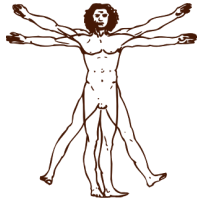


The Fourfold Human Being

A Deep-Dive Look at the Human Being



The Fourfold Human Being

A Deep-Dive Look at the Human Being

From the work of

Rudolf Steiner

& Others...

"We are not human beings having a spiritual experience. We are spiritual beings having a human experience."

~ *Pierre Teilhard de Chardin*

"O Lord God, the One above all the great realms, the One who has no beginning and no end, give us a spirit of knowledge to reveal Your mysteries, so that we may know ourselves; specifically, where we've come from, where we're going, and what we need to do to live."

~ *The Stranger's Book*

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The Fourfold Human Being



Physical Body
Mineral/Earth



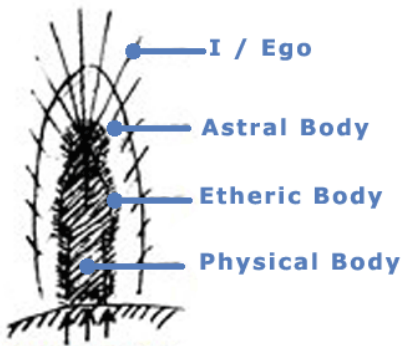
Etheric Body
Fluid / Water



Astral Body
Gaseous / Air



I / Ego
Heat / Warmth



Gravity Forces



**Astral Body Penetrates
Loosened Etheric**

**Loosening of the Etheric Body
in the head and heart region**

**Heightened Emphathy as a Means
of Developing an Enhanced
Sensitivity Towards the
Surrounding Life Realm,
Awakening Etheric Perception**

The Dawning of Natural Clairvoyance

If we don't cultivate appropriate new forms of consciousness, illness processes can ensue





Editor's Preface



This e-book attempts to provide an umbrella view of the fourfold constitution of the Human Being. With this particular work, unlike other of my so-called "deep dive" articles, I pulled from my sources only that material that I determined reached a limit of knowledge that could be considered introductory, yet a bit "in-depth", to a subject that in its entirety reaches a depth and breadth beyond my intent herein.

Most of this information is based on, but not necessarily limited to, the work of Rudolf Steiner. In most of my work transcribing esoteric material – that can be found on the *Spiritual Science Digital Library* – I normally indicate the source on the title page, however with this work I chose to list my more extensive sources for this work in the [Sources](#) section. Sources for specific passages, such as quotes from Steiner's lectures, are cited and linked to where possible inline with the quote.

This work, though synthesized as much as possible for an introductory understanding of the material presented, assumes at minimum a familiarity with Spiritual Science's (Anthroposophical) teachings. Despite any lack of such basic understanding, I felt that, even if such concepts are not within one's understanding, if "for the time being" one takes them on "faith"*, the core of the material can be found to resonate in one's soul.

If you, as the reader, are not familiar with the Cosmology taught by Spiritual Science, I recommend as a general rule you "delay" following the links nested in the content. I have preserved the links (1) out of respect for the editor of the source site(s) and (2) to allow those who feel led to a (much) deeper "dive" into the concepts presented here. I have created an extensive Appendix as a further introductory help to some of the more complex subjects mentioned in the core of this material.

* We are taught in the New Testament that the Holy Spirit will bring to one's understanding those things that *seem* incomprehensible at the moment when we are ready to "receive" them. ([John 16:12-14](#))

~ Anthony
May, 2023

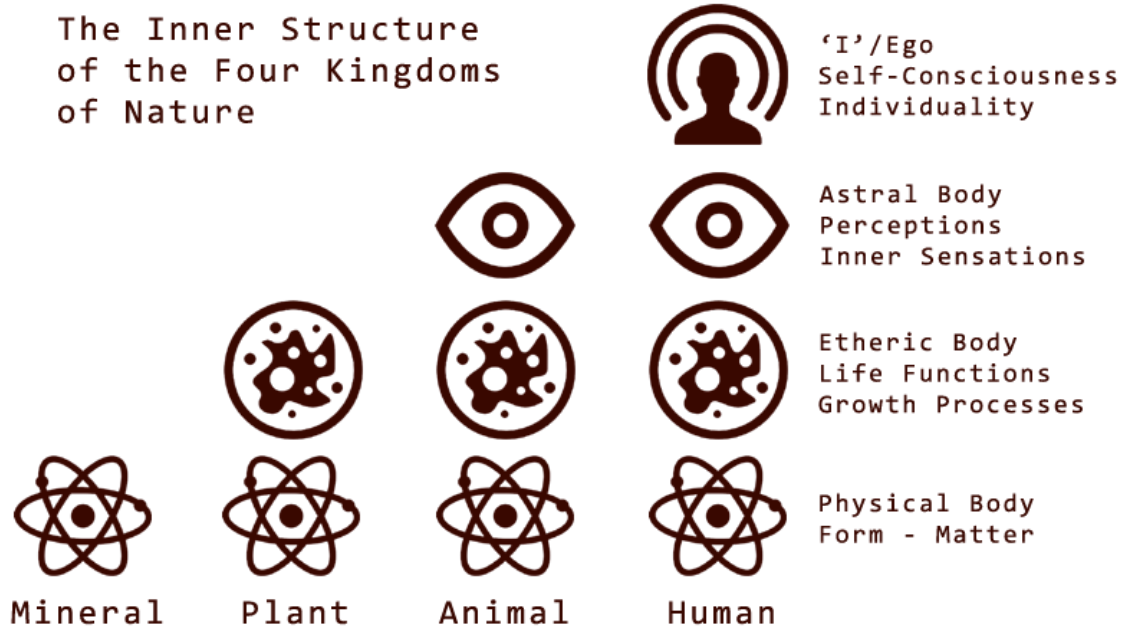




Overview of the Fourfold Human Being

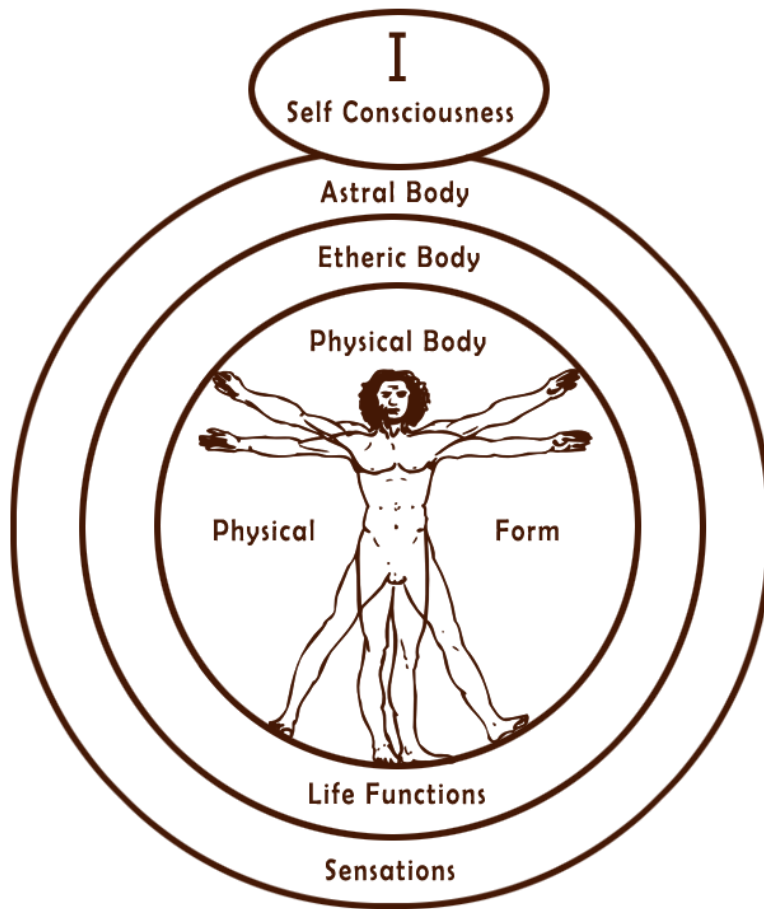


he human being is composed of four bodies with different basic functions. First is the physical body – that is, the outward physical form of the body – which is built up out of mineral substances and which is for that reason visible to us. Second is the invisible etheric body which enables our life processes and functions. The next invisible body is the astral body which enables us to have feelings and perceptions. The highest supersensible body is the 'I' or Ego, our essential self, which enables us to be conscious of ourselves as individual beings among other beings.



1. **The Physical body.** This is the physical form we share with minerals, plants and animals. It is this body that is perceptible to the "naked eye." The physical body is connected to the root chakra, which is linked with security, instinct and the element of earth.

2. **The Etheric body** completely permeates the physical, of which it may be regarded as a kind of architect – it is what holds the form of the physical body together. All the organs of the physical body are maintained in their form and structure by the currents and movements of the etheric body. Underlying the physical heart there is an etheric heart, underlying the physical brain an etheric brain, and so on. The etheric body is in effect a differentiated body like the physical, only far more complicated. And whereas in the physical body there are relatively separated parts, in the etheric all is in living interflow and movement. Man has the etheric body in common with the plant world, just as he has the physical body in common with the mineral. Everything that is alive has an etheric body. The etheric body can be linked to the sacral chakra, which, like water, symbolizes fluidity and nurturing.
3. **The Astral body** is the seat of our sensory perceptions. It is where our passions originate and exist. The astral body is where we experience pleasure and pain, feelings of hunger or of thirst. Feelings and emotions belong to the realm of the astral body. We share an astral body with the animal kingdom. The astral body has a characteristic movement of contraction, shrinking and closing down on the one hand, and expansion, relaxation and openness on the other – as in breathing. The astral body can be linked to the solar plexus chakra, which is related to emotions and will or purpose.
4. **The 'I' or 'Ego'** is what defines us as Human, distinct from all other life forms. It is the source of our self-consciousness. The ego or 'I' enters the Human organism from above and lives in the inner warmth of man. Our individual 'I' is what gives us direction and what determines the course of our life. It lives in warmth, in the element of fire. The 'I' is related to the heart chakra, which encompasses higher emotions such as love and compassion. It is where our Spirit lives – the divine aspect of the whole human being as an individual unity but which never reveals itself. The only way to gain access to our 'I' is by first understanding the three archetypal qualities of spirit: *thinking, feeling* and *willing*.



The Fourfold Human Being



In addition to the "fourfoldness" of the Human Being, there are other constitutions, or configurations, to consider. I felt a short overview of the Threefold Human Being an important supplement to the discussion of the Fourfold Human Being. ~Anthony

The Threefold Human Being

The trinity of body, soul and spirit is a concept that began in ancient civilizations. Plato already discerned three parts in the human soul and was the first to make distinctions between the thinking soul, located in the head, the emotional soul in the chest, and the soul of desires below the waist. Threefoldness can be acknowledged when considering where people located

the center of the human being throughout history. For the Chinese, it was the center of *Chi-Chung* or *Tan-tien*, the source of energy, located in the navel. The Japanese called it *Hara*, located in the belly below the navel, the center of the will. Later, in biblical times, the heart became the center. Now, in our times, the focus is in the head. One could say that throughout history awareness has shifted from the center of energy, *willing*, to the heart center, *feeling*, to the head center, *thinking* (Huber, 2003).

In contrast to the fourfold view of the human being, which answers the question of how spirit and matter interrelate, Steiner’s threefold view of the human being seeks to answer the question of how spirit expresses itself in the human being (Zeylmans v. Emmichoven, 1982). According to Steiner (1987), threefoldness is expressed in the body through three organ-systems: the nerve-sense system, the rhythmic system and the metabolic-limb system. In the soul, it is expressed through three groups of functions: forming mental images, judging and feeling-desiring. In the spirit, it is formed of three main forces: thinking, feeling and willing (see table 2 below).

Human Threefoldness (Zeylmans v. Emmichoven, 1982, p.158)

Body	Soul	Spirit
Nerve-Sense System	Forming Mental Images (<i>Imagination</i>)	Pure Thinking
Rhythmic System (<i>Inspiration</i>)	Feeling	Pure Feeling
Metabolic-Limb System	Desiring	Pure Willing (<i>Intuition</i>)

Table 1

Thinking

The force that is active in the thinking realm is similar to the force which creates the manifold forms in nature. To our sense perception, nature appears in images. Through thinking, ideas are able to form. If we take the example of meeting another human being, the thinking forces are those which allow me to see this other being through my eyes, to observe his

bodily features and characteristics, his posture, his gaze. If our paths separate and I do not see this person again, I will still be able to recall his features through my memory, through my soul's imagination. If we consider the further development of consciousness, the point is not only to become conscious of these thinking forces but also to strengthen them. Steiner refers to this as imaginative consciousness, spiritual pictures which are observed in full consciousness (Zeylmans v. Emmichoven, 1982). Rather than absent-mindedly taking in images from the world around us, imaginative consciousness allows us to observe the world through our sense perceptions in full awareness. If we think of meditation, the first instruction given in most traditions is simply to observe the breath in full awareness. Along the same lines, Houten (1999, p.41) states: "The fundamental attitude to be practiced continually is openness, wonder, even reverence for the sense phenomena – just as the unspoiled child is still able to."

See: [Appendix](#) for more on the subject of Human thought.

