them, now a world flows, as it were, from within, which reaches consciousness. Also between birth and death the I lives in this world. Only there the latter dresses itself in the revelations of the senses; and only there, where the I perceives itself in its "innermost holiest of holies" with disregard of all sense perception, that announces itself in immediate form, what otherwise appears only in the veil of the sensual. In the same way as the perception of the I takes place inside before death, so from within the spiritual world reveals itself in its fullness after death and after purification. Actually, this revelation is already there immediately after the laying aside of the etheric body; however, the world of desires, which are still turned to the outer world, lies before it like an eclipsing cloud. It is as if the black demonic shadows, which arise from the desires consuming themselves in the "fire", were mixed into a blissful world of blissful experience. These desires are not mere shadows, but real entities; this becomes immediately apparent when the physical organs are removed from the ego and the latter can thus perceive what is of a spiritual nature. These beings appear as distorted images and caricatures of what has previously become known to man through sensual perception. Supersensible observation has to say of this world of purifying fire that it is inhabited by beings whose appearance can be gruesome and painful to the spiritual eye, whose desire

seems to be destruction and whose passion is directed toward an evil against which the evil of the sensory world seems insignificant. What man brings into this world in the way of marked desires appears to these entities like nourishment, through which their powers receive constant renewal and strengthening. The picture thus drawn of a world imperceptible to the senses can appear less incredible to man if he once looks with an unbiased eye at a part of the animal world. What is for the spiritual look a cruel wandering wolf? What reveals itself in what the senses perceive at him? Nothing else than a soul, which lives in desires and operates itself through these. One can call the outer form of the wolf an embodiment of these desires. Now, the beings of the purification fire are not present for the sensual, but only for the supersensual consciousness; but their effects are obvious: they consist in the destruction of the I, if this gives them food.

These effects become clearly visible when the well-founded enjoyment increases to intemperance and debauchery. For what is perceptible to the senses would also excite the ego only insofar as the enjoyment is founded in its essence. The animal is driven to desire only by that in the outer world which its three bodies desire. Man has higher pleasures because the fourth, the I, is added to the three members of the body. But if the ego desires such a satisfaction, which serves its nature not for preservation and promotion, but for destruction, then such a desire can neither be the effect of its three bodies nor that of its own nature, but only that of entities, which remain hidden to the senses according to their true form, but which can just approach the higher nature of the ego and can excite it to desires, which are not connected with sensuality, but can nevertheless only be satisfied by it. There are beings who have passions and desires for their nourishment, which are of a worse kind than all animal ones, because they do not live out their lives in the sensual, but seize the spiritual and pull it down into the sensual field. The forms of such beings are therefore more ugly and horrible to the spiritual eye than the forms of the wildest animals, in which only passions are embodied that are founded in the sensual; and the destructive powers of these beings exceed without measure all the destructive fury that is present in the sensually perceptible animal world. The supersensible knowledge must in this way widen the view of man as to a world of beings which in certain respects stands lower than the visible destruction-bringing animal world. [5]

### **After-death passage through the world of the spirit**

When man has passed through this world after death, he finds himself facing a world which contains spiritual things and which also only generates a desire in him which finds its satisfaction in the spiritual. But also now man distinguishes between what belongs to his I and what forms the environment of this I - one can also say its spiritual outer world. Only what he experiences of this environment flows to him in the same way as the perception of his own I flows to him during his stay in the body. While the environment of the human being in the life between birth and death speaks to him through the organs of his bodies, the language of the new environment penetrates directly into the "innermost sanctum" of the ego after the laying aside of all bodies. The whole environment of man is

now filled with entities which are of the same kind as his I, because only one I has access to one I. Just as minerals, plants and animals surround man in the world of the senses and compose it, so after death he is surrounded by a world composed of entities of a spiritual nature. - But man brings something into this world which is not his environment in it; it is that which the I has experienced within the world of the senses. At first the sum of these experiences appeared immediately after death, as long as the etheric body was still connected with the ego, as a comprehensive memory picture. The etheric body itself is then discarded, but something of the memory painting remains as an imperishable possession of the ego. As if one were to make an extract, an excerpt, from all the experiences that have come to the human being between birth and death, that which is left behind stands out. This is the spiritual experience of life, the fruit of it. This experience is of a spiritual nature. It contains everything that reveals itself spiritually through the senses. But without the life in the sense world it could not have come into being. This spiritual fruit of the world of the senses is felt by the ego after death as that which is now its own, its inner world and with which it enters the world that consists of beings that reveal themselves as only its ego can reveal itself in its deepest inner being. Like a plant germ, which is an extract of the whole plant, but which unfolds only when it is sunk into another world, into the earth, so now that which the I brings with it from the world of the senses unfolds like a germ on which the spiritual environment acts, which has now received it. The science of the supersensible can, however, only give pictures if it is to describe what is going on in this "spirit land"; but these pictures can be such as present themselves to the supersensible consciousness as true reality when it follows the corresponding events invisible to the sensual eye. What is to be described there can be made vivid by comparisons with the world of the senses. For although it is of a completely spiritual nature, it has similarity in a certain respect with the sensual world. As, for example, a color appears in the sensual world when this or that object acts on the eye, so an experience like that of a color appears before the ego in the spirit world when a being acts on it. Only this experience is brought forth in such a way, as within the life between birth and death only the perception of the I within can be brought about. It is not as if the light fell into the human being from outside, but as if another being acted directly on the ego and caused it to imagine this effect in a color image. Thus all beings of the spiritual environment of the ego find their expression in a color-radiating world. Since they have a different kind of origin, these color experiences of the spiritual world are of course also of a somewhat different character than those at the sensual colors. The same must be said for other impressions which man receives from the sensual world.

But the sounds of the spiritual world are most similar to the impressions of this world of the senses. And the more the human being settles into this world, the more it becomes for him a life moving in itself, which can be compared with the tones and their harmony in the sensual reality. Now he feels the sounds not as something that comes to an organ from outside, but like a power that flows out through his I into the world. He feels the sound as in the world of the senses his own speaking or singing; only in the spiritual world he knows that these sounds, which flow out of him, are at the same time the manifestation of other entities, which pour themselves through him into the world. An

even higher manifestation in the spirit world takes place when the sound becomes a "spiritual word." [6] Then not only the moving life of another spiritual being flows through the I, but such a being itself communicates its inner being to this I. And without the separating element, which every being together in the world of the senses must have, then, when the "spiritual word" flows through the I, two beings live in each other. And in this way is really the togetherness of the ego with other spiritual beings after death. The flowing life in the spirit land is perceived at the same time like a spiritual sound. The perception of the processes in the air circle of the spirit land can be compared with the hearing of the words in the physical world. That is why it is said: as the air envelops and penetrates the earth beings, so the "blowing spiritual words" envelop and penetrate the beings and processes of the spirit land. And further perceptions are still possible in this spiritual world. Also that is present here which can be compared with the warmth and with the light in the physical world. What like the warmth permeates the earthly things and beings all in the spirit land, that is the thought world itself. Only the thoughts are to be imagined there as living, independent beings. What man grasps as thoughts in the apparent world is like a shadow of what lives as a thought being in the spirit world. Think of the thought as it exists in man, lifted out of this man and endowed with its own inner life as an active, acting being, and you have a faint illustration of what fills the fourth realm of the spirit world. What man perceives as thoughts in his physical world between birth and death is only the revelation of the world of thoughts as it can form through the tools of the bodies. But everything that man cherishes in such thoughts, which mean an enrichment in the physical world, that has its origin from this area. With such thoughts one need not think merely of ideas of the great inventors, of the ingenious persons, but one can see in every man how he has "ideas" which he owes not merely to the external world, but through which he himself transforms this external world. [7]

### **Formation of the next life germ**

After death, the ego is sunk into this world with the experience that it brings with it from the sensual life. And this experience is still united with that part of the astral body which is not thrown off at the end of the purification time. Only that part falls away which after death was turned towards the physical life with its desires and wishes. The sinking of the ego with what it has appropriated from the sensual world into the spiritual world can be compared to the embedding of a seed in the ripening earth. Just as this seed draws the substances and forces from its environment in order to unfold into a new plant, so unfolding and growth is the essence of the I sunk into the spiritual world. - In that which an organ perceives, there is also hidden the power by which this organ itself is formed. The eye perceives the light. But without the light there would be no eye. Beings, which spend their life in darkness, do not form any tools for seeing. Thus the whole bodily man is created out of the hidden powers of that which is perceived by the members of the bodies. When the ego is transferred to the spirit land (Devachan), it encounters those very forces which remain hidden for physical perception. What becomes visible in the first area of the spirit land are the spiritual entities which always surround man and which have also built up his physical body. In the physical world, therefore, man perceives nothing but the revelations of those spiritual forces which have also formed his own



physical body. After death he is in the midst of these formative forces themselves, which now show themselves to him in their own, previously hidden form. In the same way, through the second region he is in the midst of the forces of which his etheric body is composed; in the third region the powers flow to him, out of which his astral body is divided. The higher regions of the spirit-land also now let flow to him that from which he is built up in the life between birth and death.

These entities of the spiritual world now work together with what man has brought with him as fruit from the previous life and what now becomes the germ. And through this interaction man is first of all built up anew as a spiritual being. In sleep the physical body and the etheric body remain; the astral body and the ego, though outside of these two, are still connected with them. What they receive in such a state of influences from the spiritual world can only serve to restore the forces exhausted during waking. But after the physical body and the etheric body have been discarded, and after the purification time also those parts of the astral body which are still connected with the physical world by their desires, everything that flows to the ego from the spiritual world now becomes not only an improver but a reshaper. And after a certain time (see: life between death and a new birth) an astral body has formed around the I, which can again dwell in such an etheric body and physical body as are proper to man between birth and death. Man can again go through a birth and appear in a new earthly existence, which now has incorporated into itself the fruit of the former life. Until the new formation of an astral body, man is a witness of its reconstruction. Since the powers of the spirit land do not reveal themselves to him through external organs, but from within, like his own I in self-consciousness, he can perceive this revelation as long as his mind is not yet directed to an external world of perception. From the moment when the astral body is newly formed, however, this sense turns outward. The astral body now again demands an outer etheric body and physical body. It thus turns away from the revelations of the inner. Therefore there is now an intermediate state in which man sinks into unconsciousness. [8]

## **Incarnation new**

Consciousness cannot reappear in the physical world until the organs necessary for physical perception have been formed. At this time, when the consciousness enlightened by inner perception ceases, the new etheric body now begins to attach itself to the astral body, and man can then also again enter into a physical body. Only such an I could take part in these two affiliations with consciousness, which has generated the forces hidden in the etheric body and the physical body, the life spirit (Buddhi) and the spirit man (Atma). As long as the human being is not so far, entities, which are further in their development than he himself, must lead this affiliation. The astral body is guided by such entities to a pair of parents, so that it can be endowed with the corresponding etheric body and physical body. - Before the affiliation of the etheric body takes place, something extraordinarily significant happens for the human being who enters physical existence again. In his previous life he has created disturbing powers, which have shown themselves during the backward migration after death. One takes up the earlier mentioned example again. In the fortieth year of his previous life, a man, out of a surge

of anger, had inflicted pain on someone. After death, this pain of the other person confronted him as a disturbing force for the development of his own ego. And so it is with all such incidents of the previous life. At the re-entry into the physical life these obstacles to the development of the ego stand before it again. As with the entrance of death a kind of memory-painting stood before the human ego, so now a foresight of the coming life. Again man sees such a painting, which now shows all the obstacles that man has to clear away if his development is to continue. And what he sees in this way becomes the starting point of forces which man must take with him into the new life. The image of the pain he has inflicted on the other becomes the force that drives the ego, when it now re-enters life, to make up for this pain. Thus the previous life has a determining effect on the new one. The deeds of this new life are caused in a certain way by those of the previous one. This lawful connection of a previous existence with a later one has to be regarded as the law of destiny; one has become accustomed to call it by the expression "karma" (Sanskrit word for "deed") borrowed from the Oriental wisdom. [9]

## The forces that change the world - Evolution

However, the construction of a new body is not the only activity, which is incumbent on the human being between the death and a new birth. During this construction, the human being lives outside the physical world. During this time, however, the physical world continues to develop. The earth changes its face in relatively short periods of time. When man appears on the earth in a new existence, this usually never looks again as it looked at the time of his last life. While he was absent from the earth, everything possible changed. In this change of the face of the earth now also hidden forces work. They work out of the same world in which man finds himself after death. And he himself must cooperate in this transformation of the earth. He can do it only under the guidance of higher beings, as long as he has not acquired a clear consciousness of the connection between the spiritual and its expression in the physical by the generation of life spirit and spirit man. But he co-creates the transformation of the earthly conditions. One can (thus) say that during the time from death to a new birth, men reshape the earth in such a way that its conditions fit to what has developed in themselves. For the physical observation the light of the sun, the change of the climate and so on affect the transformation of the earth. For the supersensible observation, in the ray of light that falls from the sun on the plant, the power of the dead people prevails. [10]

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## 21: Levels of consciousness

The human inner being, which for each individual human being originated from a divine source, would have to be completely alien to that which confronts him in earthly life. Only then this will not be the case - as it actually is - if this human inside was already connected with the outside, if it does not live in it for the first time. Only the repeated earth lives in connection with the facts in the spiritual realm between the earth lives, as set forth by spiritual research: only all this can give a satisfactory explanation of the all-round life of present mankind. [1]

The existence of the present man proceeds not merely in one but in several states of consciousness. The ordinary state is the one in which man is from awakening to falling asleep. In this state he perceives things through his senses and forms ideas from the sensory perceptions. Thus the physical world exists for him. And the powers of his soul, his thinking, feeling, willing and acting also refer to it.

With this state of consciousness now two others alternate: the dream-filled sleep and the deep, dreamless sleep. These states are often called "unconscious", but this is a term that obscures the facts under consideration here. They are in truth only other kinds of consciousness. One could call them duller kinds of the same. [2]

The dream-filled sleep does not show objects like the waking day-consciousness, but images rising and disappearing in the soul. However confusing these images may appear to the ordinary consciousness, the illumination of their essence is suitable to lead deeper into the nature of the world. What they present themselves as in the nocturnal life of the soul cannot provide a proper basis for their cognition. Such a basis is only available for the person who, in the sense of such a training as it is described in this book, trains his higher powers of cognition, which lead him to an insight into the supersensible worlds. In this chapter a description will be given of the facts which apply to these higher worlds. Whoever starts the path of knowledge into these realms himself will then also find these facts to be true.

What must first be noticed about the dream world is the allegorical character appearing in its images. With a reasonably subtle attention to the colorful variety of dream experiences, this character can become clear. From simple allegories to dramatic events, all intermediate stages are found in this world flitting through the soul. - One dreams of a

conflagration; one wakes up and realizes that one had fallen asleep next to the lamp. The light of the lamp is perceived in the dream, but not as it appears to the senses in the ordinary world, but as a symbol, as a conflagration. Or one dreams of a troop of horsemen, which one hears trampling by; one wakes up, and the horse trampling continues immediately as the striking of the clock, which has symbolized itself in this way. - One dreams of an animal scratching the side of one's face; when one wakes up, it becomes apparent that one feels a pain at the respective place, which has found its dream-symbol in the indicated way. - A longer spun out dream could be for instance the following. Someone dreams that he is walking through a forest. He hears a noise. When going on, a man steps out of a bush towards him. This goes over to the attack. A fight ensues, the attacker shoots. At this moment the dreamer wakes up and realizes that he has just knocked over the chair next to his bed. The impact of the chair has been transformed by the dream consciousness into the symbolic action described. Thus external processes or also internal facts, as in the example given above of the scratching animal, can be perceived through the dream as allegories. Also affects, moods can represent themselves in such a way. For example, someone suffers from the oppressive feeling that an unpleasant event will occur for him in the next few days. In the dream this feeling is represented in such a way that he is in danger of drowning.

Two qualities of dream consciousness are characterized by what is described in examples: first, its pictorial, allegorical character and second, something creative in it. -- This creative character is not inherent in daytime consciousness. It gives the things of the environment as they are in the physical outside world. The dream consciousness adds something from another source. [3]

By what is this source opened? By nothing else than by the fact that the sensual activity, on which the day consciousness depends, has ceased in sleep. The silence of this sensual activity is expressed by the fact that the self-consciousness of man disappears. This self-consciousness is bound to the activity of the outer senses; if these are silent, it sinks into an abyss. This fact is described in the so-called occult science by saying: the soul of man has withdrawn from the physical world. Whoever does not want to claim that man ceases to be when he falls asleep and arises anew when he wakes up, will not find it difficult to realize that man is a human being. For those who do not want to claim that man ceases to be when he falls asleep and comes into being again when he wakes up, it will not be difficult for them to realize that during sleep man exists in a world other than the physical world. This world is called the astral. The reader will take this expression at first as a designation for that world of which man receives an inkling through his dreams. The justification of this expression will emerge from other chapters of this book.

During the dream the human being dwells in the astral world. The facts and beings of this world present themselves in pictures. The consciousness perceives these images; but the self-consciousness of man is absent. - A comparison with everyday life can give an idea of what is actually present here. Man perceives an external world only insofar as he has organs for it. Without ear there would be no sound world for him, without eye no

world of the light and the colors and so on. If man could develop a new organ of his body, then something completely new would appear in his environment, just as light and colors appear as something completely new for the blind-born after his operation. [4]

Now, just as the physical body of man perceives the physical world through its organs, so during the dream another body - a spiritual one - perceives the other world, the astral, through its own organs. Only there is no self-consciousness connected with this body. In this state it is outside the realm of the human being.

If it were impossible for man's self-consciousness to come into existence even in this state, he would never be able to see through the conditions under consideration here. But this is possible through the above-mentioned and in this book described higher training, which is also called the initiation. Through it man learns to develop organs in his astral body in the dream state similar to those his physical body has for the perception of the physical world. And when these organs are developed, then during the dream a self-consciousness appears, which is also similar to that which he has during the waking life of the day. - If such a level of existence is reached, then, however, the whole dream world is transformed to a considerable extent. It loses the confusing colorfulness which it has in the ordinary sleeper, and an inner order and harmony takes its place, which is not only not inferior to the ordinary physical world, but surpasses it to a high degree with respect to these qualities. Man becomes aware that there was always another world around him, in the same sense as around the blind man there is the world of light and colors. He could not see it only for lack of organs of perception, as the blind man cannot see the world of light and colors before his operation. The significant moment when the astral organs of perception begin to be active in man is called in occult science the awakening or rebirth.

At this moment of awakening, man experiences that he is surrounded by a higher world, in which not only the things of the sensual world known to him before have other qualities, but in which there are facts and entities that were unknown to him before. - And now he also realizes that in this other world there are the images out of which the things of the sensuous world are formed. It is not an inaccurate idea to compare the way in which the physical world is formed out of the astral with the formation of ice out of water. As the ice is transformed water, so the physical world is the transformed astral. And as water is a flowing element, so in the background of the physical world stands the astral as an ever-changing world of images. Nothing fixed, closed is found in its forms as in the ordinary world. Everything flows into each other, reshapes itself. And a physical thing or a physical being arises only in such a way, as if such a flowing picture solidified in the moment. Whoever wanted to apply the ideas of the physical world with its fixed boundaries to the realm of the astral, would thereby only betray that he lacks a real insight into this quite different world. [5]

Just as the beings of the physical world are embodied in the physical body, so the astral images are the expression for entities that do not enter the physical world. They find this expression in a different substance than the human being living in the physical world, who

finds his own in flesh and blood.

What is this astral substance? It is none other than that which man actually has in himself. It is only covered by the sensual ideas during the awake everyday life. - The human desires, wishes and abhorrence, his sympathies and antipathies are attached to these sensual ideas. He desires one object, he rejects the other. In nothing else than in these desires, wishes and loathings is the source to be sought, from which also the dream consciousness draws when it transforms things into symbols. The self-consciousness of the daily life gives with the external perceptions a nourishment to the desires and wishes corresponding to them. If the activities of the outer senses are silenced, then another creative force steps in and forms the images in the material of the desires and cravings. Occult science says that the dreaming man is in the astral body woven from desires and cravings and that the physical body is abandoned by the self-consciousness. In the case of the initiated or awakened person, the situation is such that he has also left his physical body, but his self-consciousness dwells in his astral body. Just as the physical body can convey the perception of physical things, because its organs are made of the same material as the physical world, so the initiate can perceive the beings of the astral world, because he has organs made of the material of desires and cravings, in which they find their expression. The difference between the uninitiated and the initiated man is that for the former the astral world does not become visible as an external world and for the latter this is the case. For the uninitiated this astral world remains a mere inner world; he experiences it in his wishes and desires; but he does not see it. The initiate not only feels his desire; he perceives it as a thing of the external world, as the unawakened perceives tables and chairs. [6]

From this world of the initiate, however, the ordinary dream world is only a weak echo. It can be this only because the self-consciousness is not involved in it. But where is this self-consciousness during the dream? It has withdrawn into a higher world, in which man is not present as such at first. What relation he has to this world can first be made clear by a comparison. One thinks of a hand of the human being and of a tool which is held by it. As long as the hand holds the tool, both form, as it were, a whole. The latter carries out the activities which are determined by the former. But as soon as the hand puts away the tool, the latter is left to itself; and the movements of the hand are only expressions of the will in the man to whom it belongs. Thus, during the waking life of the day, the physical body must be regarded as a tool of the member of a higher entity. If this higher entity stretches a limb into the physical body, as it were, sensory activity and thus self-consciousness appear in it. If this limb leaves the body, self-consciousness ceases. Thus the innermost being of man, which can have self-consciousness, is a member of a higher being, from which it is temporarily stretched out, so to speak, and covered with the physical body. But one will form the corresponding conception still better if one regards the stretching forth at the same time as a cutting off, as if during waking a drop detached itself from the higher being concerned, which is absorbed again during sleep. For man is not aware of his connection with a higher being while he is awake; he is therefore actually cut off from it. During sleep he must lack self-consciousness, for there it withdraws into

the higher entity; this absorbs it, and he thus rests enclosed in it. [7] When the dreamless sleep occurs, the world of images disappears. Apparently the physical body lies there completely unconscious; in truth, however, its state of consciousness is only a duller one than in dreamless sleep. The image-generating power has also left the physical body. Therefore only the insights of the awakened can bring enlightenment about this state. The non-awakened one lacks the perceptions about the same. For the awakened one, however, the image-producing body, which before was still loosely connected with the physical body, appears to be lifted out of it. And it is not idle now, but it has the task to restore in the appropriate strength the forces of the physical body which appear to be exhausted by fatigue. The refreshing effect of a healthy sleep is explained by this. Fatigued, the physical body sinks into sleep. At this moment it gives up its self-consciousness to higher beings. In the intermediate state of dream sleep the soul still remains in a loose connection with the physical body. The characteristic of this soul is its creativeness. With the moment of waking up it begins to apply its creative power to the processing of the perceptions conveyed by the senses to the human inner life. At the moment of falling asleep the external sensory perceptions fall away. In the intermediate state of dreaming, the creative still transforms itself into the described symbols; then these symbols also fall away; the soul turns its whole creative power to the body, which it now works on from the outside.

Those who would completely disregard the messages of occult science, could already learn from the fact of refreshment in the morning when awakening, what characterizes the nocturnal activity of the soul. The life of the day has something inharmonious, chaotic. From all sides the things of the physical environment affect the person. Soon this, soon that finds entrance into his inside. This brings the inner forces of formation out of the order which they have by their original nature. In the night this is balanced again. The soul restores order and harmony. Through the day life the physical body gradually looks like a mass of air, which is traversed on all sides by wind currents and whose parts move about in an irregular manner. When awakening, however, it can be compared to such a mass of air, which is set into regular vibrations by the rhythm and harmony of a piece of music. And indeed the work of the soul on the body during sleep presents itself to the initiate like a sounding through of the same. During sleep, man is immersed in the harmony of the life of the soul. And this is the same harmony out of which he was formed. Before the physical body first opened itself to the outside world through the sense organs, it was completely under the influence of this harmony, which structured it. This harmony pervades the whole world as soul harmony, as soul sounds. Man is surrounded by its sounds in the same way as he is surrounded by the images described earlier. As this world of images becomes perceptible to the awakened person as a real environment through training, so on an even higher level this third world. It begins to sound around him. And in these sounds the sense of the world opens up to him. As the form of the physical world arose out of the images, so these forms received their inner meaning and essence out of the described sounds. All things are, from this point of view, tones that have become form. [8]

During waking, then, man is a being composed of three members: the physical body, which perceives the physical world through the organs implanted in it from the outer world and encloses self-consciousness; a body which has in itself the character of a moving image; its images are at the same time the archetypes of the physical body, whose firmly outlined forms have emerged, as it were, through solidification from the changeable images of the second body; and furthermore both the physical and the image body are permeated by a tonal harmony, a third body. - In dream sleep, the soul withdraws from the physical body; it still remains in connection with the two other bodies, sounds through the sound body and intersperses the image body with images. These latter have an effect on the physical body and communicate to it the shadowy dream images. In dreamless sleep the soul is only connected with the clay body; what was in the physical body while awake is now outside it and works on it from the outside. This activity flowing from it into it produces in it only such a dull consciousness that it is not perceived by the human being.