Feeling

In the middle, between the two opposite poles, lives the true realm of the soul. Here we find the forces that unite and harmonize the two poles, creating a trinity. In this realm, if I am looking at another human being, I will not only see him through my physical sense perception, but I will develop certain feelings towards him. Feelings have a polar structure of like and dislike, sympathy and antipathy, and so on. They belong to the part of the soul that lies midway between knowing and experiencing. Since feelings are connected with the rhythmic system, I may feel an increase in my heart rate and a change in my breathing at the view of this person. These notable physical changes are likely to occur if I feel a strong attraction towards this person. In order to understand this second spiritual archetypal force, a further development of our cognitive capacities is necessary. In addition to imaginative consciousness, we must develop inspirational consciousness, by learning to control and harmonize our feelings and desires (Zeylmans v. Emmichoven, 1982).

Willing

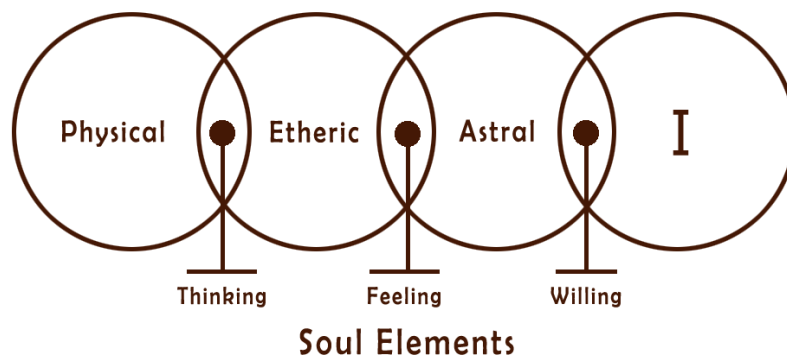
The third spiritual archetypal force that Steiner discusses is willing. This is the highest force that exists in the human organization. Willing can be known through the development of intuitive consciousness, also described by Steiner (as cited in Zeylmans v. Emmichoven, 1982) as: "Love must here become the power of knowledge". While I may have strong desires and feelings towards another being, through my will I may begin to recognize the laws of the spirit, and acknowledge that my feelings of joy and attraction

remain in me, as my own soul experience. Here, one must not get lost in the soul realm of feelings but must attempt to use his intuition in the development of wisdom:

Likes and dislikes, desire and loathing belong to the personal soul of man; duty stands higher than likes and dislikes. Duty may stand so high in the eyes of a man that he will sacrifice his life for its sake. And a man stands the higher the more he has ennobled his inclinations, his likes and dislikes, so that without compulsion or subjection they themselves obey what is recognized as duty.
(Steiner, 1923, n.p.)

Thus through his body, the human being is able to place himself in connection with things; through his soul, he retains in himself the impressions which they make on him; through his spirit, he gains an understanding of what the things retain for themselves.

Source: [The Anthroposophical Perspective on the Structure and Functioning of the Human Being](#)



Soul Elements of the Fourfold Human Being

Lecture Quotes

A further point of importance is what spiritual science calls orientation in the higher worlds. This is attained when the student [seeker] is permeated, through and through, with the conscious realization that feelings and thoughts are just as much veritable

realities as are tables and chairs in the world of the physical senses. In the soul and thought world, feelings and thoughts react upon each other just as do physical objects in the physical world.

As long as the student is not vividly permeated with this consciousness, he will not believe that a wrong thought in his mind may have as devastating an effect upon other thoughts that spread life in the thought world as the effect wrought by a bullet fired at random upon the physical objects it hits.

He will perhaps never allow himself to perform a physically visible action which he considers to be wrong, though he will not shrink from harboring wrong thoughts and feelings, for these appear harmless to the rest of the world. There can be no progress, however, on the path to higher knowledge unless we guard our thoughts and feelings in just the same way we guard our steps in the physical world.

Source: Rudolf Steiner – GA 10 – Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and Its Attainment – II: The Stages of Initiation ✓

On Earth, we have to be active, move from place to place, be on the go. It is an important characteristic of daily life that what is presented to our perception comes to us without our activity. However grotesque it may appear, the opposite is true in the spiritual world. There one cannot be active, one cannot draw anything towards one by moving from one place to another. Nor can one bring anything to one simply by moving a limb – by the movement of a hand, for example. Above all, for something to happen in the spiritual world it is essential that there be absolute calmness of soul.

The quieter we are, the more can happen through us in the spiritual world. We simply cannot say that anything happens in the spiritual world as a result of hurry and excitement. We need to develop loving participation in a mood of soul calmness for what is to happen, and then wait patiently to see how things come to pass.

Source: Rudolf Steiner – GA 140 – Life Between Death and Rebirth: IV: Recent Results of Occult Investigation Into Life ✓ – Vienna, November 3, 1912

Overview: Man's Bodily Principles

	body-soul-spirit each threefold	principles that Man developed to date		bodily principle	the I as a threefold soul
spirit			"budhi and atma still in 'core' "	spirit-man	
				life-spirit	
soul		I	I	spirit-self	consciousness soul
				I	intellectual soul
				astral body	sentient soul
body		astral body	astral body	astral body	
		etheric or life body	etheric body	etheric or life body	
		physical body	physical body	physical body	
Structure of Man:	Three-fold	Four-fold	Five-fold	Seven-fold	Nine-fold
	1904-GA089		1907-09-24-GA111		

The above shows the simplest overview of the constitution of Man's bodily principles, and how it can be referenced as 3,4,5,7 or 9 folded (Source: [Free Man Creator](#) ↗)





1

The Human Physical Body



he human physical body is a purely spiritual body (form which is called the 'phantom' – See [Appendix](#)), but current Man has this physical body consisting of mineral substance as a result of Luciferic and Ahrimanic influences.

Whereas a purely spiritual body would be more spherical, Man receives a 'model' of the physical body required for life on Earth (with arms, legs, hands, feet) as part of the stream of heredity. This is related to the [Fall and Original Sin](#).

As Man purifies his lower bodies through the forces of the I: first the astral body, then the etheric body and finally the physical body .. the transformation brought about first in the blood ultimately reaches the physical body so it becomes again a purely spiritual body.

This spiritual physical body is invisible, but when Man has reached that stage of purification, it can be materialized to any of the lower levels – see also the [Cleansed phantom](#) topic page. It is this 'higher' or spiritual structure of Man, see [Man's higher triad](#), that is eternal (see resurrection) and through which Man connects to the [Second Adam](#), or Christ group soul of humanity.

Lectures

[1907-05-29-GA099](#)

The substances of which the physical body is composed are perpetually changing; after about seven years, every particle has been renewed. The substance is exchanged but the form endures.

Between birth and death the substances of the physical body must continually be born anew; they are the ever-changing element. What we develop in such a way that death has no power over it, is preserved and builds up a new organism.

The Initiate performs consciously, between death and a new birth, what the average human being performs unconsciously between birth and death; the Initiate consciously builds up his new physical body. For him, therefore, birth amounts to no more than an outstanding event in his existence. He exchanges the substances only once, but then fundamentally. Hence there is considerable similarity of stature and form in such Individualities from one incarnation to another, whereas in those who are but little developed there is no similarity of form whatever in their successive incarnations. **The higher the development of a man, the greater is the similarity in two successive incarnations; this is clearly perceptible to clairvoyant sight.** There is a definite phrase for indicating this higher stage of development; it is said that such a man is not born in a different body, any more than it is said of the average human being that he receives a new body every seven years. Of a Master it is said: he is born in the same body; he uses it for hundreds, even thousands of years. This is the case with the vast majority of leading Individualities. An exception is formed by certain Masters who have their own special mission; with them the physical body remains, so that death does not occur for them at all. These are the Masters whose task it is to watch over and bring about the transition from one race to another.

1909-04-18-GA110 ↗

What is called the physical body had its first foundations during the very earliest Old Saturn formation. That physical body was not as yet interpenetrated by an etheric body, or by an astral body; but was already so organised that after passing through all the transformations it experienced later, it could become the bearer of the spiritual earth-man of today.

Very slowly and gradually was this physical body organised during the Old Saturn evolution, and whilst ancient Saturn itself was being formed, the different signs of the Zodiac slowly revolved, and the human body member by member, took on its earliest form.

- When Saturn stood under the sign of the Lion the beginning of the heart was formed;

- the ribs or the thoracic cage were started while Saturn was under the sign of the Crab;
- the foundation of the symmetrical shape of man, that is the reason for his being symmetrically built on two sides, arose while Saturn was under the constellation of Gemini.
- Thus we follow piece by piece the formation of the human body, and when we look up to that part of the Zodiac, where Aries the Ram is, we can say: The upper part of our head originated when ancient Saturn stood under the sign of Aries;
- the foundation of our organ of speech, when Saturn stood under the sign of the Bull.

And when you think of man distributed thus, you can see in the Zodiacal circle the creative forces for each of the human organs.

1911-02-11-GA127 ↗

(longer extract on [Human 'I' ↗](#))

Today, already at birth, we inherit such a dense and demanding physical body that only a small part of the work formerly accomplished by the I can now be carried out. Our physical body is no longer really suitable for what we ourselves are during the first three years of our life. **What we inherit is a physical body that is suitable for the later years of life, and this body is not adapted for directing the eyes upwards into the spiritual worlds.** The child himself has no knowledge of what is streaming down into him and those around him most certainly have none; for the physical body has altered, has become denser, drier.

We are born with a soul that in the first three years of our life still stretches up into the spiritual worlds; but **we are born with a body that is called upon to develop, through the whole of the rest of our life, the consciousness in which the I lives.** If we had not this dense physical body it would be possible for us in the conditions of the present cycle of human existence to remain childlike in the sense

indicated; but because we have this dense physical body, communion with the spiritual world during the first three years of life cannot come to full consciousness.

1911-10-10-GA131 ↗

The Phantom belongs to the physical body as its enduring part, a more important part than the external substances. ... that which was developed during the Saturn, Sun, and Moon periods is not the physical body that is laid aside at death. It is the Phantom, the Form, of the physical body.

So we see that physical, etheric and astral bodies are laid aside, and that the physical body seems to drain away completely into materials and forces which, through decay or burning or some other form of dissolution, are returned to the elements. But the more clairvoyance is developed in our time, the clearer will it be that the physical forces and sub-stances laid aside are not the whole physical body, for its complete configuration could never derive from them alone. To these substances and forces there belongs something else, best called the **'Phantom' of Man. This Phantom is the form-shape which as a spiritual texture works up the physical substances and forces so that they fill out the form which we encounter as the man on the physical plane.** The sculptor can bring no statue into existence if he merely takes marble or something else, and strikes away wildly so that single pieces spring off just as the substance permits. As the sculptor must have the 'thought' which he impresses on the substance, so is a 'thought' related to the human body: not in the same way as the thought of the artist, for the material of the human body is not marble or plaster, but as a real thought, the phantom, in the external world. Just as the thought of the plastic artist is stamped upon his material, so the phantom of the physical body is stamped upon the substances of the earth which we see given over after death to the grave or the fire. The phantom belongs to the physical body as its enduring part, a more important part than the external substances. The external substances are merely loaded into the network of the human form, as one might load apples into a cart. You can see how important the phantom is. The substances which fall asunder after death are essentially those we meet externally in nature. They are merely caught up by the human form.

If you think more deeply, can you believe that all the work of the great Divine Spirits through the Old Saturn, Old Sun, and Old Moon periods has merely created something which is handed over at death to the elements of the Earth? No, that which was developed during the Old Saturn, Old Sun, and Old Moon periods is not the physical body that is laid aside at death. It is the phantom, the form of the physical body. **We must be quite clear that to understand the physical body is not an easy thing.** Above all, this understanding must not be sought for in the world of illusion, the world of Maya.

We know that the foundation, the germ, of this phantom of the physical body was laid down by the Thrones during the Old Saturn stage; during the Old Sun stage the Spirits of Wisdom worked further upon it, the Spirits of Movement during the Old Moon stage, and the Spirits of Form during the Earth stage of evolution. And it is **only in this period that the physical body received the phantom. We call these Spirits the Spirits of Form, because they really live in the phantom of the physical body.**

So in order to understand the physical body, we must go back to the Phantom.

If we look back to the beginning of our Earth-existence, we can say that the hosts from the ranks of the higher Hierarchies who had prepared the physical human body in its own proper Form during the Old Saturn, Old Sun and Old Moon stages, up to the Earth stage, had from the outset placed this phantom within the Earth evolution. In fact **the phantom, which cannot be seen with the physical eye, was what was first there of the physical body of Man. It is a transparent body of force.**

What the physical eye sees are the physical substances which a person eats and takes into himself, and they fill out the invisible Phantom. If the physical eye looks upon a physical body, what it sees is the mineral part that fills the physical body, not the physical body itself.

But how has this mineral part found its way into the Phantom of man's physical body?

To answer this question, let us picture once more the genesis, the first 'becoming', of Man on Earth.

From Old Saturn, Old Sun and Old Moon there came over that network of forces which in its true form meets us as the invisible phantom of the physical body. For a higher clairvoyance it appears as Phantom only when we look away from all the external substance that fills it out. This is the Phantom which stands at the starting-point of man's Earth existence, when he was invisible as a physical body.

Let us suppose that to this Phantom of the physical body the etheric body is added; will the Phantom then become visible?

Certainly not; for the etheric body is invisible for ordinary sight. Thus the physical body as phantom, plus etheric body, is still invisible to external physical sense. And the astral body even more so; hence the combination of physical body as phantom with the etheric and astral bodies is still invisible. And when the I is added it would certainly become perceptible inwardly, but not externally visible. Thus, as Man came over out of the Old Saturn, Old Sun, and Old Moon stages of evolution, he was still visible only to a clairvoyant.

How did he become visible? But for the occurrence described in the Bible symbolically, and factually in occult science, as the entry of the Lucifer influence, he would not have become visible. What happened through that influence?

Read what is said in Outline of Esoteric Science. Out of that path of evolution in which his physical, etheric and astral bodies were still invisible, man was thrown down into denser matter, and was compelled under the influence of Lucifer to take this denser matter into himself. If the Lucifer force had not been introduced into our astral body and I, this dense materiality would not have become as visible as it has become. Hence we have to represent man as an invisible being, made visible in matter only through forces which entered into him under the influence of Lucifer. Through this influence external substances and forces are drawn into the domain of the Phantom and permeate it. As when we pour a coloured fluid into a transparent glass, so that the glass looks coloured, so we can imagine that the Lucifer influence poured forces into the human Phantom, with the result that man was adapted for taking in on Earth the requisite substances and forces which make his Form visible. Otherwise his physical body would have remained always invisible.

The alchemists always insisted that the human body really consists of the same substance that constitutes the perfectly transparent, crystal-clear 'Philosopher's Stone'. **The physical body is itself entirely transparent, and it is the Lucifer forces in man which have brought him to a non-transparent state and placed him before us so that he is opaque and tangible.** Hence you will understand that Man has become a being who takes up external substances and forces of the Earth, which are given off again at death, only because Lucifer tempted him, and certain forces were poured into his astral body. It follows that because the I entered into connection with the physical, etheric and astral bodies under the influence of Lucifer, Man became what he is on Earth and otherwise would not have been: the bearer of a visible, earthly organism.

1912-06-07-GA137 ↗

...maps the members of Man to the zodiac signs

1913-03-29-GA145 ↗

The physical body of a person undergoing occult development manifests more and more as a number of imaginations, of pictures which are in a sense inwardly alive and active, and are, or rather become, more and more interesting; for they are not just anything we please. When the person is beginning his development the pictures are not specially significant; and they are least so when the clairvoyant vision observes the body of a person who has not yet developed in occultism. In this latter case a number of pictures, a number of imaginations are perceived. To clairvoyant vision the physical substance disappears, and in its place appear imaginations: but these are so pressed together that instead of the pleasing inwardly shining aspect of a person engaged in occult development, they manifest as in an opaque substance. Even, however, in the case of a person who is not yet developed they are to be seen, and indeed as parts and each part signifies something in the macrocosm. **Essentially one can distinguish twelve parts, each of which is really a picture – a painting of one part of the great cosmos. When all twelve are assembled together, the impression is given that some unknown painter has produced miniature pictures of the macrocosm, twelve in number, and from these has formed the physical human body.** Now, when the individual is engaged in occult development, this picture grows larger and larger, and also

appears inwardly more and more pleasing, radiant from within. This is because, in the case of an individual not engaged in occult development, the macrocosm is only reflected in its physical aspect; but in the case of one undergoing an occult development the spiritual content more and more manifests itself; the pictures of the spiritual essence of the macrocosm are to be seen. Thus occult development also shows us that a person engaged in an occult development, from being merely a physical microcosm, becomes more and more a spiritual one, that is, he manifests within himself more and more, not merely the pictures of planets and suns, but of entities belonging to the Higher Hierarchies. That is the difference between persons engaged and others not engaged in occult development. The more a person presses forward in occult development the more exalted are the Hierarchies manifesting within him. And thus we learn the structure of the world, as it were, by clairvoyantly observing the physical human body.

1917-01-01-GA174B ↗

[The physical body]

Looking at the human physical body, we have to admit that if it were not filled with those higher components of existence, the etheric body, the astral body and the I, it could not be the physical body as we know it. The moment man steps through the portal of death, leaving behind his physical body – that is, the moment the higher components withdraw from the physical body – it begins to obey laws other than those which governed it while those components were present there. The physical body disintegrates; after death it obeys the physical and chemical forces and laws of the earth.

The physical body of man as we know it cannot be constructed in accordance with earthly laws, for it is these very laws which destroy it. The body can only be what it is because there work within it those parts of man that are not of the earth: his higher components of soul and Spirit. There is nothing in the whole realm of physical and chemical laws which could justify the presence of such a thing as the human physical body on the earth.

Measured by the physical laws of the earth, the human body is an impossible creation. It is prevented from disintegrating by the higher components of man's being. It follows, therefore, that the moment these higher components – the I, the astral body and the etheric body – desert the human body, it becomes a corpse.

You know from earlier lectures that the diagram of the human being we have often given is quite correct as such, but that in reality it is not as simple as some would like. To begin with, we divide the human being into physical body, etheric body, astral body and I.

I have pointed out on other occasions that this in itself implies a further complication ...

- the etheric body is something supersensible, something invisible that lives in the human being and cannot be perceived by the senses. But it has, in a sense, its physical counterpart because it imprints itself on the physical body. The physical body contains not only the physical body itself, but also an imprint of the etheric body. The etheric body projects itself onto the physical body; so we can speak of an etheric projection onto the physical body.
- It is the same in the case of the astral body. We can speak of the astral projection onto the physical body.
- You know that the I projection onto the physical body may be sought in certain features of the blood circulation, where the I projects itself onto the blood. In a similar way the other higher components project themselves onto the physical body.

So the physical body in its physical aspect is in itself a complicated system, for it is fourfold. And just as the most important aspect cannot exist in the physical body if the I and the astral body are not in it – for it then becomes a corpse – so is it also in the case of these projections, for they are all present in the physical substance. Without the I there can be no human blood, without the astral body there can be no human nervous system as a whole. These things exist in us as a counterpart of man's higher components.

see further extracts and lecture continuation on [Development of the I](#) and [I-organization](#)

1921-10-28-GA208

...discusses the forming of Man through twelve zodiacal cosmic influences.

1921-10-29-GA208

...describes how Man breathes in images through these influences, not just Man's outer form but also the form of the organs.

The life of circulation is in touch with the life of metabolism, with the result that the images are given physical substance and physical organs develop.

1924-GA026

In order really to understand what the whole choir of the Hierarchy of the Archai accomplished when they created the human form, we must remember that there is a very great difference between this form [editor: the 'phantom'] and the physical body of man.

The physical body is made up of the physical and chemical processes in Man. These processes take place in the present human being within the human form. But this form itself is something that is *altogether spiritual*. It ought to fill us with solemn feelings when, on looking at the human form, we realise that with physical senses we are perceiving in the physical world something that is spiritual.

For one who is able to see spiritually it is really the case that in the human form he sees a true Imagination which has descended into the physical world. If we wish to see Imaginations we must pass from the physical world to the neighbouring spiritual world, and then we realise how the human form is related to these Imaginations.





2

The Human Etheric Body



he human etheric body is one of [Man's bodily principles](#)✓, part of the structural make-up of Man, and so closely intertwined with the other bodily principles it should not be studied or considered as a separate entity.

In one's lifetime, Man develops the etheric bodily principle, or life body, approximately between 7 and 14 years up to the age of puberty (when the workings of the astral body starts).

The workings of Man's etheric body in the fluid body (Man is predominantly made up of water), organs and etheric currents, can be imagined by observing and comparing the life of the plants, that also have an etheric life body.

In Man's physical body, the etheric body finds its expression in the glandular system and processes (just as for example the astral system finds its expression in the nervous system). Furthermore, the connection of the etheric and physical through the brain makes that Man can think autonomously as part of the complex [I-organization](#)✓ (FMCoo.036). In terms of [Man as a threefold being](#)✓ – that is: with three subsystems – the etheric body is intimately bound up with the metabolic and limb system (1924-07-21-GA319). See further [Man: an integrated view](#)✓.

The human etheric body consists of [a blend of the four higher ethers](#)✓ (1916-01-02-GA165), it is the life body of [formative forces](#)✓ that maintains our physical body.

It acts as a time machine or memory bank, and contains the memory of all our life experiences that we first see as a life tableau [after physical death](#)✓, and is then dispersed in the cosmic ether over a short period of time.

The evolutionary trend in current and future times is such that the etheric body is slowly loosening again of the physical body, and this will have far reaching consequences for Man's reality experience. Whereas currently Man

only knows and believes in the mineral physical world as observed through the physical senses, in the future this will naturally flow into experiences of the spiritual that Man therefore has to be able to know and understand.

For the initiate, the etheric body is used as a mirror for [clairvoyant perception](#) into the higher worlds, as it is able of a sevenfold reflection. These seven types of reflection are also called the seven spiritual vowels (whereas the twelve types of reflection of the physical body are also called the spiritual consonants). (see [1914-10-03/04/05/06-GA156](#)).

Overview of Important Aspects

Practical & Experiential

- impact of lifestyle and nervousness which increases with a weakening etheric body (1912-01-11-GA143)
- beauty (such as art, and all that is noble) works through the human senses, works upon the etheric body and ennobles it (1905-10-19-GA093A)
 - this is important in the process of reincarnation and finding a fitting etheric body on the descent, people who didn't develop this aspect of ennobling the etheric body, can receive a shock due to fear of re-birth and this can cause rebirth as an idiot.
- effect of music - causes vibrations in the etheric body (eg 1906-07-29-GA097)
- paralysis is the withdrawal of the etheric body from the physical body, which then becomes independent (1911-09-17-GA130)
- a lazy person has weak etheric body either from birth or through letting it weaken through neglect (1911-09-17-GA130)

Life Explanatory

- imprinting of sensory life experiences of the I via the astral body on the etheric and physical bodies
- diffusion of the etheric body into cosmos after life tableau experience after physical death

- exercises like yoga, qigong, tai chi effect the etheric and not the physical body
- in medicine, [homeopathy](#) and potentization work via the etheric forces affecting the etheric and physical bodies
- the etheric body is most dominant in people with a phlegmatic temperament, see eg FMCoo.158 on [Human temperaments](#)
- similarity of appearance in the human form is modeled from the etheric, and over the Earth the etheric body is fashioned according to climatic and other conditions, so that this etheric body has the special national character and peculiarities in its forces, so that it forms one nation differently from another (1912-04-09-GA136)

Sudden Loosening & Separation of Etheric from Physical Body

- conditions during normal life
 - when a man has a terrible experience such as dreadful fall or has been in danger of drowning, such shock causes the loosening of the etheric body so that in such a moment the whole of the previous life stands before the soul like a memory-picture. This is analogous to the experience after death ([1907-05-26-GA099](#), see also 'Near Death Experiences' – NDE)
 - the 'prickling' sensation of a hand or limb that has 'gone to sleep' is a partial and local separation of the etheric from the physical body (also certain states of hypnosis occur this way). The tickling sensation is because the etheric body is woven in the physical body in tiny pinpoint formations. ([1907-05-26-GA099](#))
- connection between etheric and physical body, its evolution from the Atlantean epoch (etheric outside, then entry and tightening connection) over the current into the sixth epoch (loosening of the etheric body again), and its many angles, ao:
 - ancient initiation process with the three days sleep during the ancient Mysteries.
 - the danger of spiritual death and insanity in current and future times if the etheric body loosens and Man only believes in the

physical material – not realizing the realities he is experiencing (1908-04-13-GA102)

- the re-appearance of natural clairvoyance and experience of Christ in the etheric – see eg Schema FMCoo.081 on [Christ Module 19 – experiencing the Christ](#) ✓
- loosening of the etheric body through the Christ Impulse (1908-07-04-GA266/1)

Spiritual Scientific

- the etheric body connects us with the surrounding cosmos, just as it is the physical body that connects us with Earth (1915-09-05-GA162)
- the etheric body grows young with physical aging; and this makes a huge difference when someone dies young or old (1915-09-05-GA162), continued on: [Journey between death and a new birth](#) ✓
- the human etheric body is permeated by the higher ethers and thus the principles of spirit-man, life-spirit, and spirit-self that work on the astral, etheric and physical body. Through the action of atma the physical body is contracted, through the action of buddhi it is stabilized, through the action of manas it is unburdened. See also link with the [Human senses](#) ✓ of life, movement and balances (1909-10-25-GA115 ✓)
- how the etheric life brings life of the senses, nerves, breathing, circulation, metabolism, movement, reproduction (and the link to the seven life forces and planetary influences) (1921-10-29-GA208)
- use of the etheric body as a reflector for clairvoyant perception, see [Stages of clairvoyance](#) ✓
- the ether body has an influence both on the astral and upon the physical bodies .. ”the forces of Eros and Demeter in the ether body, from the etheric are sent upwards into the astral body, and downwards into the physical body” (1911-08-18-GA129 ✓ See [Appendix](#))
- a woman has a masculine etheric body, and a man a feminine etheric body (1905-10-05-GA093A)

- a young person has an old ether body, as one grows old physically, the etheric body grows young, see eg Schema FMCo0.386 on [Laying off the etheric body after death](#)↗
- structure
 - seven-folded nature of the etheric body, and the corresponding life functions
 - developing consciousness through initiation, means separating out again the soul forces of TFW (Thinking, Feeling, Willing) and splitting the ether body in three parts. With still higher development, Man takes control over twelve such centers in order to attain higher consciousness. This way Man can take control of his twelve parts, and splits his human etheric body in twelve parts. (1905-08-13-GA091, see [Man's transformation and spiritualization#Aspects](#)↗)
- evolutionary
 - origin of the Man's etheric bodily principle during Old Sun evolutionary phase
 - Man's etheric body was fashioned in remote primitive times; then came an episode when this etheric body was sent down, sunk into human nature. Only later did it shine out as the intellectual soul and brought forth the external powers of civilisation. (1912-04-09-GA136, explained in the language of the Kalevala (old Finnish myth), where the etheric body is called Sampo)

More Advanced Topics:

- a human etheric body which remains preserved after death is called nirmanakaya, one that originates from multiplication is called dharmakaya (1909-02-19-GA109 extra notes to lecture) – see also [Principle of spiritual economy](#)↗
- relation of Christ as a group soul to the twelve apostles on the basis of a twelvefold etheric body (1905-08-13-GA091)
- the etheric law or principle of recapitulation (eg 1908-10-26-GA107 below)

- in the Egyptian culture the etheric body and formative forces were called 'Ka' (see a.o. Teichmann)
- man's etheric body is the builder and creator of the whole glandular system, as well as in another aspect the organizer, creator, and controller of the circulation of the chyle (1908-01-06-GA102 - see [Blood is a special fluid#1908-01-06-GA102 ↗](#))

Lectures

1904-GA009 ↗

We should not take offense at the expression 'ether body'. Ether here designates something different from the hypothetical ether of the physicist. We should regard it simply as a name for what is described here. The structure of the physical body of the human being is a kind of reflection of its purpose, and this is also the case with the human etheric body. It can be understood only when it is considered in relation to the thinking spirit.