In fact, there are three states of consciousness of the physical body: the awake day-consciousness, the dream-consciousness and the dreamless sleep-consciousness. For the initiate, the dullness of the last two states of consciousness brightens; through this brightening, he lives in higher worlds in the same way as the unawakened person lives in the physical outer world during the awake daytime life. Thus five states of consciousness have been given, which are divided into the following series according to their increasing brightness:

1. the dreamless sleep consciousness
2. the dream sleep
3. the awake day consciousness
4. the image consciousness of the initiate
5. the sound consciousness of the initiate

If one considers that through secret-scientific training the two last states of consciousness are reached by the initiate as a higher stage of development of mankind, then it will be obvious without further ado that also the awake day-consciousness represents a higher stage of the two subordinate states of consciousness, thus has developed from them. This is what is represented by occult science. It explains that in the distant past man passed through a stage of development in which he had only a dull sleep consciousness, interspersed with no dream image; then he ascended to a dull dream consciousness, to arrive at last at the awake day consciousness of today. The initiate continues this line of development. He forms the two higher forms of consciousness. [9]

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## 22: Levels of Higher Consciousness

Now, however, an even higher kind of consciousness is attainable for this initiate. It is evident from the foregoing that even in sound consciousness the soul is still connected with the human body. This connection can cease completely. The soul can leave the body completely. This is what the initiate learns. And then he must have developed organs of an even higher kind than before, if he still wants to perceive something. If this is the case, then the sense of the world expresses itself directly in its environment, without the mediation of sound. This first highest level of consciousness is called spiritual or pure-spiritual consciousness. In the sense of the preceding enumeration of the levels of consciousness, in the present man a state would have to correspond to this, which represents an even duller consciousness than the dreamless sleep consciousness. According to the sense this is indeed the case. But the present man cannot live this state in reality. Then his soul would have to be completely outside the body; the dreamless sleep would have to be interrupted by a completely soulless state. This would indeed amount to a temporary surrender of the physical body to itself, that is, to a temporary killing. The physical body must not be exposed to this if it is not to run the risk of no longer being receptive for the soul. [1]

In the development, however, this state has in fact preceded the dreamless sleep-consciousness, so that the complete series of the stages of consciousness of man is this:

1. a low dullest consciousness
2. a dreamless sleep consciousness
3. a dream consciousness

4. the bright day consciousness

5. the **picture consciousness**

6. the **sound consciousness**

7. the **spiritual consciousness**

Only up to the fourth level of consciousness the body of man has advanced in the present. The initiate can reach the higher levels of consciousness. But they also lead him into higher worlds. But the development of man is to be imagined in such a way that the physical body itself has formed through the first three stages and at present has assumed such a formation that in sleep it still shows two other forms of consciousness as remnants of previous stages. The first stage has been completely obliterated by development. - The three higher levels of consciousness of the initiate cannot at present express themselves in the physical body of man, because the latter cannot develop organs for them. They are prophetic proclamations of forms which this physical body will still take.

If one wants to imagine the present world correctly on the basis of these arguments, then it presents itself as a fourfold world: first the physical world of the bodily senses, then a world of images enveloping and penetrating these, furthermore a world of sounds penetrating both, and finally a spiritual world underlying them all. [2]

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## 23: Levels of consciousness and world development

This world was preceded by another one, in which man lived like a dreaming being. At that time his physical body was in the state in which he is at present during the dream-filled sleep. The environment resembled a panorama of changing pictures. No firm outlines of the things were there. This state was then interrupted by another one, which is equal to the present dreamless sleep. And this again by such, which can no longer be realized today and which was filled by the first of the above characterized forms of consciousness. In a still earlier world man could also not rise up to an experience of dream images. His highest consciousness was that of dreamless sleep, and this state was interrupted by the lower, dullest consciousness, which at present is already blurred; the latter again by a state which has lost all significance for the present development.

In the first world, to which occult science points back, man also lacks the dull sleep consciousness; the first of the described states is his highest; two others, which are not considered today, alternated with it. [1]

Thus one looks back into a remote past of evolution; one surveys four stages through which the physical human body has passed. But one also looks into the future, in which the three forms of consciousness attainable today for the initiates in higher worlds will find their realization in the physical world. Our world will be replaced by a future one in which physical human bodies will have organs through which a self-conscious human being will perceive an eternally moving world of images, indeed will look at himself as such. - And further one looks at such a world, in which the images will be permeated by harmonious sounds, which will express their inner being. Lastly, to a world with spirit nature, but which will have poured its spirit into physical nature.

Thus occult science represents the development of the world, in which man passes through his successive stages. And it designates these stages of development with names, which then have passed over to the planets surrounding the earth as designations. The stage of development on which man stood with the still dullest consciousness is called Saturnian development; the second, in which man lived with dreamless sleep-consciousness, as solar development; the third, in which a dream-consciousness appeared, as lunar stage (see: lunar development); the fourth, the present one, on which man has won through to bright day-consciousness, as earth development. And the stages of the future, on which the levels of consciousness attainable today by the initiates in higher worlds will find their physical manifestation, are successively called Jupiter-, Venus- and Vulcan-evolution.

The distinctive feature of the initiate's states of consciousness from the states of consciousness of man during the future Jupiter, Venus and Vulcan evolution lies in the fact that the former must rise to higher worlds in order to live in the corresponding consciousnesses, whereas the future man will have them in the (respective) physical world. This is due to the fact that in the initiate in the present corresponding organs of perception are formed out of the powers of the higher worlds; in the future equivalent organs of perception will arise in the physical human body out of the physical environment. Man can perceive as his environment that world which gives him the material for his organs. In the future the physical environment will have powers of formation which at present still belong to the higher worlds alone. One can therefore represent the development of the world in such a way that successively higher and higher worlds physically embody themselves. The earth is the fourth embodiment. In its physical structure it has the ability to imprint on the human body the organs of daylight consciousness. In the sense of occult science it developed from another physical state, in which it could impress organs for a dream consciousness only. This state is called "moon". From this "moon" the earth is formed by acquiring a new ability to develop the organs for the awake day-consciousness. The "moon" has developed from the "sun". That, what has become "earth" now, was "sun" at that time. The secret science designates as "state of

the sun" the one, where the world body, which is in it, can produce in a human body only the organs for the dreamless sleep consciousness. And before the earth was "sun" in this sense, it was on the level of "Saturn". [2]

How does such a world body acquire the power to form the corresponding organs in the human body? It could never do it, if these organs were not formed in relation to higher worlds by human beings who hurry ahead. By forming the organs of Jupiter in higher worlds, the initiates create the possibility that the surrounding world of images takes on a physical character. The solidification to the physical is caused by the fact that the forms, which this should take, are first there in a spiritual way. Thus the initiates become the transformers of the world body they inhabit. From them radiate, as it were, the formative forces which later bring into existence the things of the physical human environment.

Thus the initiates of the lunar stage have spiritually preformed the physical form of the earth. The present earth environment of man formed the content of their soul experiences. They perceived the earth as their object of a higher world.

In this sense occult science recognizes seven great world cycles or world periods, through which that being passes, which represents the earth on its fourth stage. Each such period is connected with a higher formation of the human body. - From this realization this science sees in the "fourness" that which characterizes the present stage of world development. What, for example, Pythagoras and his school called "fourness" is characterized by it. The "four" is the number of the "great world," that is, of the world which man inhabits at present. It has raised him to the fourth level of his consciousness.

Secret science contrasts man himself with this "great world" (macrocosm) as the "small world" (microcosm). In his dispositions he has at present already as soul in himself what the "big world" is to become physically. He is therefore on the way to expand his inner "small world" to the "big world". In him is the creative womb of the latter. In this sense, occult science sees in the soul a creative germinal plant for the future, an "inside" which strives to realize itself in an outside.

But in order to be able to be creative in the outside, this soul itself must first become mature. It must first experience inwardly what it is to develop later in the outward. Until the soul, for example, possessed the ability to imprint the physical body with organs for the waking consciousness of the day, it had to go through a series of stages of development in which it gradually acquired this ability. Thus the soul had to experience the first state of consciousness before it could create it; and so correspondingly for the other forms of consciousness. These stages of development of the soul, which precede in it the creation of the kinds of consciousness, carry in occult science the name life stages. Accordingly, there are seven stages of life just as there are seven stages of consciousness. Life differs from consciousness in that the former bears an inner character, the latter is based on a relation to the outer world. [3]

Applied to the earth one can say: before the bright day state of consciousness of the human body appeared on it, this world body had to pass through four states, which are to be understood as four states of life.

The stages of the soul experience result when one thinks internalized what is perceived as the outside world in the states of consciousness. First of all, there is the dullest state of consciousness, which precedes the dreamless sleep. In the latter, the soul harmonizes the body; its corresponding state of life is the harmonization of its own inner being. It thus penetrates itself with a world of sounding movement. Before, in the dullest state of experience, it was in a motionless interior of its own. It felt this inside in indiscriminate indifference all through. One calls this lowest state of life the first elementary realm. It is an experience of the substance in its original quality. The substance comes into excitement and movement in the most different directions. And its self-experience of this mobility is as the first stage of life the first elementary realm. - The second stage is reached when rhythm and harmony become out of these movements. The corresponding stage of life is the inner awareness of rhythm as sound. This is the second elemental realm. - The third stage is formed when the movements transform themselves into images. Then the soul lives in itself as in a world of forming and dissolving images. This is the third elementary realm. - On the fourth level, the images take on solid forms; the individual emerges from the panorama of change. Thus it can no longer be experienced merely inwardly, but can be perceived outwardly. This realm is the realm of the outer bodies.

One must distinguish in this realm between the form it has for the bright daytime consciousness of man and the form it experiences in itself. The body actually experiences in itself its form, that is, the substance forming itself into regular shapes. - At the next stage, this mere experience of form is overcome; instead, the experience of the change of form occurs. The form forms itself and transforms itself. One can say that at this stage the third elementary kingdom appears in a higher form. In the third elementary kingdom, the movement from form to form can only be experienced as an image; in this fifth kingdom, the image passes over to solidification in the external object, but this external object does not die out in form, but retains its ability to change. This realm is that of the growing and reproducing bodies. And its ability to transform is manifested in growth and reproduction. - In the next realm the ability to experience the outer in its effect on the inner is added. It is the realm of sentient beings. - The last realm that comes into consideration is the one that not only experiences the effect of external things in itself, but also experiences their interior. This is the realm of the compassionate beings. Thus, the sequence of stages of life is divided in the following way:

1. dull material experience
2. experience of inner movement
3. experience of inner design

4. experience of a fixed boundary
5. Experience of reshaping
6. Experiencing the effects of the outer world as sensation
7. Experiencing the outside world

The inner experience of the soul must first be preceded by the creation of this life. For nothing can be experienced what has not first come into existence. If occult science calls the inner experience soulish, it calls the creative as spiritual. The [physical body] perceives through organs; the soul experiences itself within; the spirit creates outwardly. Just as the seven stages of consciousness are preceded by seven experiences of the soul, so these experiences of the soul are preceded by seven kinds of creative activity. To the dull experience of the substance corresponds in the field of the creative the bringing forth of this substance. The substance flows into the world in an indifferent way. This area is called the area of formlessness. On the next level the substance is divided, and its members enter into relationship with each other. There one has to do with different substances, which connect and separate. This area is called the area of form. On the third level, substance no longer needs to relate to substance itself, but the forces emanate from the substance, the substances attract each other, repel each other, and so on. One is dealing with the astral realm. On the fourth level a material appears, formed by the forces of the environment, which on the third level merely regulated the external relations and which now work into the interior of the beings. This is the realm of the physical. A being on this level is a mirror of its environment; the forces of the latter work on its structure. - The further progress consists in the fact that the being not only structures itself in such a way as it is in the sense of the forces in the environment, but that it also gives itself an outer physiognomy which bears the imprint of this environment. If a being of the fourth level represents a mirror of its environment, such a being of the fifth level expresses this environment physiognomically. Therefore, this level is called physiognomic in occult science. On the sixth level the physiognomy becomes the emanation of itself. A being, which stands on this stage, forms the things of its environment in such a way, as it formed itself first. This is the stage of forming. And on the seventh stage the forming passes over into creating. The being, which has arrived there, creates such forms in its environment, which reproduce in the small what its environment is in the large. It is the stage of the creative. [4]

The development of the spiritual is therefore divided into the following series of stages:

1. the formlessness
2. the shaping
3. the incorporation of power

4. the shaping in the sense of the forces of the environment
5. the physiognomic expressiveness
6. the formative power
7. the creative ability [5]

## Saturn Evolution

When the evolution of Saturn began, the human body was on the level of formlessness. It first had to reach the creative ability before a soul could experience its first material experience in it. This means that the body first had to develop through the seven stages of creative activity, then its soul could experience it. This soul must now come so far again that it can communicate its inner movement to each of the seven forms of the body. The first time the body passes through its seven forms, it is itself still quite lifeless. Only at the seventh stage, when the body becomes creative, does its life awaken. And it must awaken now, because the body gives out material in its creation. The soul must replace it. And now a second cycle begins. The substance, which flows into the body as a substitute, itself goes through the seven stages from formlessness to creative ability. When it has reached this stage, the soul is no longer limited to the experiences caused by the movement of the inflowing substance, but it begins a new stage of life. Because the inflowing substance itself has become creative, it begins to fill the body internally. Before, it only replaced the outflow; now it is deposited in the body. And again it goes through all forms from formlessness to creative ability. First it is deposited formlessly in the body, then it gradually passes over to forms, develops powers, forms shapes, gives them a physiognomic expression and so on. During this whole cycle the soul goes through its third stage of life. It harmonizes this inner structure and balances out what has become disordered through the inner processes. - If the substance has been thus formative in the inside, then it passes on to a fourth stage to let the outside world have an effect on itself. It can do this, because the soul inhabiting it has now become mature enough to experience the impressions of the environment dully and thus to bring the disorder caused by the outer world into order again and again. In the next cycle the body no longer stops at dividing itself; it reshapes itself under the influence of the outer world. The soul has matured to regulate this reshaping. Then a cycle begins for the body, in which it perceives the effects of the outside world as sensations. The soul again forms the regulator of this stage of existence. Finally the body has reached its last stage; it can experience the outer world. The soul is now so far that it pre-experiences a next stage, namely the next stage of consciousness in a world higher for the Saturn existence. During this last Saturn cycle it goes through the dreamless state of sleep. And this it now transfers to the physical body during the first solar cycle.

It is evident that during the Saturn period the physical human body went through a physical stage seven times. Each time it reached such a stage, the soul reached a higher level of its experience. At the seventh stage it progressed beyond the Saturnian evolution

and pointed in its experience to the solar stage. [6]

## Old Sun

Now, when the solar cycle begins, the physical body is ready to take over its own formation. If formerly the soul was the regulator of this shaping, now it has its own shaper within itself. This is called the etheric body. The soul is now no longer in direct connection with the physical body; between it and it stands the etheric body as mediator. Its experiences pass over to this etheric body as they passed over to the physical body before. Now, first of all, this etheric body has to go through the seven states of form again, from formlessness to creative activity. As the etheric body has a formative effect on the physical body, it continuously loses its tension. And this is again and again regulated by the soul. In such a way also the solar evolution passes through seven physical stages. And in each of them the soul appears on a higher level; on the seventh one it forms a new state of consciousness. While it is still witnessing how the etheric body becomes the creator of new formations, which reproduce the whole solar world, it already feels in itself a world of images, which rises and falls within it. [7]

## Old Moon

During the first lunar cycle, this imagery transfers it to the etheric body, which now forms the physical body according to these images of the soul. As on the sun level the shaping etheric body interposed itself between the physical body and the soul, so now the characterized image body interposes itself between the etheric body and the soul. In secret science it is called the body of sensation (or astral body). For as the human sensations from the outer world flow, as it were, into the inner world and thus make the content of the outer world the possession of the inner world, so the images of the image body work from the inside outward and impress their content on the etheric body, which again transfers it to the physical body.

Again, during the evolution of the moon, man passes through all the states of form seven times, in order to let the soul mature to a higher stage in each of them. During the seventh stage the soul has the ability to give its images the most perfect form; there it can experience everything that happens on the world body around it, so that its world of images is an expression of the whole lunar world. At the same time it has as a preliminary experience the elevated state of consciousness of the next stage; it begins to see solid forms within its world of changing images. Thereby it becomes ripe to act also on the etheric body in such a way that it forms organs in itself which have something lasting. - And thus the transition can be made to the first earth cycle. Within it, the physical body absorbs the solid image-forms; these become its organs. Thus a fourth limb begins to develop in man. Between the image body and the soul the perceptions of external objects are inserted. The body has now in a certain way outgrown the soul; it has become independent. What appeared in it before were the results of those images which the soul had appropriated from the outer world. Now the outer world directly causes the perceptions in him. And the inner life of the soul proceeds as a co-experience of these



perceptions. The expression of this self-activity of the body is self-consciousness. But self-consciousness matures only gradually. First man must go through a cycle of forms, in which only dull material life is felt in his organs; in a second cycle the influence of the material causes an inner movement; the etheric body thereby experiences the outer world and transforms the organs into living tools of the physical organism. In a third cycle the imagery body also becomes capable of imitating the outer world. It now excites the organs in such a way that they themselves produce images that live in them, but are not yet images of external things. Only in the fourth cycle does the soul itself become capable of enforcing the bodily organs; thus it detaches the images from these bodily organs and covers the external things with them. Thus an outer world stands before it, to which it contrasts as an inner independent being. - But now it is also where from time to time the bodily organs, which it uses, fall into exhaustion. Then the possibility of being in contact with the outside world ceases. Sleep occurs, in which the soul again has a balancing effect on the physical body in its former way through the body of images and the etheric body. Thus sleep appears to occult science as a retarded remainder of earlier stages of development. At the present time man has passed the middle of the fourth earth cycle by some distance. This is expressed in the fact that he does not only perceive the external objects in the bright daytime consciousness, but beyond that the laws underlying them. The soul has begun with its experience of the inner transformation of things. [8]

## Citations

[6] GA 89, page 38ff (edition 2001, 234 pages)

[7] GA 89, page 40f (edition 2001, 234 pages)

[8] GA 89, page 41ff (edition 2001, 234 pages)

[1] GA 89, page 32 (edition 2001, 234 pages)

[2] GA 89, page 32ff (edition 2001, 234 pages)

[3] GA 89, page 34ff (edition 2001, 234 pages)

[4] GA 89, page 35ff (edition 2001, 234 pages)

[5] GA 89, p. 38ff (2001 edition, 234 pp.)

## Sources

GA 89: Consciousness - Life - Form. Basic principles of spiritual-scientific cosmology (1903-1906).

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## 24: Development of consciousness and the spiritual hierarchies

During the evolution of Saturn the human body was on the level of the dullest consciousness. But one must not assume that other levels of consciousness were not present in beings who had their existence at that time in connection with this earlier embodiment of the earth. Thus above all a being was present at that time, which had a

consciousness, which was equivalent to the present awake day consciousness of man. But since the conditions of the Saturn environment were completely different from those on earth, this level of consciousness also had to operate in an essentially different way.

The earth man has around him as objects of perception minerals, plants and animals. He regards these entities as standing below him, himself in relation to them as a higher being. With that Saturn being the reverse was the case. It had three groups of entities above itself and had to consider itself as the lowest member in the area of what was perceptible to it. These three higher groups of entities were called by different names in secret science, depending on the language of the people and the time to which the secret teachers belonged. The names of the Christian secret science are, enumerated from top to bottom: Dominions (Kyriotetes), Powers (Dynamis) and Powers (Exusiai). As fourth lowest member that characterized being lines up, as the earth man lines up as highest member to the mineral, plant and animal kingdom. - According to these quite different conditions also the nature of the perception itself was different. From the experience the initiate knows this nature. For it is equal to what he reaches as his third stage, beyond the waking day-consciousness, the spiritual consciousness. It is as if the impressions did not come to the senses from external objects, but as if they forced their way from within to the senses, flowed outward from them, and out there struck the objects and beings in order to be reflected in them and then to appear in their reflection to the consciousness. - So it was with that Saturn being. It poured its life force on the things of the planet, and from all sides the reflection was thrown back to it in the most manifold way. It perceived its own life from all sides in the mirror image. And the things which reflected back to it this its being were the beginnings of the physical human body. Because the planet consisted of them. What else was perceived did not appear on the planet, but in its periphery. The beings, which are called Exusiai (powers), appeared as radiating beings, which illuminated the world body from all sides. Saturn itself was a dark body in itself; it received its light not from dead light sources, but from these beings, which inhabited its circumference and illuminated it as luminous beings. Their light revealed itself to the perception of the Saturn being, as at present the animal body makes itself perceptible to man. The beings, which are called Dynamis (powers), revealed themselves in a similar way from the circumcircle by spiritual sounding and the Kyriotetes (rulers) by what in occult science is called the world aroma, a kind of impression, which one can compare with the present smell. [1]

Just as the earthly man rises above the perceptions of external things to ideas which live only in his inner being, so that Saturnian being, besides the mentioned entities which revealed themselves to him as if from within, also recognized entities which he perceived from without; they are called seraphim, cherubim and thrones in the Christian secret science. There is nothing in the circle of the experience of the earth man which can be compared with the sublime features in which they appeared at that time. - Finally, a third kind of co-inhabitants was known to this Saturnian being. They populated the interior of the planet. This existed only as a composition of the human bodies, as far as they had prospered at that time. If one wants to get an idea of these bodies, one can do this by

comparing them for the times in which they appeared in physical form with automata consisting of finest ethereal matter. As such they reflected the life of that being of Saturn; but they themselves were entirely without life and without all sensation. But they were inhabited by two kinds of beings, which developed their life and their sensibility in them. These needed a certain base for it. For they lacked a physical body of their own, and yet they were so predisposed that they could develop their higher abilities only in such a body. Therefore they made use of the human physical body. [2]

Thus on Saturn (see: Saturnian evolution) the bodily, soul and spiritual element was present in a similar way as it occurs on earth. Only it is found on earth in such a way that it forms the threefold nature of man: his body, his soul and his spirit. Each of these members of man consists again of three sub-members: the body of the physical, the etheric body and the sensory body (astral body); the soul of the sensory soul, the mind soul and the consciousness soul; the spirit of spirit self (Manas), life spirit (Buddhi) and spirit man (Atma). On Saturn the corporeal, the soul and the spiritual are not present as members of one entity, but as independent entities; the physical-emotional as the first plant of the human body and the actual material basis of the planet itself; the etheric body as angels (Angeloi), the sentient body as archangels (Archangeloi); the sentient soul is represented by that characterized Saturn being itself, the mind soul by the powers (Exusiai), the consciousness soul by the powers (Dynamis), the spirit self (Manas) by the dominions (Kyriotetes), the life spirit (Buddhi) by the thrones, the spirit man (Atma) by the cherubim; above all stand the seraphim.

Saturn, therefore, in the times when it was on its physical level, represented a body of limbs, consisting of fine etheric bodies; in it the angels and archangels, like the life and nervous forces, were present in the human body. They reflected everything that made an impression from the circumference of the world body. Then the luminous powers (Exusiai) illuminated the surface of Saturn, and their light was reflected back in many ways from the surface of the same. Then it sounded from the powers (Dynamis), and these sounds again penetrated as manifold echoes into the space; finally the Saturn surface was irradiated by the aroma of the dominions (Kyriotetes), and it returned this again in multiply changed form. And in the perception of all these reverberations the soul life of that marked Saturn being consisted. -One can call this being the actual planetary spirit of Saturn. For there was indeed only one in its kind, just as in the earth-man there is a multiplicity of limbs, senses, and so forth, but only one self-consciousness. The whole Saturn was the body of this planetary spirit.89.45f

Now the development of Saturn consisted in seven cycles, which represent the soul-life unfoldment. In each of these seven cycles the planet passes through the seven forms, from formlessness to creative ability. - In the first cycle the thrones form the directing soul element, in the second the dominions (Kyriotetes), in the third the powers (Dynamis), in the fourth the powers (Exusiai), in the fifth the Saturn planetary spirit itself. This spirit did not have the full bright consciousness immediately from the beginning of the evolution of Saturn, but acquired it only in the fourth cycle. Only then did it attain an actual spiritual

experience of the planetary processes. Thus, in the fifth cycle he can himself act as a soul. During the fifth cycle the archangels (Archangeloi) develop an inner soul life, the content of which is taken from the processes of Saturn. They can do this by making use of the human bodies which have developed into corresponding instruments for them until then. Thereby they are enabled in the sixth cycle to lead it as self-acting souls. The same is accordingly the case for the seventh circuit with the angels (Angeloi). [3]

In the fifth cycle the planetary spirit of Saturn could not work as a soul in the characterized way if it remained within the body of Saturn. For the Saturn body by its nature does not permit this. The Saturn spirit must therefore step out of the Saturn body and act on the latter from outside. Thus in this cycle a separation of Saturn into two world bodies takes place. Of these, however, one, the one that has emerged, is to be called the Saturn soul. It is, as it were, the prophetic preannouncement of the next planetary embodiment: the sun. Thus during its fifth, sixth and seventh cycles Saturn is orbited by a kind of sun, as at present the earth is orbited by its moon.