The human etheric body differs from that of plants and animals through being organized to serve the purposes of the thinking spirit. Man belongs to the mineral world through his physical body, and he belongs through this etheric body to the life-world. After death the physical body dissolves into the mineral world, the ether body into the life-world.

By the word 'body' is meant whatever gives a being shape or form. The term body must not be confused with a bodily form perceptible to the physical senses. Used in the sense implied in this book, the term body can also be applied to such forms as soul and spirit may assume.

1905-08-13-GA091

.. - extract, freely translated

In this lecture, the relation of Christ as a group soul to the twelve apostles is explained on the basis of a twelvefold etheric body.

Higher consciousness means that the components of lower consciousness are relaxed and controlled.

In soul forces of TFW (Thinking, Feeling, Willing) correspond to the Thrones, Spirits of Wisdom, and Spirits of Movement. The nine other forces work also in Man but are less noticeable.

When Man develops his higher Self, he takes control over these forces TFW (Thinking, Feeling, Willing) first in astral, then etheric and finally physical .. and that way the higher consciousness comes in that controls the three components that have departed from one another.

With still higher development, Man takes control over twelve such centers in order to attain higher consciousness.

Each human power stands in relationship with a primal force of the world, universe.

(example: ants)

This way Man can take control of his twelve parts, and this way he splits his ether body in twelve parts. Each part has its own special characteristic.

...

Higher developed emanate etheric bodies at death, these are used as models.

Christ radiated new physical matter at his birth, so he was able, before to radiate the twelve separate parts of the foregone Christ.

The twelve ether bodies of the apostles are the twelve separate parts of the previous Christ ether body.

Christ is one consciousness and the group soul of the twelve apostles who are his parts and represent his body. Christ has really worked through these twelve parts.

If we consider man's being in its entirety, we have to begin with the physical body, then the etheric body, then the astral body. The physical body of man can be seen by everyone. The etheric body becomes visible when the physical body is suggested away by a strong act of will [editor: clairvoyance]. Then the space of the physical body remains filled with the etheric body. The spiritual scientist considers the etheric as actually being the lowest body. It is the body according to which the physical body is formed. Taking the descending line, the form of the etheric body is the reverse of the physical. It is only in the ascending line that they are identical. **A woman has a masculine etheric body, and a man a feminine etheric body.**

1905-10-19-GA093A

Every combination of [mineral] matter on the physical plane lacks an etheric body, but **all that grows has an etheric body.**

If someone works artistically either in a visual or plastic way, this has an effect on the etheric body. **An artistically formed piece of sculpture or a painting works directly on the etheric body.** A virtue, on the other hand, works on the astral body.

Many noble human beings who return from the spirit world meet an etheric body which is in no way suited to their advanced astral body, because they have done nothing in the way of organised activity in the sphere of beauty.

It therefore happens that many people who in their last incarnation lived very holy lives, but without concerning themselves with what is noble in the outer world of the senses, when approaching reincarnation experience a fear of re-birth, because they have not **ennobled their etheric body through that beauty which is dependent on the senses.**

This very frequently brings about an apprehension before incarnation and in an extreme case, rebirth as an idiot. When a person during his life as an idiot experiences all that is detrimental in his etheric body, this is balanced out in the following incarnation.

Because the human being at the moment of incarnation, of birth, **receives a shock if he has not ennobled his etheric body through allowing beauty which is dependent on the senses to work upon it.**

Freemasonry took beauty as its second principle. Wisdom, Beauty and Power or Strength are the three constructive forces; these have to be developed.

Anyone possessing all three will in his next incarnation become a human being who fits harmoniously into his three bodies.

1906-07-29-GA097

In the Nineteenth Century it was not possible to make clear to man the deep meaning of that great process of initiation in a drama. There is, however, a medium through which man's understanding can be reached, even without words, without concepts or ideas. This medium is music.

Wagner's music holds within it all the truths that are contained in the Parsifal story. **His music is of such a unique character that those who listen to it receive in their ether body quite special vibrations. Therein lies the secret of Wagner's music.**

One does not need to understand it – not in the least! One receives in one's ether body the benign and healthful effect of the music. And man's ether body is intimately connected with all the movements and throbbings of the blood.

Wagner understood the mystery of the purified blood. In his melodies are rhythms and vibrations that must needs beat in the ether body of Man if he is to be cleansed and purified so as to be ready to receive the Mysteries of the Holy Grail. (1907-05-26-GA099)

1907-05-26-GA099

[Other separations of physical and etheric bodies]

Separation of the physical body from the etheric body during life can take place only in an initiate, but there are certain moments when the etheric body suddenly loosens from the physical body. This occurs when a man has had terrible experiences, for instance, a dreadful fall or has been in danger of drowning. The shock causes a kind of loosening of the etheric body from the physical body and the consequence is that in such a moment the whole of the previous life stands before the soul like a memory-picture. This is analogous to the experience after death.

Partial separations of the etheric body also occur when a limb has “gone to sleep” as we say if a hand, for instance, has gone to sleep, the seer can perceive the etheric part of the hand protruding like a glove; parts of the etheric brain also protrude when a man is in a state of hypnosis. Because the etheric body is woven in the physical body in tiny, pinpoint formations, there arises in the physical body the well-known sensation of prickling in a limb that has gone to sleep.

1908-04-13-GA102 ↗

.. discusses the impact of connection of etheric body with physical body

Why was spiritual vision a natural condition in the far distant past?

The reason is that the **connection between the physical body and the etheric body was different**. The connection existing today did not develop until the later phases of the Atlantean epoch. Before that time the upper part of the etheric head extended far outside the boundaries of the physical head; towards the end of Atlantis the etheric head gradually drew completely into the physical head until it coincided with it. This gave rise to the later form of consciousness which became natural in Post-Atlantean man, enabling him to perceive physical objects in sharp outlines, as we do today. The fact that man can hear tones, be aware of scents, see colours on surfaces – although these are no longer expressions of the inmost spiritual reality of things – all this is connected with the firm and gradual interlocking of the physical body and etheric body.

[Ancient initiation via etheric body]

In earlier times, when the etheric body was still partly outside the physical body, this projecting part of the etheric body was able to receive impressions from the astral body, and it was these impressions that were perceived by the old, dreamlike clairvoyance. Not until the etheric body had sunk right down into the physical body was man wholly bereft of his dim clairvoyance. Hence in the ancient Mysteries it became necessary for the priests to use special methods in order to induce in the candidates for Initiation the condition which, in Atlantis, had been natural and normal. When pupils were to receive Initiation in the Mystery-temples, the procedure was that, after the appropriate impressions had been received by the astral body, the priests conducting the Initiation induced a partial loosening of the etheric body, in consequence of which the physical body lay for three and a half days in a trancelike sleep, in a kind of paralytic condition. The astral body was then able to imprint into the loosened etheric body experiences which had once come to Atlantean man in his normal state. Then the candidate for Initiation was able to see around him realities that henceforth were no longer merely preserved for him in scripts, or in tradition, but had become his own, individual experiences.

Let us try to picture what actually happened to the candidate for Initiation. When the priests in the Mysteries raised the etheric body partially out of the physical body and guided the impressions issuing from the astral body into this released etheric body, the candidate experienced in his etheric body the spiritual worlds. So strong and intense were the experiences that when he was restored from the trance and his etheric body was reunited to the physical body, he brought back the memory of these experiences into his physical consciousness. He had been a witness of the spiritual worlds, could himself bear witness to what was happening there; he had risen above and beyond all division into peoples or nations, for he had been initiated into that by which all peoples are united; the primal wisdom, primal truth.

...

[the loosening of the etheric body, and its impact]

The whole evolution of mankind has a certain strange quality. It goes forward in one direction until a certain point is reached and then it begins to stream in the opposite direction. Having streamed downwards to a certain point, it turns again upwards, reaching the same stages as on the descent, but now in a higher form.

Today man stands in very truth before a fateful future, that future when, as is known to everyone who is aware of this deeply significant truth of evolution, his etheric body will gradually loosen itself again, freeing itself from its submergence in the physical body, where the things of the physical world are perceived in their sharply outlined forms. The etheric body must release itself again in order that man's being may become spiritualised and once again have vision of the spiritual world. Today humanity has actually reached the point when in a great number of individuals the etheric body is beginning to loosen.

A destiny in the very highest degree significant is approaching us, and here we come near to the secret of our own cultural age.

We must realise that the etheric body, which has descended very deeply into the physical body, must now take the path upwards, carrying with it from the physical body everything that has been experienced through the physical senses. But just because the etheric body is loosening itself from the physical, everything that was formerly reality – in the physical sense – must gradually be spiritualised.

It will be essential for mankind in times to come to have conscious certainty that the spiritual is reality.

What will happen otherwise?

The etheric body will be freed from the physical body while men still believe only in the reality of the physical world, and have no consciousness of the reality of the spiritual, which will be manifest in the loosened etheric body as the fruit of man's past experience in the physical body. In such conditions men may be faced with the danger of losing all relationship to this loosening of their etheric bodies.

Let us consider the point at which a man's etheric body, which has been firmly anchored in the physical body, begins to loosen from it again and to emerge. Suppose that this happens to a man who in his physical existence has lost all belief in, all consciousness of, the spiritual world, and has cut himself off from any connection with it. Let us assume that he descended so firmly and deeply into the physical body that he has been able to retain nothing save the belief that the physical life is the one and only reality. Now he passes into the next phase of human existence. Relentlessly the etheric body

emerges from the physical body, while he is still incapable of realising the existence of a spiritual world. He neither recognises nor knows anything of the spiritual world about him. **This is the fate which may confront men in the near future, that they do not recognise the spiritual world which, as the result of the loosening of the etheric body, they must inevitably experience, but regard it as a phantasy, illusion, vain imagination.** And those who have experienced most ably, with the utmost perfection, the physical body, the men who have become the pundits of materialism and are full of fixed, rigid notions of matter, it is they who, with the loosening of the etheric body, will face the greatest danger of being without a single inkling that there is a spiritual world. They will regard everything that then comes to them from the spiritual world as illusion, fancy, as so many figments of dream.

If in times to come, when the etheric body has again loosened itself from the physical, man is to live his life in any real sense, **he must have consciousness of what will then present itself to the etheric body.** In order that he may be conscious that what then comes to him is knowledge of the spiritual world, it is essential that **realisation of the existence of the spiritual world shall be preserved in humanity and carried through the period when man is most deeply immersed in the material world.**

For the sake of the future, the link between the religious life and the life of knowledge must never be lost. Man came forth from a life among the gods; to a life among the gods he will again return. But he must be able to recognise them; he must know that in very truth the gods are realities. When the etheric body has loosened he will no longer be able to rely on remembrances of ancient human times. If meanwhile he has lost consciousness of the spiritual world, has come to believe that life in the physical body and things to be seen in the physical world are the only realities, then for all ages of time he must dangle, as it were, in mid-air. He will have lost his bearings in the spiritual world and will have no ground under his feet. He will be threatened, in this condition, with what is known as the **“spiritual death.”** For around him there is only phantasy, illusion, a world of whose reality he has no consciousness, in which he does not believe, and so ... he dies! That is the death in the spiritual world. It is the doom which threatens men if, before passing again into the spiritual worlds, they fail to bring with them any consciousness of those worlds.

1908-07-04-GA266/1

The etheric body is loosened, lifted out of the physical body through the Christ Impulse. The etheric body is permeated by the Holy Spirit through the Christ Impulse. And the Holy Spirit – our higher 'I' – causes forces to stream to us from outside.

1908-10-26-GA107 ↗

.. the most **elementary principle of the etheric body is recapitulation**. A being, standing solely under its etheric and physical principles, would express in itself the principle of recapitulation. We see evidence of this in the plant in a very marked degree: We see how leaf after leaf develops, since the plant's physical body is permeated by the recapitulation principle of the etheric. A leaf is formed, then a second and a third; leaf is added to leaf in continuous repetition. And even when the plant comes to a certain conclusion above, recapitulation is still there. There is a kind of wreath of leaves forming the calyx of the flower, though they have a different form from the other leaves. Yet, you feel that it is still a recapitulation of the same leaves in altered form. We may therefore say that the green calyx-leaves up above where the plant ends are a kind of recapitulation. And even the flower petals are a recapitulation. It is true that they have a different color, but in essentials, they are still leaves – greatly transformed leaves.