A similar thing must occur in the sixth cycle for the archangels (Archangeloi). They leave the mass of Saturn and orbit it as a new planet, which in secret science is called Jupiter. And in the seventh cycle a similar thing happens with reference to the angels (Angeloi). They extract their mass from that of Saturn and orbit it as an independent planet. This one is called Mars in occult science. - These are processes, as they have similarly already taken place during the previous Saturn cycles. In the third cycle the powers (Exusiai) guided the development of the soul. During the fourth cycle they left the planet and orbited it as a luminous independent planet, which is called Mercury in secret science. In the third cycle the same had happened with the powers (Dynamis), which became independent as the planet Venus. [4]

## On the old Sun

Within the solar evolution the previously automatic body of man becomes alive in itself. This happens by the fact that the light, which before irradiated Saturn as an outflow of the luminous beings from the circumcircle, is now taken up by the components of the solar body itself. The sun becomes a luminous planet. The perfected human bodies develop luminous life. From the circumcircle it now sounds in, and the world aroma flows from the corresponding beings. [5]

A transformation has taken place with the Saturn planetary spirit. It has multiplied. One has become seven. As the seed is one and in the ear that forms from it there are many who are of the same nature as that one, so seven shoots germinate from the one Saturn planetary spirit at the transition to the solar stage. And his life now becomes another. He gains the ability to attain perceptions of a realm that is one step lower than he is. This is made possible by the fact that a number of human bodies have fallen behind in their development, have stopped on the Saturn stage. They are thus incapable of receiving the luminous life of the sun. They form dark places within the radiant solar planet. They perceive the seven solar spirits that have arisen from the Saturn planetary spirit as a

natural kingdom standing below them. Thus on the surface of the sun these seven entities live; below them they behold a kingdom whose beings have bodies, standing only one step lower than the sun-human bodies. But these bodies themselves give them in the light radiating from them the nourishment which they need. While the bodies of Saturn were only the reflectors of his beingness to the Saturn spirit, the bodies of the sun take the place towards the sun spirits, which at present the sun with its light takes towards the beings of the plant kingdom. With regard to the organization of the body, man stands during the evolution of the sun on the level of a plant being. It would not be correct to say that at that time he himself passed through the plant kingdom. For a plant kingdom, as it is today, can develop only under the peculiar conditions of the earth. If one wants to use a comparison in this respect, one would have to imagine the sun-human body as a plant being, which turns towards its own planet similar organs as at present the plant develops as a flower. And as the present plant receives its light from an external sun, so the sun-man plant received its light from its own planet, which was the sun. That which today the plant sinks as a root into the earth, was in the sun's womb turned towards the inflowing sounds and smells; it received them and processed them in its interior. One could call the present plant a human body that has stopped on the sun level and has completely turned around. Therefore it stretches the organs of growth and reproduction, which man has covered and turned downwards, chastely upwards towards the sun. [6]

In this way, the human body was fully developed only during the fourth solar cycle. Three previous cycles were a preparation for it. The first cycle is actually only a repetition of the Saturnian existence. And its seven form stages are seven repetitions of the life stages of the Saturn cycle. But only in the second solar cycle life flashes in the human body. It is not yet so fully developed that the archangels (Archangeloi), who enter the position on the sun which the planetary spirit has taken on Saturn, can find their satisfaction in this life. Rather, the powers (Exusiai) now suck the power which can flow from this life; during the third cycle the seven entities which have arisen from the Saturnian spirit take their place; and during the fourth solar cycle the archangels (Archangeloi) live in the life of the earthly bodies as the planetary spirit has been reflected in the bodies of Saturn. During the fifth solar course the archangels (Archangeloi) ascend to a higher level of existence, and the angels (Angeloi) take their place on the planet. During the sixth solar course, the angels (Angeloi) have also developed so highly that they do not need the physical part of the human body; they only make use of the outflowing and inflowing light for their purposes in order to live in it. The physical human body has become an independent entity, the model of the present physical body of man. And it behaves on this level also quite like a physical apparatus; only like such a one, whose parts just live. It is, so to speak, a living sensory instrument, the perceptions of which, however, are not taken up by itself. He himself lacks the necessary degree of consciousness. He is in a plant-like sleep, which constitutes his highest level of consciousness. What is drafted in him as perceptions passes over into the consciousness of the angels, archangels and so on, according to the sequence of the different solar cycles. These higher beings watch over the sleeping human body.

What are the causes under the influence of which the sun has developed from Saturn? One recognizes them, if one casts a glance at the last states of Saturn's development. Let us assume that the seventh cycle has reached the fourth stage of form, the physical one. The human body has reached such a stage that it can serve the angels (Angeloi) as the sense organs reflecting their nature. On this level they have a kind of human consciousness, which is granted to them, however, only with the used senses of the human body. Higher beings work on the planet from its surroundings. They develop successively the higher levels of consciousness. At the moment when the angels also develop to such higher levels of consciousness, they can no longer use the human body. The consequence is that they leave him. He must die. This means nothing else than that the physical body of Saturn decays before the physiognomic form of the seventh cycle develops. This physiognomic stage is therefore no longer physical at all. The planet exists only as a soul planet. The physical form sinks into the abyss. In the soul planet the angels live in a superphysical picture consciousness. And the higher beings are active on it with corresponding higher forms of consciousness. At the moment when the angels have outgrown the picture consciousness, the planet of the soul must also disintegrate. In its place another one takes its place, on which the formative form is developed. But it floats only in that world in which the earthly initiate finds himself when he dwells in the higher tone consciousness. For the same reasons from this planet another one develops, which belongs to a still higher world at the end of the seventh Saturn cycle. In this one the creative form of existence is realized. - It has been shown that with the ascent of the higher beings into corresponding forms of consciousness always secondary planets of Saturn separate, which must float in higher worlds, because the main form of Saturn cannot accommodate such forms of consciousness. But now Saturn itself ascends to such higher worlds. As a result, every time it arrives in such a higher world, it unites with that minor planet which is present in the same world. At the end of the seventh Saturn cycle, for this reason, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, Mercury and the Sun are again united with Saturn. Everything forms again one world. - In this one world, however, the creative form of Saturn's life force is found. Through it the world, which has spiritualized itself in the manner indicated, is led back again to the lower levels of existence. This happens with the development of the sun. In the course of its cycles the planets formed from Saturn emerge again. Each of them now appears only one step closer to the physical existence. [7]

If a human observer with senses could watch the development of the described planet in the present form, he would see the world body rising out of the darkness only in certain periods of time; in long intervening times, in which it only leads an existence in higher worlds, it would disappear from such an observer. There it would remain recognizable only for an observer whose consciousness can dwell in higher worlds. Therefore one distinguishes between the physical states of the planetary existence twilight or night states. Only one must not imagine that in such intermediate times the planet with its entities falls into inactivity. This activity falls there only into higher worlds and expresses itself thus in a much more real existence than the mere physical one. [8]

## On the Old Moon

When the sun has completed its seven cycles, then the time begins in which the human body is so far advanced that it can not only receive the influxes of light and thereby be animated, but it acquires the ability to let the world of sound, which is formed from the "powers" (dynamis) and which flows around it, continue to work in itself and to reproduce it itself as tones. On this stage of existence, which is called the lunar development, the human body becomes a sounding entity. While the sound reflected from the planet into the environment on the Saturn stage was only an echo of the environment, it now sounds out into this environment in a changed form. It is changed in such a way that it reproduces in the most manifold way what is going on in the human bodies. These human bodies have thus incorporated a third member into their being, the body of feeling. For it is their inner nature, their world of feelings, which sounds outwardly. - But out of the seven entities, which have developed out of the Saturnian spirit during the evolution of the sun, seven times seven have become. Their environment has now become such that they experience their own world of feelings in the sensory bodies (astral bodies) which have been formed. These sensory bodies are the carriers of their bright daytime consciousness. They now feel surrounded by two realms which are below them and one which is above them. This kingdom hovering above them makes itself perceptible to them out of space as the world aroma; they experience themselves as sounding beings, and the two kingdoms which stand below them have become so because one area of human bodies has stopped on the Saturn stage, a second on the solar stage. Thus these lunar beings are surrounded by the automata-like beings, which continue their Saturn maturity on the moon under conditions quite different from those which existed on Saturn itself, and further by plant-like solar bodies, which are in a similar position. In the actual lunar mass there are therefore three kinds of beings. Those automatonlike beings, which are dark in themselves and which have still preserved from Saturn the ability to radiate life around themselves. They are not lifeless beings in the sense of the present minerals. A mineral basis, as it has the earth, did not exist on the moon at all. In its place there was one, which consisted of the characterized being. One gets an idea of it, if one imagines it endowed with a life passing through it completely, so that on the moon, for example, instead of the mineral arable earth of our planet there is a living, pulpy mass; in this there are inserted woody parts like the rock masses in the softer rock of our earth.

In this living basis, which in its parts can be called plant minerals, the marked solar beings were rooted, standing on a level between the present animal and the present plant. And the mobile beings inhabiting the moon were the human bodies, standing in the middle between animal and human in terms of their evolution. They were the hosts of the descendants of the Saturn planetary spirit. But this could not have developed an awake day consciousness in them. In order to live in such a consciousness, these beings had to step out of the body every time. If they were within the body, that is, if they lived its life, then they were only permeated with a consciousness filled with dream images. In this consciousness they saw nothing of their physical surroundings; but they sounded out their inner experience into the surroundings. What was lived out there in sounds during the sleep of the moon beings were their passions and desires. In order to emphasize only one

thing from the circle of this experience, it should be pointed out that, for example, what is now called love life and what lies at the basis of reproduction, took place on the moon during the dream-filled sleep. The awake day life was without desire and also without love, completely devoted only to looking at the environment. The human ancestor on the moon knew nothing of sexual relations in his day life. For what today man feels in the sexual love, dream images took place on the moon, which expressed only in the symbol, what is today concrete reality. - Not the human ancestor experienced the world of images on the moon in the awake state; in it lived rather the beings standing first above the human being, the angels (Angeloi). For them, so to speak, the dream world of man took place as bright day reality. They watched over the dreaming human world, as the archangels (Archangeloi) watched over the sun world living in plant-like sleep. [9]

The first two lunar cycles were but repetitions of the earlier states of evolution. The seven forms of the first cycle repeated the seven cycles of Saturn, and the seven forms of the second repeated the seven cycles of the Sun.

In the third lunar cycle the human body is to such an extent that the beings standing on the archangel stage (Archangeloi) experience its dream images as their environment; in the fourth cycle this is the case with the angels (Angeloi). In this cycle, the descendants of the Saturn planetary spirit can use the human body to such an extent that when they envelop it from the outside and make use of it, they attain a bright daytime consciousness through it. In the fifth cycle these beings have risen to such a height that they no longer need the physical human body; this now perceives its surroundings for itself, but it brings it only to a lower level of consciousness in relation to these perceptions. Only the etheric body and the sensory body are still needed by these beings at this time. In the sixth cycle they also leave the etheric body to themselves, in the seventh the sentient body.

The moon is a reincarnation of the sun planet. At the time when the stage of solar development is repeated on the moon, i.e. in the second cycle, the solar body emerges from its mass. Within this emerged solar body then live those beings who have assumed a level of consciousness and life for which no conditions can be found on the moon itself. These are the powers (exusiai) during the second cycle; they have lived the life of the physical human body during the solar life. Now on the moon this solar stage leads only a stunted, retarded existence in the animal plants described above. The powers (exusiai) cannot live in them. They rather animate these beings from the outside by sending them the light they need from their sun. During the third lunar cycle also the descendants of the Saturn planetary spirit have risen to a stage that they can no longer find existence on the moon. And accordingly, during the fourth cycle, the archangels (Archangeloi) leave the moon, which in this period of its existence is the dwelling-place of the angels (Angeloi), just as later the earth in its fourth cycle is the dwelling-place of men.