1909-GA010 ↗

(the constitution of the etheric body)

1909-10-25-GA115 ↗

(SWCC [Shortened without Contents Change])

We began with the sense we called the sense of life – the feeling of life, the vital sense. What is this sense based upon, in the true spirit of the word? In order to visualize its source we must delve rather deep down into the subconscious mind, into the substrata of the human organism. This method of spiritual-scientific research discloses first a peculiar co-operation of the physical and etheric

bodies. The lowest member of the human being, the physical body, and the second, the etheric body, enter a certain mutual relationship whereby something new occurs in the etheric body.

Something that is different permeates and flows through the etheric body, and actually, men of our time don't in the least know in a conscious way what this "something" is. **It saturates the etheric body as water does a sponge.**

- Spiritual science can tell us what it is that acts thus in the etheric body. It is what corresponds today to what men will develop in a far distant future as spirit man, or atma. At present, man does not possess this atma as his own. It is bestowed upon him, so to speak, by the surrounding outer spiritual world, without his being able to participate in it. Later on, in the distant future, he will himself have developed it within him. That which saturates the etheric body, then, is **spirit man, or atma**, and at the present stage of human evolution it is in a sense a superhuman being. This superhuman atma, or spirit man, **expresses itself by contracting the etheric body** – cramping it, as it were. Using an analogy from the sense world, we can compare the effect to that of frost, which cramps and contracts the physical body. Man is as yet not ripe for what one day will be his most precious possession, and therefore, in a sense, it destroys him. **The result of the contraction described is that the astral element is pressed out, squeezed out.** In proportion as the etheric body is pressed together the physical body as well undergoes tension, **whereby the astral body makes room for itself.** You can visualize it approximately by imagining a sponge being squeezed out. Now, the activities in the astral body are all emotional experiences – pleasure, distaste, joy, sorrow – and **this process of being squeezed out communicates itself to sentience as the sense of life.** This is the process that takes place in the astral body, and it expresses itself as a feeling of freedom, of strength, of lassitude, etc.
- As the second sense, we listed the sense of our own movements. In this case, again, an extraneous principle is at work in the etheric body, and again it is one not yet

indigenous in man. He has not achieved it through his own efforts; it flows into him out of the spiritual world, and, as with atma, the etheric body is saturated with it as a sponge with water. It is the **life spirit, or buddhi**, which in time will permeate him, but which for the present he holds as a gift, as it were, from the life spirit of the world. Its action is different from that of atma. As water seeks its level, so buddhi effects proportion, equilibrium, in the etheric and physical bodies, and hence in the astral body as well. This condition operates in such a way that when the balance is disturbed it can re-establish itself automatically. If we stretch out an arm, for example, destroying the balance through this change of position, the balance is immediately restored because the astral body is in a state of equilibrium. In proportion as we stretch out an arm the astral current streams in the opposite direction, thereby re-adjusting the balance. With every physical change of position, even merely blinking, the astral current in the organism moves in the opposite direction. In this inner experience of a process of equalization the sense of movement manifests itself.

- We come now to a third element that can permeate man's etheric body, and this, too, is something that has entered human consciousness only to a negligible extent: **manas, or spirit self**. But inasmuch as precisely at this period it is incumbent upon man to develop manas, this being his earth task, **manas acts differently upon the etheric body than do atma and buddhi**, which are to be developed in the distant future. Its action is to **expand the etheric body**, effecting the opposite of what was designated "frost" in connection with the sense of life. This activity could be compared with **a pouring, a streaming, of warmth into space, and this expands the elastic etheric body**. We have something like streaming warmth when this semi-conscious expansion of the etheric body occurs. The **consequence of this elastic expansion of the etheric body is a corresponding rarefaction of the astral body, which can thus expand as well. It need not be pressed out; by having more room it can remain in the expanding etheric body**. While the sense of life becomes conscious through the

contraction of the astral body, the static sensation results from the expansion of the etheric body, which thus makes more room for the astral body. In the way of a comparison it can be said that the texture of the astral body becomes rarefied, less dense. This thinning of the etheric and the astral bodies offers the possibility for the physical body to expand as well – in a sense, to extend itself.

So:

Through the action of atma the physical body is contracted, through the action of buddhi it is stabilized, through the action of manas it is unburdened.

The result is that at certain points it pushes out tiny particles, and this occurs in those three marvelous organs, the semi-circular canals of the ear. Such spreading out of physical matter does not arise from a forcing from within, but from a cessation or diminution of pressure from without, through the unburdening of the physical matter in question. This in turn enables the astral body to expand more and more. It makes contact with the outer world and must achieve equilibrium with it, for when this is not the case we cannot stand upright; we even fall over. If we would move in space we must take our bearings, and for this reason those three little canals are arranged in the three dimensions of space at right angles to each other. If these canals are injured we lose our sense of balance, we feel dizzy, we faint.

1911-09-17-GA130 ✓

As soon as we know that the physical body is interpenetrated by an etheric body we will readily understand the occultist describing in his way that paralysis is an abnormal occurrence of what otherwise happens through normal training.

- It can happen that a man's **etheric body withdraws from his physical body**. Then the physical body becomes independent. **Paralysis** could possibly result, for the physical body has been deprived of its enlivening etheric body. But we do not need to

go as far as the appearance of paralysis, for we can understand its appearance in everyday life even better.

- For example, what is a **lazy person**? He is someone who has a **weak etheric body from birth or who has let it grow weak through neglect**. We try to correct it by relieving the physical body of its leaden heaviness and by some means making it lighter.

1912-01-11-GA143 ↗

(overcoming nervousness) (SWCC [Shortened without Contents Change])

[forgetfulness]

.. forgetfulness, so common and such a nuisance, but also so significant in our lives. Strange as it may seem, anthroposophy shows it to be harmful to health, and that many upsets bordering on severe illness can be avoided if people would only be less forgetful. And who can claim to be exempt, since there is no one who is not forgetful to some degree. Just consider the numerous cases in which people can never find where they put things. One has lost his pencil, another cannot find his cufflinks, etc., etc., all of which seems trivial but such things do, after all, occur often enough in life.

There is a good exercise for gradually curing such forgetfulness. Suppose a lady is forever putting her brooch down when she takes it off in the evening, and then cannot find it in the morning. You might think the best cure for her forgetfulness would be to remember to put it always in the same place. There is a far more effective means of remembering where it is. This does not, of course, apply to all objects but in this case the lady should say to herself, "I will put my brooch in a different place each evening, but as I do so I will hold the thought in mind that I have put it in a particular spot. Then I will form a clear picture in my mind of all the surroundings. Having done this, I will go quietly away. I realize that if I only do this once, I probably will not succeed, but if I make a habit of it, I will find that my forgetfulness gradually disappears."

Further results can be attained from such an exercise. When it becomes habit to hold such thoughts when things are put aside, it represents a strengthening of the etheric body, which, is the bearer of memory.

But now assume you have advised someone to do this exercise not because he is forgetful but because he is nervous. It will prove to be an excellent cure. **His etheric body will be strengthened and the nervous tendencies will disappear.** In such cases, life itself demonstrates that what spiritual science teaches is correct.

[jerking in writing]

.. the physical and etheric bodies are intimately connected .. anyone with a healthy soul will be moved to compassion for clerical workers and others whose professions demand a great deal of writing. Perhaps you have noticed the strange movements they make in the air whenever they are about to write. Actually, with some of them the movements are not so extreme and they may only give a kind of jerk when they write, a jerk repeated for every up and down stroke. You can see the **jerking in the writing**.

This condition is easily understood through spiritual science.

- In a healthy human being the etheric body, guided by the astral body, is always able to permeate the physical body. Thus, the physical body is normally the servant of the etheric body.
- When, undirected by the astral body, the physical body executes movements on its own, it is symptomatic of an unhealthy condition. These jerks represent the subordination of the etheric to the physical body, and denote that the weak etheric body is no longer fully able to direct the physical. Such a relationship between the physical and etheric bodies lies at the spiritual scientific foundation of every form of cramp or convulsion. Here the physical body has become dominant and makes movements on its own, whereas in a healthy man all his movements are subordinated to the will of the astral body working through the etheric.

Again, there is a way of helping a person with such symptoms (provided the condition has not progressed too far), if one takes into account these facts. In this case **we must recognize the existence and efficacy of the etheric body and try to strengthen it.**

Imagine someone so dissipated that his fingers get to shaking and jerking when he tries to write. You certainly would do well to advise him to write less and take a good vacation, but better still you might also recommend that he try to acquire a different handwriting. Tell him to stop writing automatically and try practicing for fifteen minutes a day to pay attention to the way he forms the letters he writes. Tell him to try to shape his handwriting differently and to cultivate the habit of drawing the letters. The point here is that when a man consciously changes his handwriting, he is obliged to pay attention to, and to bring the innermost core of his being into connection with what he is doing. The etheric body is strengthened in this way and the person is made healthier.

It would not be a bad idea to introduce such exercises systematically into the classroom to strengthen the etheric body even in childhood. But, even though anthroposophy can give such pedagogical advice, it will doubtless be a long time before leading educators will consider it anything but foolish. Nevertheless, suppose that children were first taught to write a particular style of penmanship and after a few years were expected to acquire an entirely different character in their handwriting. The change, and the conscious attention it would involve, would result in a remarkable strengthening of the etheric body.

So something can be done to strengthen the etheric body. **This is of immense importance because in our time weakness of the etheric body leads to many unhealthy conditions.** What has been indicated here represents a definite way of working upon the etheric body. When these exercises are practiced, an actual force is applied to the etheric body that certainly could not be applied if the existence of this body were denied. Surely, the effects of the force, when they become apparent, demonstrate the existence of the etheric body.

The etheric body can be strengthened by performing another exercise, in this case, for the **improvement of memory**. By thinking through events, not only in the way they occurred but also in reverse sequence, that is, by starting at the end of an event and pursuing it through to the beginning, will help to make the etheric body stronger. Historical events, for example, which are usually

learned in chronological sequence, can be followed backwards. Or a play or story can be thought through in reverse from end to beginning. Such exercises when done thoroughly are highly effective in consolidating and strengthening the etheric body.

.. it soon becomes apparent that people do not do the things that would contribute to the strengthening of the etheric body. **The restless daily bustle of modern life does not allow them the opportunity to come to that inner quiet required for such exercises, and in the evening after the day's work they are generally too tired to be bothered.** Should spiritual science begin to penetrate their souls, however, people would soon see how many things done in the bustle of modern life could be dispensed with, and they would find the time to practice such exercises. They also would become aware of the positive results that could be achieved if such exercises were carefully applied in education.

Another exercise: If it has not been cultivated from early youth, it is perhaps not quite so useful in later life. Nevertheless, it's still a good exercise to practice in later years. With certain things we do, no matter whether or not they are of enduring importance, it is good practice to look carefully at what is being done. This is comparatively easy in writing and I am quite sure many people would soon correct their hideous handwriting if they really looked at the letters.

In still another exercise a person should endeavor to watch himself the way he walks, moves his head, laughs, etc. In short, he should try to **form a clear picture of his movements and gestures.** Few people actually know what they look like when they are walking, for instance. While it is good to make this experiment, it should not be prolonged because it would quickly lead to vanity. Quite apart from the fact that it can be corrective of undesirable habits, this exercise also tends to consolidate the etheric body. When a man cultivates an awareness of his gestures and involuntary actions, **the control of the astral becomes increasingly stronger over the etheric.** Thus, he also becomes able, if necessary, to suppress certain actions or movements out of his free will.

It is an excellent accomplishment to be able to do quite differently the things we do out of habit. .. This does not mean that we need become fanatical about the indifferent use of our right and left

hands. If a man, however, is occasionally able to do with his left hand what he commonly does with the right, he will strengthen the control of his astral over his etheric body.

1912-04-09-GA136 ↗

explains in the language of the Kalevala (old Finnish myth), where the etheric body is called Sampo:

quote A

Now it was so that when these bodies of man were forged, especially when the etheric body of Man, the Sampo, was forged that it had first to be wrought upon for a time; did not at once possess the forces which were prepared for him by the super-sensible powers. Whilst the etheric body was being forged, it had first to grow accustomed to itself inwardly; just as when a machine is being prepared it must first be made ready, then as it were, fully matured, in order to be made use of. In human development – this shown in all evolution – there had **always to be an interval between the creation of the principle in question, and the using of it. Thus Man's etheric body was fashioned in remote primitive times; then came an episode when this etheric body was being sent down into human nature.**

Only later did it shine out as the intellectual soul, and Man learnt to use his powers as external powers of nature; he brought forth from his own nature the Sampo which had remained concealed. We see symbolically in a wonderful way this secret development in the forging of the Sampo, in the concealment of it, in the inefficiency of the Sampo, in the episode which lies between the forging, and the rediscovery of it.

We see the Sampo first sunk into human nature, then brought forth to the external powers of civilisation, which appear first as primitive forces just as they are described in the second part of Kalevala. Thus everything in this great national epic gains a profound significance when we see in it clairvoyant descriptions of the ancient occurrences in human development, of the coming into being of human nature in its various principles.

I can assure you that to me who only learnt to understand Kalevala long, long after these facts regarding the development of human nature stood clearly before my soul, it was a wonderful, amazing fact to find again in this epic that which I had been able to represent more or less theoretically in my “Theosophy”, which was written at a time when as yet I knew not a line of Kalevala.

quote B (SWCC [Shortened without Contents Change])

But there is yet another secret concealed.

... In the animals we see the etheric body so active that it becomes the master-builder of the most varied forms, from the most imperfect to the most perfect.