As during the evolution of the sun the other planets came out step by step, so this happens with them also now during the evolution of the moon. Only they are again one step nearer to the physical existence at the time when the moon stands at the height of



its development, that is, from the physical form of its fourth cycle. With the fifth cycle Mars, which is then inhabited by the angels (Angeloi), attains a fine, ethereal-physical form in the lunar environment; with the sixth cycle such a form takes place in relation to Jupiter, the abode of the archangels (Archangeloi). Finally, during the seventh lunar cycle, the same happens with Mercury. Mars and Jupiter have become even denser in the meantime; the former has there a density which makes it possible for it to develop warmth through the movements of its components and to flow out into the space of the world. [10]

## Earth Evolution

The earth evolution takes over the fruits that have ripened on the moon. The human body has passed three stages of its development. In the first stage it was able to serve as an organ of perception, like a physical instrument, to those beings who had already advanced so far on the solar level that they could do without any such apparatus. They belonged therefore already at that time to those beings which could dedicate their activity to the sun planet from the outside as creators. The place which they held on Saturn was taken on the sun by the archangels (Archangeloi). Not in the sun planet the Saturn planet spirits had their corporeality, but in the creative forces by which the solar life was maintained. On the moon then the archangels (Archangeloi) had become the creative powers. Their corporeality could be admired by the angels (Angeloi) of the moon, who at that time had bright day consciousness, when they looked up to their creators.

These three planetary stages of development were now first repeated in the first three earth cycles. During them, the human body was to prepare itself to experience the images that had been formed during the lunar consciousness. It had to become able not only to accommodate in itself a life and image body, but also to reflect the environment inwardly in its images. He was so far on the moon that his pictures could look at the angels (Angeloi). The lunar body of man was the environment of the angels. And they themselves had advanced in the contemplation of the moon man; they had pulled themselves through so that they could now create on a higher level what they had perceived on the moon. They had there, besides the two kingdoms which were under them, in their surroundings still the beings of their equals. After the evolution on the moon had ended, they could imprint their nature on the human body. The earth people could then see in their physical surroundings while they inhabited their bodies what the angels on the moon could see only when they ascended to a higher world: their equals. [11]

But only gradually could the human body be directed upward to such ability. And this happened during the three earth cycles. In the first it could perceive itself as it was on Saturn, in the second as it was on the sun, in the third as it was on the moon. During the first earth cycle the neighboring people were for him still absolutely walking automata; during the second they appeared to him as plant-like beings; and during the third with animal character.

When the fourth cycle began, man had become able to perceive the creations of the angels (Angeloi), his equals, around him. The angels, however, stood three levels of consciousness above him. They could create what he perceived. - The human body now acquired four members: the physical member, which became the mirror of the environment, the living member, which could convert the perceptions of the environment into inner movement, the image body, which was able to convert the inner movements into the character of images, and finally the body, which became the bearer of the bright day consciousness, which brings the inner images into harmony with the impressions of the environment and thus creates the connection between inner experience and the processes of the environment. - But the bright day-consciousness remains limited to the outer world of the physical; the processes of life and the images of the image-body are inwardly animated, but not perceived as surroundings. His image body remains the object of the next higher level of being, the angels (Angeloi), his life body even that of the archangels (Archangeloi). Everything that is connected with the life body in man, the laws of his growth and reproduction, is therefore hidden for him; he has only the consciousness of it that is present in dreamless sleep. For the archangels, however, these processes are such things of the outer world and its workings, as for man his work on a physical machine is present. And everything that is connected with the image-consciousness, the laws that are more mysterious for man, that give his countenance a certain character and facial expression, his walk and so on certain forms, that is, what expresses itself in his character, temperament and so on, that is under the rule of the angels (Angeloi). Only what he causes in his environment, that is under his own lawfulness. [12]

Man has developed into a being that can be characterized in this way in the fourth earth cycle. - The angels, however, who had developed to the consciousness of creators during the lunar stage, could no longer find a place for themselves on earth at the moment when the image body began to belong to man himself, that is, from the moment when the second cycle had passed its middle. Then they withdrew to a higher community with new living conditions; the sun separated from the earth anew and from then on sent its forces to it from outside.

In the third earth cycle those human bodies, which in the second had not come so far that they could have the image body supplied by the forces gathered on the sun, had to fall into a subordinate existence. They sank down to the animal level from the animal-human one. Where could they now get the forces for their image body? They were not receptive for the solar powers of the perfected angels. Now, however, on every stage beings remain behind in their development. Until the third cycle, angels had remained behind in their development, who therefore could not find a place on the sun. During the second half of the third earth cycle they could not yet find the disposition to ascend to the sun. But they were also not capable of influencing the image-bodies of the perfecting human being. They had only the gift to work on those image bodies which had remained on the level of the moon existence. Therefore they pulled themselves out of the earth mass as the present moon. This is therefore a world body, which represents an earlier

part of the development of the earth in a hardened condition, so to speak. It is the dwelling place of those entities which do not want to become creators of the perfect human body. Their activity is found in the image bodies of the animals; but they still direct their attacks on the image body of man, which is their outgrown area. As soon as man strays only a little from the devotion to his higher nature, which becomes him through the impressions of his senses, as soon as he falls for the powers that work in his image body, these beings gain influence on him. Their action shows itself in desolate dreams, in which the animal desires coming from his lower nature are reflected. [13]

When the third earth cycle reaches beyond its center, where the earth has thus become physical for the third time, there are at first no conditions of existence for the form of the physical human body, which can receive external perceptions. The physical dies. The consequence of this is that the sin of omission of the angels who have remained behind is no longer felt so painfully by the beings who have ascended to the solar existence. The moon is therefore again incorporated into the earthly body. And when the cycle continues, when the whole earth has ascended to a higher world via the image existence, it also reunites with the sun. Thus the forces in the human body, which in the third cycle could first see the image-living body in their environment, attain the creative ability. Thus they can enter the fourth cycle. At first, they are still in the world that can only be perceived by a spiritual consciousness, but they gradually descend to deeper and deeper worlds. At last the human body is so far advanced that it can form organs of perception for its own kind in a fine ethereal form. The physical body thus acquires the faculties of its earthly form. This is also the time when the earth again cannot be a scene for the perfected angels; the sun emerges with them from the earth and illuminates it from outside. Further and further the physical body reaches. The images of the image body attain a vividness which was not theirs before; the organs of the physical body give them nourishment in the mirror images of the external objects. The time has come when the outer earth environment snatches these images from the angels who have remained behind. These must pull out the part of the earth which can be their dwelling place. The moon separates again from the earth and orbits it as its secondary planet. [14]

How far is the human body at this point of time? It has developed its fourfold nature. It is organized in such a way that it can be the bearer of an etheric or life body, that it can accommodate an image body. And furthermore, its sense organs allow the earth environment to be reflected in these images. So the physical human body has now reached a completely new level. It reflects inwardly, as it reflected outwardly on Saturn the essence of the Saturn planetary spirit. Thus that part of this spirit can now live in him, which at that time was the lowest member of it. This part therefore cuts itself off from the Saturn planetary spirit; it loses the ability to receive the revelations of the upper realms and becomes the bearer of human self-consciousness. Man learns to feel himself as "I". From now on he carries in himself the nature which on Saturn the planetary spirit revealed like a perimeter of the planet.

Thus man has reached the stage where in his etheric body the archangels (Archangeloi) are revealed, in his image body the angels (Angeloi), in his self-consciousness the planetary Saturn spirit. He can now ascend to the level at which the Saturn spirit in him becomes capable of having a similar relationship to the image body as the Saturn spirit itself attained when it gradually outgrew its own planetary existence and became a Jupiter dweller. But since man remains an inhabitant of the earth, such forces can only have an effect on him from outside: That is, the earth comes under the influence of the Jupiter forces. At a later stage it happens in a similar way with regard to those entities which were at a stage where they affect the etheric body only from outside, from Mars. The earthly man comes under the influence of Mars.

When the sun, the earth and the moon still formed one body, on this planet the human body was formed of a substance which had an air-like state. Apart from the human bodies there were only the descendants of the human animals of the moon with a body in a liquid state. The solid state was reached by the offspring of those moon beings who lived there as plant minerals. Apart from the liquid human beings, however, there were still animal-plant-like beings at this time, which had developed from the plant-animals of the moon. But while the former had a more watery appearance, the animal-plant-like beings consisted of a dense pulpy mass which, when it became coarse, approached the substance which at present forms the mushrooms.

When now the sun pulled out its matter from the earth, so that the latter had only the moon mass in itself, then all relations on the planet changed. The material of the human bodies condensed to a liquid substance, which can be compared to the blood of today. The previously liquid beings took on a solid form, and the solid plant minerals received a completely dense materiality. Before the departure of the sun, the life of the human body was essentially a kind of breathing, a taking in and giving out of air-like matter. After the same, a way of nourishment was formed from the liquid environment. And with this nourishment was connected also the reproduction. The viscous human body was fertilized from the reproductive material of its environment and split under such fertilizing influence. Its development, while the lunar substance was still within the earth, proceeded in such a way that it formed semi-solid parts within its liquid mass, which condensed to cartilaginousness. Solid bone-like limb inclusions he could not form in this time yet, because for this the earth mass was not suitable, as long as it contained the moon in itself. Only with the departure of the moon, when the coarsest materiality was removed, a solid skeletal arrangement arose in the human body. And this was also the time in which the possibility ceased to take the fertilizing materials from the environment. With the lunar mass, the earth substances also lost the ability to have a fertilizing effect on the human body. In the time before there were not two sexes of the human body. Man was a being of female nature, to which the male entity was in the earth environment itself. The whole earth had a male character.

With the exodus of the moon, a part of the human bodies changed into those with a male character. Thus it absorbed the fertilizing forces, which were contained before, as it were, in the juice of the earth itself. The female nature of the human body underwent such a transformation that it could be fertilized by the resulting male. - All this happened by the fact that a kind of double-sex human body changed into a single-sex one. The former human body fertilized itself with absorbed substances. Now one form of the human body, the female one, received only the power to mature the fertilized. This happened in such a way that in it the male power lost the ability to prepare the fruit substance. This power remains only to the etheric or life body, which has to bring about the maturation. The male form of the human body lost the possibility to do something with the fruit substance in itself. The feminine remained limited to the etheric body. Thus it is that in the present human being the etheric body is female in the man, but male in the woman. - The acquisition of these faculties coincides with the formation of a solid skeleton. [15]

Now another important process preceded this. When the human body passed from the aeriform into the liquid materiality, at the same time the plant arose, in order to take up the aeriform matter in a special organ. The separate breathing began with it. One must only make clear that in this time the earth did not have yet a separate air circle for itself. The substances, which later separated as liquid and solid from the common mass, were then still air-like themselves, were enclosed in the air. And when the liquefaction began, the human body did not live on a solid ground, but in the liquid element. Its locomotion was a kind of floating. And the air above the liquid element was much denser than the later air. It contained not only still all later water, but many other substances in dissolution. Accordingly, the whole respiratory apparatus of the human body was different.

Before the departure of the sun, the whole process of breathing had a different meaning than in the following time. It consisted in absorbing and releasing heat from the environment and into it. One can say that the warmth, which man today prepares in himself by his blood circulation, was inhaled and exhaled by him at that time from the environment. Only after the sun's exodus the process changed in such a way that the air, after it has been taken in, produces heat in the body by its effect. - Thus, with the breathing of air in its present form, the human body had become a producer of heat in its interior.

This change in the human body is connected with a cosmic event, which in secret science is called the withdrawal of Mars from the Earth. Mars is the planet which, through its inherent forces, brought about in the human body before this withdrawal what the blood circulation took over in the human body itself afterwards. As the blood on earth thus took over the activity of Mars, the spiritual beings could lift themselves out of the earth, so that then the influence of Mars on man became one which worked from outside. Physically this came about by the fact that iron became an important constituent of the blood; and iron is the substance on which the Martian forces have a special effect. Thus the present form of respiration is connected with this withdrawal of Mars. But man

thereby received everything that can be called the inner power of his blood. The ensoulment was thus given. In fact, man breathed in his living soul with the breathing of air.

As long as the earth was in connection with the sun, the solar power was that which regulated the other effects in the human body. In the solar power was contained that which worked in the human body as male and female at the same time. And under its influence also the absorption and release of the heat, which went out from Mars, got law and order. When the sun had gone out, certain human bodies began to change in such a way that they became infertile. These were the precursors of the later male natures. As long as the lunar forces were still connected with the earth, the other part retained the ability of self-fertilization. By the moon's withdrawal it lost it. From now on the sun, and in fact those beings who now inhabited it, the angels (Angeloi), had an effect on the reproductive ability. The male etheric body came under the influence of these solar beings. The female etheric body, being male, retained its relation to those beings whose scene had become the moon. Correspondingly, the physical body of the woman came under the influence of the solar forces. It had formed the form corresponding to it now, when the sun already shone on the earth from outside. The male physical body, on the other hand, came under the influence of the moon, because under the influence of the planet, which was still united with the earth, it had assumed its infertile form with regard to reproduction. Beside all these processes the formation of the senses runs simultaneously, which bring the imagery of the sensory body under the influence of the earth environment and thus man under the influence of the descendants of the Saturn planetary body. Further, the pulsating force of the blood is developed within, through which the ensoulment is formed and with the sensory perceptions an inner life, sympathy and antipathy with the environment can be formed. [16]

Man arrived at the stage characterized by this when the earth had emerged as an independent physical planet in its fourth cycle and had detached itself from the sun, moon and Mars.

At that time, therefore, man had completed the separation into two sexes. He looked through his senses into the environment. He felt inclination and aversion towards this environment. And he was equipped with the beginning sense of self by the fact that he was different from this environment. The human body had become a four-limbed being. And within the fourth limb, through the blood, which gave access to the Martian forces, soul interiority had come into being.

Man had thus developed in himself all that he could have as the fruit of the first three planetary stages of development. And he had a fourth member of his body, which had come into being because other influences, which could have nothing to do with its development, had withdrawn from the earth.

In secret science this humanity is called the third main earth race. Actually one can speak of race formation only from this point of time. For only now there was a human procreation and with it differences within mankind, which are produced by the interaction of people themselves. There appeared what can be called heredity, kinship. But now the earth, the fourth planetary form of evolution, had not yet any influence. The perceptions of the environment had only taken possession of the images of the sensory body. The etheric body was not yet under the influence of the earth environment. The fourth planet had not yet any influence on the hereditary relations. Only the three first planetary forms. Therefore the race in which this was the case is called the third.

It was followed by the fourth, within which the earth environment itself got an effect on the etheric body. This could only happen when beings received influence on man, which in their development stood on such a stage that they lacked the creative ability to act on the etheric body in the sense of fertilization, but which were nevertheless beyond that, so as to receive, like man himself, only perceptual impressions from the physical environment. Such beings were those who on the moon, that is, during the previous embodiment of the earth, had not risen to the level of creative beings who could populate the sun, but who had nevertheless gone beyond the stage where one can merely lead an inner life through the images of the human body. [17] (Here the manuscript draft breaks off) (further see: Earth evolution).

## Citations

- [1] GA 89, page 43f (edition 2001, 234 pages)
- [2] GA 89, page 44f (edition 2001, 234 pages)
- [3] GA 89, page 46 (edition 2001, 234 pages)
- [4] GA 89, page 47 (edition 2001, 234 pages)
- [5] GA 89, page 47 (edition 2001, 234 pages)
- [6] GA 89, page 48 (edition 2001, 234 pages)
- [7] GA 89, page 49ff (edition 2001, 234 pages)
- [8] GA 89, page 51 (edition 2001, 234 pages)
- [9] GA 89, page 51ff (edition 2001, 234 pages)
- [10] GA 89, page 54f (edition 2001, 234 pages)
- [11] GA 89, page 54ff (edition 2001, 234 pages)
- [12] GA 89, page 56f (edition 2001, 234 pages)
- [13] GA 89, page 58 (edition 2001, 234 pages)
- [14] GA 89, page 59f (edition 2001, 234 pages)
- [15] GA 89, page 60ff (edition 2001, 234 pages)
- [16] GA 89, p. 62ff (edition 2001, 234 pages)
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## Sources

GA 89: Consciousness - Life - Form. Basic principles of spiritual-scientific cosmology (1903-1906).

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## 25: The path of knowledge of man

The knowledge of the spiritual science meant in this book can be acquired by every man himself. The explanations of the kind given in this book provide a mental picture of the higher worlds. And they are in a certain respect the first step to one's own view. For man is a thought being. And he can find his path of knowledge only if he starts from thinking. If his mind is given a picture of the higher worlds, this is not unfruitful for him, even if it is for the time being, as it were, only a narration of higher facts, into which he has as yet no insight through his own contemplation. For the thoughts which are given to him represent themselves a force which continues to work in his world of thoughts. This power will be active in him; it will awaken dormant faculties. Whoever wants to turn to other forces in man for higher knowledge, spurning the work of thought, does not take into account that thinking is precisely the highest of the abilities that man possesses in the world of the senses. Whoever therefore asks: how do I myself gain the higher knowledge of spiritual science? - To him it is to be said: first of all, inform yourself of such knowledge through the communications of others (which is quite natural in all sciences). And if he replies: I want to see for myself; I do not want to know anything of what others have seen, then he is to be answered: precisely in the appropriation of the communications of others lies the first step to his own knowledge. One can say to it; there I am forced first to the blind faith. But it is not a question of belief or disbelief in a communication, but merely of an unbiased reception of what one hears (as in every study). [1] Unfounded unbelief, however, is harmful. For it acts in the receiver as a repulsive force. [2]

### Citations

[1] GA 9, page 172f (edition 1961, 214 pages)

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## 26: Evaluation of a spiritual-scientific representation

(But it must also be said in general that only then) if one really balances and holds together in patience everything that has been said in the course of time, one will find that nowhere is there a piece in our occultism that does not unite with the others to form a well-rounded whole. [1] The great patience and renunciation of knowledge, we must first learn. One must mature to a judgment. The world itself is infinite in every point. And one must have the modesty to say that everything is in a sense only half true. [2] By processing the material that is offered in the (lecture) cycles, one progresses from an



outward taking in to an inward processing. This inner processing has a high value for the real progress. Through such compilations (of different lectures) really inner evolutions are undergone. Individuals will progress when such fruitful compilations are made. [3] It is a question that just as for the simple soul mind can be absorbed the remarks scattered everywhere in the lectures, in the cycles, which can carry the man, also everywhere the individual hints are taken up, which must lead to the necessary progress in the individual sciences. [4]

In the judgment of these things, which are communicated by spiritual science, the mistake is most often made that people judge, who, let us say, have just heard a few remarks about a thing and do not have the patience to really let everything that can be said work on them from the most diverse points of view. [5] The printed writings and the cycles have not actually been read as they could be read, so that one would come to all that is meant and said, more or less even palpably said. [6]

I have quite consciously striven not to give a "popular" presentation, but one that makes it necessary to enter into the content with a right effort of thought. I have thus imprinted such a character on my books that their reading itself is already the beginning of spiritual training. For the calm, prudent effort of thought, which makes this reading necessary, strengthens the soul forces and makes them capable of coming close to the spiritual world. [7]

My visions in the spiritual world have been countered again and again that they are altered reproductions of what has emerged in the course of older times in people's ideas about the spirit world. It was said that I had read many things, absorbed them into my subconscious and then presented them in the belief that they arose from my own vision. From gnostic teachings, from oriental wisdom poems and so on I am said to have gained my representations. My realizations of the spiritual, of this I am fully conscious, are results of own seeing. I had strictly examined myself at any time with all details and with the large overviews, whether I make each step in the looking progress in such a way that fully-considered consciousness accompanies these steps. As the mathematician steps from thought to thought without unconsciousness, autosuggestion and so on playing a role, so - I said to myself - spiritual seeing must step from objective imagination to objective imagination without anything else living in the soul than the spiritual content of clearly prudent consciousness.

Thus I had the results of my seeing before me. At first they were "views" which lived without names. If I should communicate them, then it required the word designations. Later I searched for such in older representations of the spiritual, in order to be able to express the still wordless in words. I used these word designations freely, so that hardly one of them coincides in my use with what it was there, where I found it. But I always looked for such a possibility to express myself only after the content had dawned on me in my own seeing. What I had read before, I knew how to switch off in my own investigative looking through the state of consciousness that I have just described. [8]

And if we now enter the spiritual worlds ourselves and experience a little of this life in the spiritual worlds, then we encounter quite different conditions than here in the physical life of the earth. That is why it is so extraordinarily difficult to bring in these conditions of the spiritual worlds in human words and human thoughts. And it sometimes sounds so paradoxical when one tries to speak concretely about the conditions in the spiritual worlds. [9] I even said (for example), I must express myself trivially, if I want to speak of these two thrones (the throne of the Sun and the throne of Lucifer) - (for) one can only always speak more or less figuratively of these sublime conditions; but whoever rises more and more to an understanding, will understand that the words coined on earth are not sufficient, and that in order to make oneself understood, one must already resort to the image. [10] If the spiritual researcher wants to express his experiences, he is compelled to represent what he has experienced in a supersensible sphere by means of sensual imagination. His experience is then not to be understood as if it were equal to his means of expression, but in such a way that he only uses these means of expression like the words of a language necessary to him. One must look for the content of his experience not in the means of expression, that is, in the sensualizing ideas, but in the way he makes use of these means of expression. [11]

In principle, unbiased logic will always be able to decide: if what the spiritual researcher says is true, then the course of the world and of life, as these take place sensuously, is intelligible. It is not important what the experiences of the spiritual researcher are considered to be at first. One can see in them hypotheses, regulative principles - in the sense of Kant's philosophy. One only applies them to the sensuous world, and one will already see how this confirms in its course everything what is asserted by the spiritual researcher. - Of course, this does not apply otherwise than in principle; in detail, of course, the assertions of the so-called spiritual researchers can contain the greatest errors. [12]

Words (intended) for the sensuous world we have to re-mould if we want to use them for the supersensuous world, and (therefore) it is easy then to interpret them in another sense. [13] I have often mentioned that our language is prepared for the physical world, and that we must, as it were, internalize our relation to words, if we want to make words capable of expressing that which is (for example) beyond death. [14]

But it became palpable to the author in numerous places how brittle the means of representation accessible to him proved to be in relation to what supersensible research shows. Thus, hardly more than one way could be shown to reach the ideas which are given in the book (Occult Science GA 13) for the development of Saturn, the sun and the moon. The experiences with regard to such things differ so much from all experiences in the field of the senses that the representation requires a continuous struggle for an expression which seems to be only reasonably sufficient. Whoever is willing to go into the attempt of representation made here, will perhaps notice that many things, which are impossible to say in dry words, are striven for by the way of description. [15]

Certain things, of course, had to be presented by me with a strong reserve in the first years, simply for the reason that years were necessary to verify certain things exactly, and because I had set myself from the beginning to publish nothing else and to say essentially nothing else than what I could vouch for in the way that I had verified it. [16]

The method of spiritual science must be such that one gathers from the most diverse sides what can bring enlightenment about the spiritual world. Even if only after years something is added to what was said years ago, the things need not contradict each other. Thus, what has been brought forward here in earlier years is still valid after years, even if it can now be illuminated anew from new points of view by what we can now bring forward. [17]

(About possible errors of observation we read): But it is better if everyone describes exactly what just he has to say. In this field only salvation can come, if the statements of the individual observers are weighed out against each other, and mutually supplemented by each other. We will get nowhere by merely praying after the theosophical dogmas. However, the individual must be aware of his great responsibility regarding his statements. On the other hand, it must be kept in mind that at these heights of observation, errors in detail are quite possible; indeed, they are certainly much more probable here than in scientific observation of the sensual world. The writer (and the speaker) of these remarks therefore asks for the appropriate indulgence of all those who themselves have something to say in this field. [18]

## Citations

- [1] GA 140, page 47 (1980 edition, 374 pages)
- [2] GA 98, page 146 (1983 edition, 272 pages)
- [3] GA 161, page 21f (1980 edition, 292 pages)
- [4] GA 326, page 148 (1977 edition, 196 pages)
- [5] GA 140, page 83 (1980 edition, 374 pages)
- [6] GA 147, page 151 (edition 1969, 168 pages)
- [7] GA 13, page 10f (edition 1962, 444 pages)
- [8] GA 13, page 11ff (edition 1962, 444 pages)
- [9] GA 140, page 339 (edition 1980, 374 pages)
- [10] GA 141, page 49f (1983 edition, 200 pages)
- [11] GA 35, page 127f (1965 edition, 484 pages)
- [12] GA 35, page 129 (1965 edition, 484 pages)
- [13] GA 148, page 316 (edition 1980, 342 pages)
- [14] GA 161, page 123 (1980 edition, 292 pages)
- [15] GA 13, page 21 (edition 1962, 444 pages)
- [16] GA 254, page 125 (1969 edition, 279 pages)
- [17] GA 141, page 189 (1983 edition, 200 pages)
- [18] GA 34, page 136 (1960 edition, 627 pages)