Into the human etheric body was forged something which collected all these animal forms as in a unity, with the one exception only, that **over the Earth the etheric body, that is the Sampo, is fashioned according to climatic and other conditions, so that this etheric body has the special national character, the special national peculiarities in its forces, so that it forms one nation differently from another.** The Sampo is, to every nation that which determines the special form of the etheric body; which so places this special nationality in life that its members have the same appearance as regards that which shines out through them, through life-being, and physical-being.

Just as **similarity of appearance in the human form is modeled from the etheric,** so do the forces of the etheric body lie in the Sampo.

[1913-03-29-GA145 ↗](#)

.. is called 'The Etheric Body as a Picture of Cosmic History, or: 'The Etheric Body Records Cosmic History. The Twelve Members of the Cosmos Through which the Hierarchies Speak.'

[1914-12-04-GA063 ↗](#)

describes the greyzone of effects that can appear for example in certain Near Death Experiences (NDE), that the forces of the physical body pull back the etheric body

The physical body counteracts it, as long as the physical just lasts. For at the moment when the danger threatens that the subtler etheric of a more spiritual body as it were would lose itself, the physical body asserts its reinforced forces – and one has to go again back into the physical body. Then this is just in such a way, as if you are forced back by the power of the physical body to the everyday perception, to the usual sight and to the physical way. As you can learn from this representation, you get to know the moment that must take place when the physical and chemical forces seize the outer physical body and take it away if death enters. One learns to recognise how the consciousness can live on after death because now the physical body does no longer call back the just described subtler etheric body. It can just live on at first in this form that our own experience faces us as a memory picture, only as long as the forces of the spiritual universe assert themselves and the subtler body disintegrates in the universe.

[1915-04-20-GA157 ↗](#)

[1915-06-13-GA159 ↗](#)

(the etheric body as a reflection of the universe)

[1915-09-05-GA162 ↗](#)

.. is called 'the physical body binds us to the physical world, the etheric body to the cosmos'

It is true, of course, that we are always making use of our etheric bodies, except when we are sleeping, but we use them in the sense that they carry on their activity within our physical bodies, so that both the physical and etheric bodies are made use of during our life on the physical plane. But we come to know what the particular characteristics of the etheric body are when it is lifted out of its connection with the physical body and put to use as our sole perceptive instrument. We know that this condition comes about naturally immediately after death, when we have laid the physical body aside. Then, for a short time, we make use of the etheric body, until that too is laid aside.

We have therefore to distinguish the first condition after death, in which we dissolve our bond with the physical body, from the second condition that soon follows it, and brings about the dissolution of our bond with the etheric body.

I have been saying that the physical body binds us to everything that comes to us on the physical plane. What, then, does the etheric body bind us to? **It binds us to everything that relates us to the cosmos, to the extraterrestrial, to everything that lives in us that cannot be ascribed directly to any connection with the physical realm.**

If, for example, a person is born with a physically defective ear, he won't be able to become a musician. But physical defects are due to physical heredity. This is a radical case that illustrates our dependence upon the ongoing heredity process. But we must turn our attention from **the capacities to which our physical bodies predispose us to those occasioned by the etheric. These show up more distinctly in particular predispositions of the soul.** Only a poor observer can miss the fact of the great differences of soul manifested by individuals. Dull-witted materialists are sometimes little interested in subtle differences of soul; they want to investigate the external form element alone. But alert observers of life are perfectly aware that nobody resembles any other person as far as his individuality is concerned.

... [continued on [Journey between death and a new birth](#), explaining the difference between old and young people: the etheric body grows young with physical aging; and this makes a huge difference when someone dies young or old]

1916-01-02-GA165 ↗

quote A

Let us think of the human etheric body as it is connected with the physical body. We shall sketch it thus: representing it entirely diagrammatically, and we shall sketch the physical body as a kind of rind of the etheric body, though it must be understood that in reality it interpenetrates the whole human etheric body, except the

most external part of the latter. Let this then be the etheric and physical body, and there, belonging to them, as is understood, in the whole system of Man, his astral body and I.

Let us now recall that **the etheric body of Man naturally consists of the different kinds of ether** which we have learnt to distinguish.

We recognize these as consisting of:

- warmth-outer ether,
- light-ether,
- chemical-ether [by which the music of the spheres is communicated]
- and life-ether.

Let us turn our attention to the light-ether. It is true that **the whole etheric body consists of an inner blend – an inwardly organised blend of the four kinds of ether**, but we shall only consider today that part of the ether body which is **light-ether**; and in order to fix our attention on that part of the etheric body which we call the light-ether, we have sketched it above.

quote B describes the process of remembering with our light body (light ether)

It is the light part of the etheric body that we are now considering; of course, the other members of the etheric body – the heat, chemical and life parts also vibrate in sympathy, but it is the light part that we are considering today; I will speak of it therefore as **the light-body**. Our etheric body, then, experienced certain movements, for the thoughts evoked by the man whom we met, revealed themselves within our light-body as movements – as inner light-movements; so that apart from our having perceived the man with our senses, we received impressions [not communicated through the senses] that gave rise to movements in our light-body. Thus the whole result of our meeting with the man consisted in our light-body experiencing all kinds of movements. Picture this vividly to yourselves. While you stood before the man and spoke to him,

your etheric light-body was in continual movement. What you said to him, what you felt and thought regarding him, is all disclosed in the movements of your light-body. When, several days after, you see this man again, the fresh sight of him stirs your soul, and this movement causes your etheric body, purely because of its laws of continuity, to reproduce the movements it experienced five days before, when you met the man and exchanged thoughts with him. Very well, we encounter this man again after five days. The etheric light-body, stirred by this meeting, experiences again the same movements which it did at the first meeting; and because man is always with part of his astral body and ego in the outer ether, he feels the movements which stir the outer ether, and thus because of its law of continuity [or persistence] he again becomes aware of what he experienced previously. We have really to picture to ourselves, that during the waking state we are both with our ego and astral body within the outer light-ether; sleep only consists in that part of the astral body and ego, which during the day, when we are awake, is within the physical and etheric body, also withdrawing into the outer ether. **Remembrance is this: the perception from the outer ether of inner etheric movements; the perception from the outer light-ether of movements in the inner light-body: that is, to remember.**

1916-03-20-GA174A ↗

(the weaving and living activity of the human etheric bodies)

1921-10-01-GA207

We cannot understand our etheric body without understanding that we have this universal thought-weaving of the world (see drawing, bright) and that our etheric body (red) is woven, as it were, out of this thought-weaving of the world through our birth. **The thought-weaving of the world weaves into us, forms the forces that underlie our etheric body and that actually manifest themselves in the space between etheric body and physical body.** They are drawn in, as it were, through the physical body, separated from the outer world, and then they work in us with the help of the etheric body, the actual body of formative forces.

What is my etheric body? It is that in you which is subject to the forces streaming in on all sides from the periphery.

You can even show it in a drawing. [see Schema FMCo0.254]. Imagine that this is the human being. His physical body is the one that is subject to the forces that go towards the centre of the Earth. His etheric body is the one that is subject to the forces streaming in from all sides, from the ends of the Universe. Here we have a system of forces in man.

- There are forces that pull downward, – they are really present in all organs that are upright, – and
- there are forces that pour in from without, tending inward.

You can actually perceive in the form of man where the one kind and the other are more represented.

- Study the **legs** and it is obvious, their form is due to the fact that they are more adapted to the **earthly forces**.
- The **head** is more adapted to the forces of the **periphery**.
- In like manner you may also study the arms, and this is not uninteresting.
 - Hold your arms close to your body, and they are subject to the forces that go towards the centre of the Earth.
 - Move them in a living way, and you yourself will be subjecting them to the forces streaming in from all sides of the periphery.

Such indeed is the difference between arms and legs:

- The legs are invariably subject to the central forces of the Earth, while
- the arms are so only in a certain posture, that is to say, conditionally. Man is able to lift them out of the domain of the earthly central forces and place them in the midst of those

forces which we call the ethereal forces, the forces pouring in from the periphery.

And so you can see for all the single organs, how they are placed in the whole cosmic system.

Frank Teichmann, in 'The sacred mysteries of Egypt'

(1999 in DE, 2016 in EN), writes:

[p88]

All these transformations are effected by formative forces that shape matter. These the Egyptians called Ka, and they are those forces that transmute the Sun God as well as those that give shape to human beings. They are the life giving forces, allowing propagation and growth, as well as keeping the overall form while the substance continually changes.

[p92]

What Fichte describes as the unifying forming principle .. is nothing other than the Ka.

...

Rudolf Steiner follows this tradition [to call this the etheric body] but also uses names like 'formative forces' or 'time body'





3

The Human Astral Body

It is impossible to follow the evolution of man in its reality unless we are able to understand what happens to the human astral body in the course of earthly evolution. (1923-08-31-GA227)



The human astral body is one of [Man's bodily principles](#), part of the structural make-up of Man, and so closely intertwined with the other bodily principles it should not be studied or considered as a separate entity. In the human life, Man develops the astral body approximately between 14 and 21 years from the age of puberty.

When the astral body is together with the physical body, it has an egg-like shape. In accordance with individual characteristics, it has various radiant colours fluctuating and enclosed in an egg-shaped sheath. The **auric egg** has an underlying blue colour with a dark violet spot in the middle of the brain. It extends about two-and-a-half times the length of the head beyond the physical body, surrounds it like a cloud and fades away as you go from the head downwards. (See [Appendix](#))

It has three key energy centers in a triangle consisting of brain, liver and heart. In the spirit world these form a six pointed figure, in the astral world a triangle. After death it is a wonderfully radiant, mobile formation.

Man's astral body is made up of a **dual nature**. Although the astral bodily principle was developed on [Old Moon](#) (See [Appendix](#)), the higher spiritual part only merged with the lower physical part in the [Lemurian epoch](#) (See [Appendix](#)) in the current planetary stage Earth. As a result, Man still contains a lower animal nature. The spiritual beings living in Man withdrew slowly as Man developed his own I-consciousness, see [development of the I](#).

Therefore in ancient legends and art we still find the **image of the Centaur** (See [Appendix](#)), which reflects an actual human form in a certain stage of evolution (Lemuria before [Separation of the Moon](#)) and above man and below animal. (see 1908-09-09-GA106 below). Man is to a certain extent a **centaur** as his humanity is somehow 'mounted upon' his lower, bestial, astral nature.

Lectures

1903-12-29-GA088

What connects the astral body with the physical body and its organs, and what leads them back together again?

There exists a kind of band, a **connection that is an in-between-matter between astral and physical matter**. This is called **kundalini fire**. If you observe a sleeping person, then you can always follow the astral body in astral space. There is a luminous band leading to where the astral body is. The location can always be found. When the astral body separates, then to the same extent the kundalini fire becomes thinner and thinner. It becomes an increasingly thin track; it becomes more and more a thin mist. Now when you look carefully at this kundalini fire you will see that it does not always have the same form. In some places it is brighter and thicker; those are the places that lead the astral back again to the physical body. The optic nerve is therefore connected to an astral nerve through a thicker kundalini fire.

... The astral body with its kundalini fire cannot be completely lifted out of the physical body. Should it happen that someone actually decides not to return, the kundalini fire would continually draw him back to the body. It is as if he still belonged to the physical body. Such a person would follow the track of the kundalini fire. When the life forces are not yet exhausted, it is very difficult to lift the astral body out of the physical body. It is very difficult when someone is attached to a physical body that he can no longer make use of.

In this sense the destiny of a suicide and that of an accident victim are not that very different from one another.

...

The physical body is permeated by the nervous system. Every nerve center is connected to an astral center; for example, the optic nerve is surrounded by, is enveloped by an astral optic nerve, by an astral substance belonging to the optic nerve.

1905-10-16-GA093A ↗

... **the astral body of Man** is composed of two different members. ... If we consider human development we shall find that the one part of the astral body is continually endeavouring to overcome the other half, the lower nature, and transform it. In so far as Man today consists of astral body with etheric body and physical body, it is in fact only the physical body which in its present state is a product which has reached completion. In the case of the etheric body also there are two parts that seek to merge into one another. ...

.. The etheric body consists of two members, that part of human nature which originally came over from the Old Moon, and its opposite pole. They were at first not yet joined together; later they approached one another and became united.

The one is the pole of animality, the other the pole of the spiritual. The pole of animality is called 'etheric body', the pole of the spiritual, 'mental-body'. The mental body is materialised ether.

Between them is **the astral body and this too has arisen out of the union of a duality. Fundamentally it is also a two-fold formation. We have to differentiate in it a lower and a higher nature.** The higher nature was originally connected with the mental body. This part of the astral body which has its seat in the mental body – what therefore has come into it from above – is the other pole of the lower astral body.

- One of the characteristics of the **lower astral body is that it has desires.**
 - The upper part has instead of these, **devotion, love, the giving virtue.** This part of the astral body is called **Buddhi.**
-

at the end of the lecture, in context of process of reincarnation and descend of souls to Earth

What clings to the person from that astral body which came with him from the Old Moon compels him to spend a period of time in Kamaloka until he has freed himself from this point as regards that particular life.

Then he still has that part of the astral body which has found a state of balance; with this he makes his journey through the spirit world and back to physical life.

This is why one sees **bell-like formations in astral space** rushing about with terrific speed. These are the human souls again seeking incarnation. When here with us such a bell-like human being darts through astral space and an embryo in South America is karmically connected with it, this human bell must immediately be there. So these returning souls rush through astral space.

This bell formation is reminiscent of those which appeared in the Lemurian epoch, only it has already found its state of balance with the higher astral body.

[1906-09-02-GA095 ↗](#)

talks about the form and appearance of the astral body

When the astral body is together with the physical body, it is somewhat egg-like in shape.

After death it is a wonderfully radiant, mobile formation. In accordance with individual characteristics it has various colours, radiant colours. Its three gleaming points are at first widely separated, joined together but open below. They are centres of force; they draw progressively together and then they look like a small triangle. 1. Heart; 2. Liver; 3. Brain. These three points work together at the time of a new incarnation.

- In Devachan they are radiant centres of force, which stream out from the three points.

- In the astral world these three points form a triangle; in Devachan they form a six-pointed figure – two interlaced triangles. They are bells.

1908-05-25-GA103 ✓

Let us once more look back to the time when the human astral body with the I was immersed in the matrix of a common divine astral substance.

As you follow this evolutionary course, you find that development took place in such a way that it is possible to describe it schematically.

- In the beginning, your whole astral being was embedded in the common astral substance and through the processes which we have just described, the physical and etheric enclosed it like surrounding shells. Thus individual human beings became separated from the general astral substance as detached parts. It was as though you had a fluid substance here before you and were dipping out parts of it.
- **The detachment of the individual human consciousness from the divine consciousness runs parallel with the formation of the physical body.** Thus we may say that **the further we progress, the more we see how the separate individual human beings enclosed in the shell of the physical body, develop themselves as parts which are severed from the common astrality.**
- It is true, the human being had to pay for this becoming independent by the darkening of his astral consciousness. Therefore he looked out from the sheath of his physical body and beheld the physical plane. The ancient clairvoyant consciousness, however, gradually disappeared.
- **Thus we see coming into existence the human inner being, an independent individual human inner being which is the bearer**

of the I.

When you observe the sleeping human being of the present, you have before you in the physical and ether bodies, which have remained behind in bed, what these sheaths, formed during the course of the ages, have produced through condensation. What had previously separated from the common astral substance returns to it each night in order to receive strength from it. Of course it does not enter so deeply into this divine substance as it did at that time, otherwise it would be clairvoyant. It retains its independence. This, then, is the independent individuality that came into existence in the course of evolution. It may be asked, *to what is this independent individual human being indebted for its very existence, this inner being that seeks its strength outside the physical and ether bodies?*

It is indebted to the physical and ether human bodies which were gradually formed in the course of evolution. They gave birth to that which dipped down into the physical senses and looked out into the physical world during the day, but which at night sank down into a state of unconsciousness, because it had severed itself from that condition in which it previously existed. In occult language, the part remaining in bed is called the real earth-man. That was "man." And that part in which the ego remained day and night, that part born out of the physical and ether bodies was called the "child of man" or the "son of man." The "son of man" is the ego and astral body, born out of the physical and ether bodies in the course of earthly evolution. The technical expression for this is the "son of man."

1908-09-08-GA106↗

describes the formation of the nerves

Note: Isis (feminine) and Osiris (masculine) represent the forces of Moon and Sun.
([Read More](#)↗)

At the time when all this had not yet happened, when Osiris had not yet withdrawn, man in his light-form did not have the foundation for something that today is of the greatest importance. We know

that the spinal cord is important and nerves proceed from it. Not even the beginnings of these were present in the time when the moon had not yet departed.

These fourteen aspects of the moon, in the order in which they follow on one another, **were the cause of fourteen nerve-filaments being annexed to the human spinal cord.** The cosmic forces worked in such a way that **these fourteen nerve-filaments correspond to the fourteen phases or aspects of the moon.** This is the result of the Osiris influence. But something else also corresponds to the moon-evolution. These fourteen phases are only half the phenomena of the moon. The moon has fourteen phases from new moon to full moon, and fourteen phases from full moon to new moon. During the fourteen days leading to the new moon, there is no Osiris influence. Then the sun shines upon the moon in such a way that the latter gradually turns its unilluminated surface to the earth as the new moon. These fourteen phases from full moon to new also have their result, and for the Egyptian consciousness this result was achieved through Isis. These fourteen phases are ruled by Isis. Through the Isis influence fourteen other nerve-filaments proceed from the spinal cord. This makes a total of twenty-eight nerve-filaments, corresponding to the different phases of the moon. So we see, from the viewpoint of cosmic events, the origin of specific members of the human organism.

Many will now object that this does not account for all the nerves, but only for twenty-eight of them. There would have been only twenty-eight had the moon-year coincided with the sun-year. But the sun-year is longer, and the difference between the two caused the surplus nerves. Thus from the moon the influences of Isis and Osiris were built into the human organism. .

1909-03-14-GA266/1

There is a remedy that will hinder Ahrimanic beings from penetrating into our consciousness, a symbol that one must enliven within oneself. This is the staff of Mercury: the luminous staff with a black snake and a brightly lumniuous shining snake. **The snake is a symbol for the astral body. Every night the astral body sheds its skin, it throws off the used-up skin. The black snake is a symbol for this. Overnight it gets a new, shimmering skin, and this newly**

enlivened, beautiful, shining skin of the astral body is symbolized by the shining skin. [continues on the use of the symbol in meditation]

Esoteric Lessons I, GA 266, Number 44 (1909-02-26-GA266) ↗

...When we mediate we should forget ourselves by extinguishing everything that connects us with ordinary life, we should immerse ourselves entirely in the content of the given words so that we don't feel our body or have any ordinary thoughts or daily feelings. The opposing powers try to pull us back into ordinary life and to prevent us from concentrating.

...we can use the Mercury staff as an effective symbol, and namely a bright, shining yellow staff with first a dark snake and then also a shining white snake wound around it.

Every live thing has a skin as a sign that it's enclosed in the physical world. Etheric and astral bodies also have skins. When a man receives impressions through his senses, the astral body's skin gets cracked and is used up; this becomes manifest as tiredness. This skin is shed and replaced during sleep. We should try to become aware of this process before going to sleep. Think that one is going into spiritual worlds where the astral body is renewed by spiritual beings in the realms of harmonies and sphere tones. We should go to sleep with thankful feelings for these divine beings and powers; here we should feel love for wisdom. Then bad feelings won't be able to influence us.

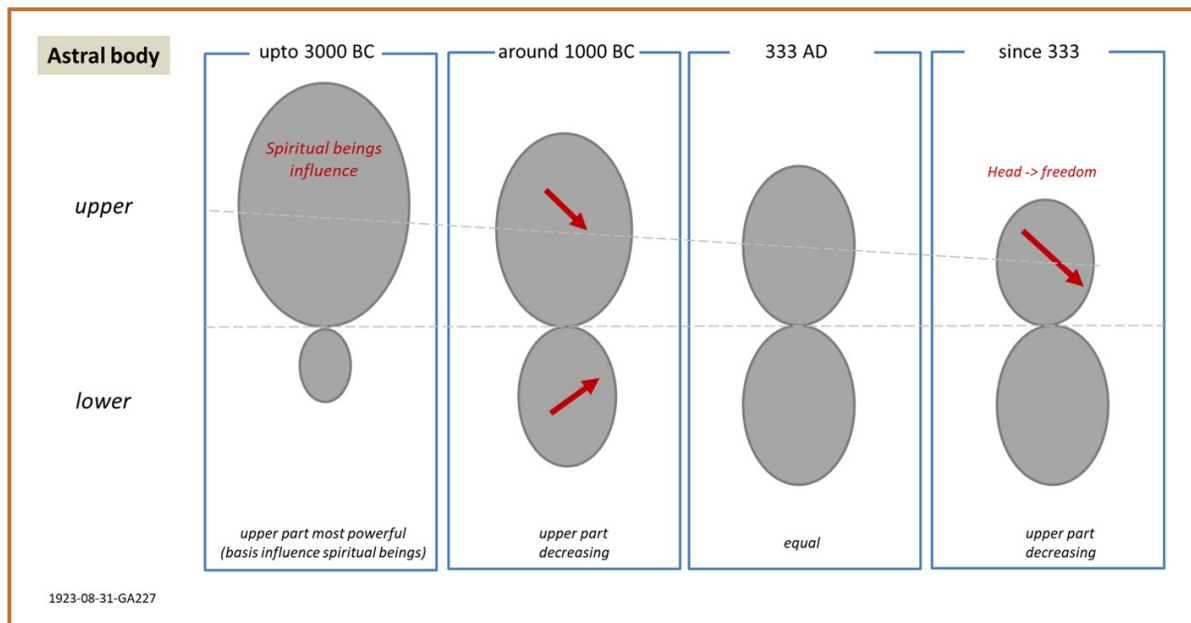
Just as a man uses up the skin of his soul body every day and renews it, so a snake also sheds its skin every so often and renews it. That is why looking at a Mercury staff is an effective way to get into spiritual worlds during meditation in such a way that hindering influences are overcome.

Another way is through the idea that we're inside a blue aura, closed off from all bad feelings and thoughts that want to get at us. Only the good powers can gain access to our soul. This can be effectively connected with the following meditation:

*May the outer sheath of my aura become denser.
 May it surround me with an impermeable skin for all impure,
 unclean thoughts and feelings.
 May it only open to God's wisdom.*

It's during our occult exercises that the Tempter approaches us most strongly. An advanced pupil sees him just as he's described in the Bible.

Finally a feeling of deepest soul peace arises during meditation – no external feeling of quiet, but a deep inner feeling of peace that can't be disturbed by anything, no matter how much things are raging and roaring around one. Here the Mercury staff helps us to press into spiritual worlds and the rose cross makes us firmer in them. Two things must be completely avoided during occult training. We should never harm anyone through deeds, thoughts or words intentionally or not. Secondly, the feeling of hate must disappear in us, otherwise it reappears as a feeling of fear; for fear is suppressed hate. We must transform the hate into a feeling of love, the love of wisdom.



Schema FMCo0.134: The above depicts the evolution of Man's astral body in the current Postatlantean epoch, linked to the development of the sentient, intellectual and consciousness soul.

(see schema FMCoo.134 above)

When we survey this evolution of world and of man we find that **at a certain definite time**, Man encountered difficulties which had to be overcome on his way from being led exclusively by divine-spiritual Beings to the conscious work of raising himself to knowledge of these Beings and so to the gaining of human freedom. **This point of time, which in a certain sense signifies the greatest crisis in the whole evolution of man, came approximately 333 years after the Mystery of Golgotha.** Such dates are only approximate owing to time being reckoned in various ways. According to our present reckoning, it was 333 years after the Mystery of Golgotha that this crisis came about.

Looking back at this critical moment, we can describe it as follows: if the evolution of mankind and that of the Earth itself had continued as they were doing, if men had remained under the guidance of the divine-spiritual Beings who had been leading them up to that time, then, since it was intended by those Beings that men should acquire freedom, it would have been achieved – but with what result? **At that time it would have meant upsetting the balance between the two parts of the human astral body.**

Think of the connection between the physical body and the astral body: we will keep to the astral body first. Before the year 333 the greater part of the astral body had been active essentially in the upper man, and its smaller part in his lower body – the middle man being between the two. And because in those times the upper part of the astral body was the more powerful, it was through it that divine-spiritual Beings exercised upon man their greatest influence. In accordance with the plan for mankind, human evolution has proceeded in such a way that:

- up to about 3,000 years before Christ those conditions for the astral body held good,
- but by 1,000 years before Christ the lower part of the astral body was becoming larger and the upper part relatively smaller,
- until, in the year 333, the two parts had become equal. This was the critical situation 333 years after the coming of Christ,

- and since then the upper part of a man's astral body has been continuously decreasing. That is the course taken by his evolution.

It is impossible to follow the evolution of man in its reality unless we are able to understand what happens to the human astral body in the course of earthly evolution.

If human beings had not undergone this decrease in the upper part of the astral body, their I would never have been able to gain sufficient influence and they could never have become free. This decrease in the astral body therefore **contributes to the evoking of freedom.**

.. there is no sense in asking why the Gods have not arranged everything to give human beings pleasure: the Gods had to create a universe that was inherently possible. Much that gives men the greatest pleasure rests on that, besides other things which, until they are enlightened, they do not find at all agreeable.

This decrease of the astral body is connected with something else, for on the size of the astral body in the upper part of man – not on its size as a whole – depends his power to control, with his I and astral body, his physical and etheric bodies.

Hence all men are likely to have their health gradually impaired by this decrease in the astral body. We can form a true conception of human evolution only if we recognise that freedom has to be paid for on Earth by a general weakening of health. Not, of course, in the form of cholera or typhus, but freedom is not to be gained without bringing ill-health of some kind along with it.

If all human forces after the year 333 had remained as they were, men on Earth would have become weaker and weaker, increasingly powerless. And earthly life would have come to an end through this complete decadence of mankind.

A sun being to go through death – 333y before great crisis -> healing

At this point there took place what I should like to describe as follows. **At a gathering of those divine-spiritual Beings I spoke of as belonging to the Sun, it was decided to send down to the Earth their**

representative, the Christ, there to go through something that the divine Beings connected with mankind would be experiencing for the first time. Birth and death are certainly not what materialists imagine them to be, but they are part of man's earthly existence.

None of the divine-spiritual Beings above man – Angels, Archangels, and so on up to the highest – had ever known death, but only metamorphoses. They change from one form to another, but they are not born and do not die. A man, too, changes form, but at the same time he lays aside his physical and etheric bodies, thus making birth and death a more radical change than any change experienced by the higher Hierarchies.