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## **27: The supersensible can only be represented imaginatively, i.e. through pictures**

That, which is supersensible facts, I can summarize only in pictures, in imaginations. This cannot be represented by abstract concepts, one must describe pictorially. [1]

(Like Faust's conversation with the earth spirit,) this was also the procedure that was adopted, for example, in my book "Occult Science - An Outline" (GA 13). There everything in the inner being of man was questioned, what it has to say. Actually, a great deal was drawn from the spirit of the earth. But the spirit of the earth speaks about the Saturn time, about the sun time, about the moon time of the earth, about the Jupiter time, Venus time. The spirit of the earth speaks to you of what it has preserved in its memory of the universe. Once one turned one's gaze out into the heavens to enlighten oneself for the earth, now one lowers one's gaze into one's own human being, listens to what the earth spirit in human nature has to say from the world memory, and through the understanding of the genius of the earth one gets the macrocosmic knowledge. [2]

Never has there been more than in our period the necessity for men to strive more and more to attain just that which is especially valuable: to understand spiritual-scientific cognitions. Certainly, spiritual-scientific knowledge must be sought through clairvoyant penetration into the spiritual world; that is a necessity. But it is a matter of course that there must be clairvoyants who penetrate into the spiritual world, that there must be people who strive for supersensible insights. Secondly, however, it is especially important that for this spiritual-scientific knowledge, for this knowledge sought in supersensible worlds, people are found who understand the matter by virtue of the intellect. The

rational, understanding comprehension of spiritual science, that is especially necessary today, because that is the very thing by which the most reluctant cultural powers are overcome. The intellect of people today is so great that the whole spiritual science can be understood, if one only wants to. And to strive for just this understanding is a general human interest, not an egoistic interest of culture. [3]

## Citations

[1] GA 237, page 115 (1959 edition, 186 pages)

[2] GA 221, page 58 (1966 edition, 142 pages)

[3] GA 183, page 56f (1967 edition, 195 pages)

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## 28: Spiritual scientists

There is a beautiful sight: it is the sight of the one who, in calm clarity, but with inner fire and enthusiasm, because it is a necessity for him, can warm up to the spiritual material. There is another (opposite) sight: that is the one where one tries, if possible, to be lulled by the spiritual material, to become dreamy, to be poured warmly, to merge into the universal forces, to unite the soul with the divine universe. These are opposites, which can be observed in the present, opposites, for which it is necessary to observe them. For it will not be easy to assimilate the spiritual spiritual material into the culture of man. And it must enter, because the culture of man needs it. [1]

Therefore, one must not be too unjust to those who cannot understand the anthroposophist, because they lack all the preparations which are absolutely necessary to be able to grasp the results of spiritual research, and so they must, in most cases, already think in the words and also in the concepts something quite different from what is meant. Therefore, to a large extent, a greater understanding of spiritual science can only be achieved by speaking blatantly from the spiritual point of view even to an unprepared audience. Then among these unprepared people there will be a large number of those who say: This is all just foolishness, fantasy, just elaborate silly stuff that is being put forward! - But there will always be some who, through the innermost needs of their soul, first get an inkling that there is something behind it after all, and they will go on and gradually settle in. Such patient settling in is what is important, and that is what we can achieve. [2]

The (spiritual-scientific) ideas should penetrate us with warmth, should become impulses, forces of mind in us. They become more and more so when the answers we get to certain questions present us with new questions, so to speak, and when we are thus led from question to answer and the answer actually becomes a question for us again, and then a new answer comes to us again, and so on. By this means one advances in spiritual knowledge and also in spiritual life. [3]

One must have eyes in which processes take place in order to learn something about the realm of colors. But one experiences thereby not only something about the eye, but about the world. - One must have an inner soul organ to experience certain things of the world. But one must bring full conceptual clarity into the experiences of the mystical organ, if knowledge is to arise. But there are people who want to take refuge in the "interior" in order to escape from conceptual clarity. These call "mysticism" what wants to lead the cognition from the light of the ideas into the darkness of the feeling world - the feeling world not illuminated by ideas. My writings speak everywhere against this mysticism; every page of my books is written for the mysticism which holds the clarity of ideas in thought and makes the mystical sense, which is active in the same region of the human being where otherwise the dark feelings rule, a soul organ of perception. This sense is completely equal for the spiritual to the eye or ear for the physical. [4]

It is basically quite egoistic if we begin to be enthusiastic about Anthroposophy because the thoughts of Anthroposophy excite us, appear to us to be true. For what are we then satisfying? We satisfy what is our longing for a harmonious worldview. That is very beautiful. But the greater thing is when we permeate our whole life with what arises from these ideas; when the ideas go into the hands, into every step and into everything we experience and do. Only then does anthroposophy become a principle of life, and until it becomes that, it has no value. [5] I admit that because of the rapidity with which the teachings of the anthroposophically oriented worldview have come to the members of the anthroposophical movement, there has really been at times the fact that the later has obliterated the earlier. If one had sometimes had a month or even longer to present what one had to present in the course of a week, one could have offered it in small portions, which by the urge of the times (spoken November 1918) necessarily had to be brought quickly to the hearts, it might have penetrated more deeply into the souls. But that was not possible. Time was pressing, and the events (World War) proved that time was pressing. [6]

There are many people in the present time who have transformed their ordinary egoism into a refined egoism. They call it theosophical (or, of course, anthroposophical) development when they raise their ordinary, everyday self as high as possible. After all, they want to bring out the personal. Real occult knowledge, on the other hand, shows man how his inner self opens up when he learns to recognize his higher self in the world. When man has developed this attitude in contemplation, when his self flows out over all

things, when he feels the flower that grows towards him as he feels the finger that he moves towards himself, when he knows that the whole earth and the whole world is his body, then he learns to recognize his higher self. [7]

There is much criticism of these ideas (about reincarnation and karma) today as at all times. But what is criticized there are only the arbitrary thoughts of the critics themselves (about reincarnation and karma); and these are quite irrelevant. - By the way, it should be admitted that many followers of the idea of reincarnation have no better ideas about it than its opponents. - Of course, it should not be claimed here that today everybody understands these teachings who defends them. Even among these defenders there are many who are quite too comfortable or too - self-confident to learn silently before they teach. [8]

## Citations

- [1] GA 183, page 58 (1967 edition, 195 pages)
- [2] GA 107, page 26f (1973 edition, 328 pages)
- [3] GA 118, page 11 (1977 edition, 234 pages)
- [4] GA 2, page 140 (1960 edition, 150 pages)
- [5] GA 125, page 219 (1973 edition, 278 pages)
- [6] GA 185a, page 177 (1963 edition, 237 pages)
- [7] GA 96, page 152 (edition 1974, 350 pages)
- [8] GA 34, page 60 (1960 edition, 627 pages)

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## 29: Spiritual scientists of the future

With reference to the life of the worldview one must always say: Whoever is at any time in the development of mankind comes to certain views. He then does not see certain perspectives of this view; these are then seen by the later ones. One would like to say

that it is always preserved for the later ones to see something more thoroughly, more truly, than the one can see who has to express certain things at a certain point of time in the evolution of mankind. Even the knowledge that one can acquire about spiritual things in the present, no matter how pronounced it may be, must not be taken as a sum of absolute dogmas. One must be clear about the fact that later ones will appear in times to come, who will see more truth precisely in what we are able to bring forward today than we can see ourselves. The spiritual development of mankind is actually based on this. And all hindrance, all obstacle of the spiritual progress of mankind is ultimately based on the fact that people do not want to admit this, that they would like to have truths handed down which are not the truths of a certain age, but which are absolute, timeless dogmas. [1]

## Citations

[1] GA 184, page 12f (1968 edition, 334 pages).

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### GA 2

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### GA 9

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### GA 13

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### GA 34

Not Available. Here is a [list of topics](#) in GA 34.

### GA 35

Philosophy and Anthroposophy

### GA 89

Esoteric Cosmology

A full list of topics under GA 89 can be found [here](#).



## **GA 96**

This particular lecture in GA 96 is not available (as of March 19, 2023).

A full list of topics under GA 96 can be found [here](#).

## **GA 107**

The full list of topics under [GA 107](#).

## **GA 118**

This particular lecture in GA 118 is not available (as of March 19, 2023).

A full list of topics under GA 118 can be found [here](#).

## **GA 125**

This particular lecture in GA 118 is not available (as of March 19, 2023).

A full list of topics under GA 125 can be found [here](#).

## **GA 140**

Life Between Death and Rebirth

## **GA 141**

Between Death and Rebirth

## **GA 147**

Secrets of the Threshold

## **GA 148**

GA 148, "The Fifth Gospel", is not available on the RSArchive in its entirety, however a list of what chapters are available can be found [here](#).

## **GA 161**

GA 161, "Ways to Spiritual Knowledge and the Renewal of the Artistic Worldview", is not available on the RSArchive in its entirety, however a list of what chapters are available can be found [here](#).

## **GA 183**

GA 183, "The Science of Becoming Human", is not available on the RSArchive in its entirety, however a list of what chapters are available can be found [here](#).

## GA 184

GA 184, "Three Streams of Human Evolution", is not available on the RSArchive in its entirety, however a list of what chapters are available can be found [here](#).

## GA 185

From Symptom to Reality in Modern History

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## GA 237

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## GA 254

The Occult Movement in the Nineteenth Century

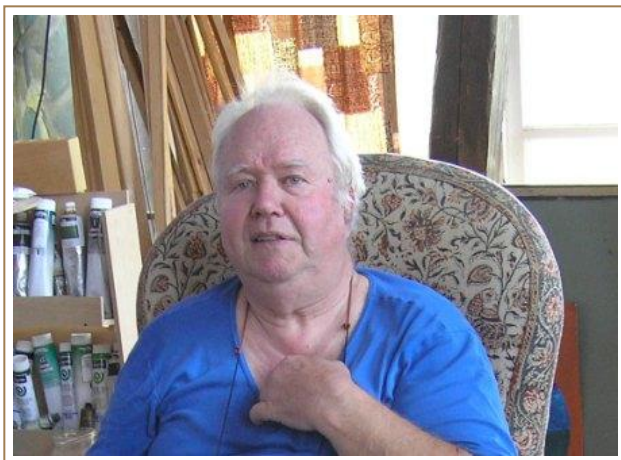
## GA 326

The Origins of Natural Science

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## Urs Schwanderner

On May 19th, 2010 Urs Schwanderner passed through the gate of death into the spiritual world.



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*Ex Deo nascimur, (We are born of God) [From the Divine mankind is born]  
in Christos morimur, (we die in Christ) [In the Christ death becomes life]  
per Spiritum sanctum reviviscimus (we are made alive by the Holy Spirit) [In the  
spirit of the world thoughts awakens the soul]*

*(Rosicrucian saying, translation: [Rudolf Steiner])*

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His life's work is the encyclopedia "Anthroposophy - The Spiritual Science of Rudolf Steiner". In the print edition (year 2000) he describes this work in the subtitle as an "alphabetical reference work using the original wording of Rudolf Steiner as far as possible". The compilation of a comprehensive list of terms, the gathering of all relevant statements on the respective keyword/term/topic from Rudolf Steiner's complete works and the creation of an understandable description from the selected sentences is a task to which he devoted many years of his life.

In addition, all the graphic engravings that can be found in the encyclopedia (mainly in the article "Goethanum - first building made of wood"), for which he developed his own line technique, which specifically optimizes the representation as black and white illustrations. He reproduced the ceiling paintings of the first Goetheanum not only in this technique, but also in color. This in a size that filled his entire studio. The following two photos give an impression of this:



Urs Schwendener in front of his reproduction of the painting of the first Goetheanum in his studio in Bärschwil (CH). Represented are the motifs of the ceiling painting in the small dome, in a total size of about 11 m (36 ft) x 4.5 m (14 ft), distributed on 3 walls in his studio. The photo shows the part on the far right of the entire unwinding of the motifs.

The entire painting is shown in the following picture, which is composed of individual photos (click to enlarge):



Source: <http://www.anthrolexus.de/Topos/16057.html>

*Urs Schwendener's Magnum Opus can be found online (in German) in its entirety at <http://www.anthrolexus.de/toc.html>*

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Source: <http://www.anthrolexus.de/Topos/15702.html>



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