So the leaders in the harmonies and impulses of the Sun resolved to send down to Earth the Christ, as a Being who had not yet experienced birth and death, so that He might go through this purely human destiny. **The Mystery of Golgotha, therefore, is not merely the concern of mankind; it is also a concern of the Gods**, and this can be put into words such as these: The Sun Gods met and held counsel together as to the steps they should take for warding off from mankind the danger of becoming weaker and weaker through the decline of the astral body.

And so the Christ was sent down to Earth and went through birth and death – naturally not as a human being but as a divine Being. The consequence was that through the Mystery of Golgotha, through the fact of Christ's death, **forces came into Earth-evolution for the healing of those other forces which, in the sense already described, were the cause of sickness. Thus Christ became for mankind, in very truth, the great cosmic and terrestrial Healer of mankind.**

In other words, His forces entered everything that has to be healed in human beings, so that man, having his tendency to decadence on the one hand, but on the other the saving forces of Christ, can find his way to freedom. **Therefore, provision was made in world-evolution to ensure that, 333 years before the great crisis, the Mystery of Golgotha should take place.**

Human evolution on Earth, accordingly, could not have gone forward without this **threat of disastrous universal sickness, to begin in the year 333**. Then, through the Mystery of Golgotha, came the great universal healing.

Everything therefore done by man without Ego-consciousness, everything that derives from the deeper forces tending to his future downfall, can be healed through association with the Christ.

That is what the Mystery of Golgotha means for earthly and human evolution.





4

The Human 'I'



he human I is what makes Man the crown of creation by the Gods, by the spiritual hierarchies (See [Appendix](#)). It sets Man apart from all other kingdoms of nature: animals, plants, minerals do not have an I-consciousness.

After preparing the structure of Man in the previous three planetary stages with a physical body, etheric body and astral body, the evolutionary goal for development within the current planetary stage of Earth is the development of I-consciousness.

Evolutionary Perspective

The human I-consciousness evolved in various stages, first nurtured in the archai and the warmth of the Old Saturn Earth stage, through the preparation of human [group souls of humanity](#) as spiritual prototypes on Old Moon and up to the Lemurian epoch in the Earth planetary stage, where [Man's higher triad](#) joined with the physical bodies below.

In the [Lemurian epoch](#), Man's consciousness arose by an impulse of the Spirits of Form (a.k.a the Jehovah impulse, by the Elohim) whereby the warmth entered each human being and brought the love and memory of the blood-lines. The Luciferic infection that took place in this process (see Jehovah-Lucifer topic), is countered by the Christ impulse that contains the impulse for Man to cleanse his lower bodies and become a spiritual being characterized by brotherly love and freed from the Luciferic, Ahrimanic and Asuric influences.

Currently this is still an ongoing process of individuation, whereby Man is moving from the [human group souls](#), in a evolutionary process on the basis of the previous human races, towards a fully individual and independent I-consciousness. (ref. 1907-12-27-GA101).

The unique novel aspect related to the 'I' is that Man is set free from guidance by the higher hierarchies: the capacity for thinking and free will, as the basis for love. This freedom in self-consciousness is also the key lever

for the spiritualization of the lower bodily principles into [Man's higher or spiritual self or 'I'](#): **it is by conscious work on ourselves that Man will evolve into a spiritual being, which is the purpose of evolution.**

Structural Perspective:

To avoid misunderstandings with terminology, it is important to make the distinction between two aspects (see also [Man's bodily principles](#)):

- **Man's threefold soul** (Imaginative Cognition in waking, Intuitive Willing in sleeping, and Inspired Feeling in dreaming) maintains a hold – with varying degrees – on the lower bodily principles of physical, etheric and astral bodies. This is the mechanism of reflection causing humanity's current [waking consciousness](#). This is the I-consciousness provided by the Spirits of Form (SoF) in the current Earth cycle/stage, as shared below. It is currently still limited to mineral I-consciousness. With threefold soul we refer to sentient, intellectual, and consciousness soul – see the chapter on *Human character* below.
- **Man's spiritual or 'Higher Self'**, or the core of Man's purely spiritual seed, see [Man's higher triad](#). The life spirit and spirit man principles are to be found in the higher spiritual worlds. This links to the Christ principle in Man, 'not I but the Christ in me' – see also the [Threefold Sun](#).

The threefold soul is used by Man's spiritual Higher Self to have a daytime mundane [waking consciousness](#) experience with freedom and karmic learnings during daytime of incarnate life, experiences that are 'worked' during the night-time sleeping process and between death and a new birth. This evolutionary process results in a spiritualization of Man's lower bodies to the higher spiritual principles. Connection points in this process are also on three cycles. (See the [Three meetings](#) and the [Appendix](#).)

Consciousness and relating to human experience:

The human 'I' consciousness is currently mineral, i.e. the Human Being gathers consciousness through his physical senses. In the future he will further develop his astral senses, and further his consciousness in the next planetary stages of evolution (Jupiter, Venus & Vulcan).

The activity of the human I is characterized by [Thinking, Feeling and Willing](#) (TFW), through which Man actively contributes as Free Man Creator to creation. This activity is directly related to the [Third Hierarchy](#) of especially the angels and archangels (See [Appendix](#)).

The I-organization

The human 'I' consciousness arose through the sacrifice of the Spirits of Form whose substance (the I being their lowest element) 'rippled into' Man during the Lemurian and Atlantean epochs, and in the current Postatlantean epoch found its implementation in an adapted physical body and led to the development of the threefold soul. It took hold of the astral body (sentient soul), etheric body (intellectual soul) and physical body (consciousness soul), and this provides the threefold soul with the contemporary [Waking consciousness](#).

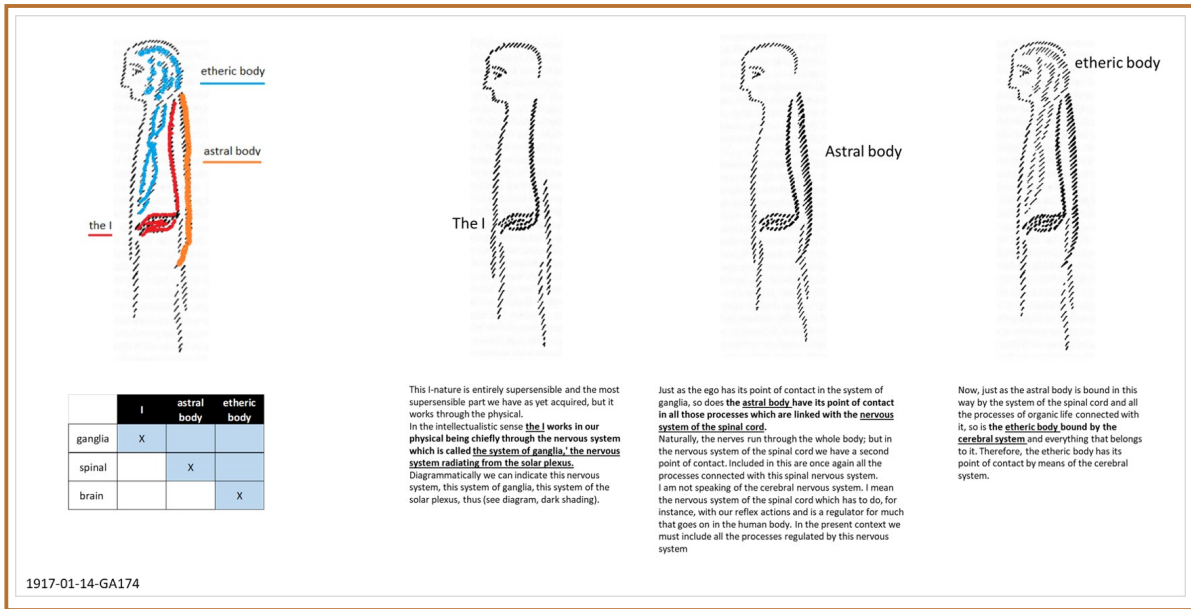
However, Man's true I as a spiritual being, composed of the spirit-self, life-spirit and spirit-man, is a purely spiritual entity in the higher [spirit world](#).

So, whereas 'Man' is truly a spiritual structure in the higher spirit world (see the *Human Character* section below), the threefold soul in the lower spirit world 'operates' within and uses lower bodies (see [Man's bodily structure and principles](#)) and the organisms of earth, water, air and warmth and the higher ethers. It therefore uses all the available infrastructure: physical but also etheric and astral. The physical body with the physical senses gives rise to [waking consciousness](#) and this makes for a reflection of the astral experiences called 'maya'. See [Cosmic fractal](#) or the advanced topics section of the [Appendix](#).

Relation to the Physical Body

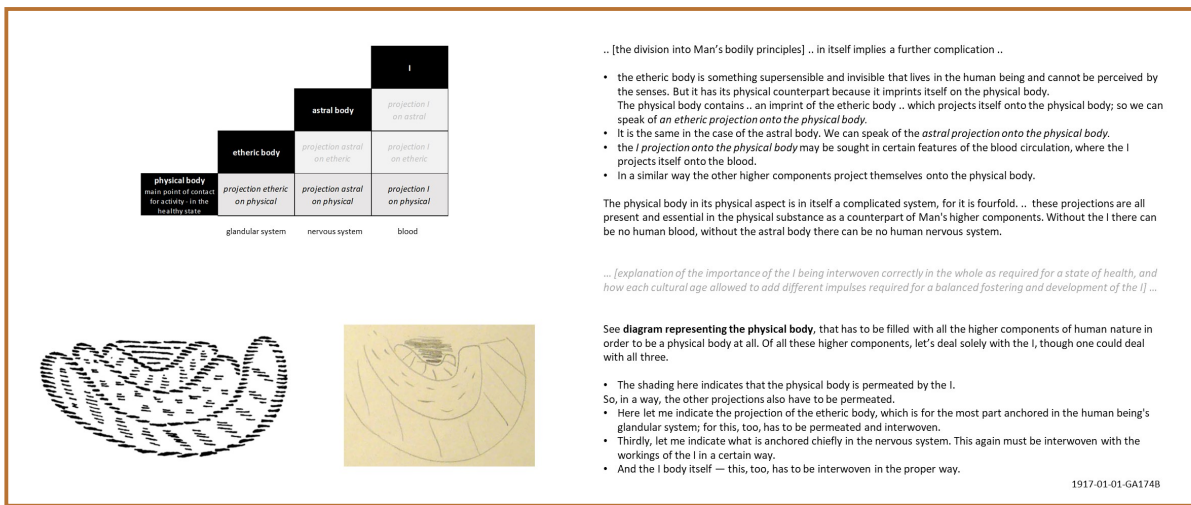
The human 'I' lives in the warmth body or organism, and [blood](#) is the physical expression of the I, but how does the 'I' work across the human bodily principles and subsystems on the [blood-nerve interface](#)?

This is called the I-organization: the I connects into the bodily structures of Man at different points of the nervous system as a mechanism of the [astral body](#), and through that, lower down, to the etheric and physical bodies. That is the where, regarding the 'how', the I-principle lives in the warmth differentiations in the whole human organism through the element hydrogen.



Schema FMCoo.036. The table on the lower left is important to contemplate, as the various bodies interpenetrate so this represents a cumulative 'and' effect of the bodily principles working in the nervous system.

So the I-organization can be described as the way in which the human I-principle molds and gives form to the lower bodily principles, as well as how it works in those lower bodily principles. The latter is the physiology depicted in Schema FMCoo.036 above. As shown in Schema FMCoo.415 below, one can imagine the I to sit on top of those lower bodily principles (the astral, etheric and physical body), and the life processes go through the I down to the mineral, from warmth downwards to earth along the **spectrum of elements**.



Schema FMCoo.415 shows the physical body as a structure that embeds and hosts all other Man's bodily principles, and hence has a specific organization for each of them as part or

subset of the physical body. If a new principle is added, as the human 'I' in the current Earth planetary stage of evolution, then this new principle has to be interwoven in a balanced and correct way. This is done over the various epochs and cultural ages, and because it is so complex offers many ways for this development to go wrong (see eg the sixteen paths of perdition), as explained in the lectures of 1917-01-01-GA174B and 1917-01-14-GA174B.

Man's transformation and Spiritualization

In the current stage of development on the planetary stage Earth, Man has received his 'I'-consciousness that sets him apart and above the other lower kingdoms of creation on earth. Man is made up of four developed, and three latent bodily principles.

Man's 'I' or threefold soul is 'pivotal' in that it is the vehicle or instrument for transformation of the lower bodily principles: Man's astral body, etheric body and physical body .. into their spiritualized counterpart versions: the spirit-self, life-spirit and spirit-man.

Planetary stage		Epoch						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Old Saturn	1	phys	eth	astr	I	manas	budhi	atma
Old Sun	2	phys	eth	astr	I	manas	budhi	atma
Old Moon	3	phys	eth	astr	I	manas	budhi	atma
Earth	4	phys	eth	astr	I	manas	budhi	atma
Future Jupiter	5	phys	eth	astr	I	manas	budhi	atma
Future Venus	6	phys	eth	astr	I	manas	budhi	atma
Future Vulcan	7	phys	eth	astr	I	manas	budhi	atma
		recapitulation - integration and adaption for new principle						
		first seed and developing ground for future principle						
		principle that represents evolutionary goal for planetary stage						

Schema FMCoo.130 provides a simple tabular overview of evolution and the developmental goal per planetary stage (and Condition of Consciousness) - and epoch (taking into account Conditions of Life and Form). For the current fifth epoch on Earth that developmental target is spirit self (or manas), for the

sixth it is life spirit (or budhi), and for the seventh it is spirit man (or atma). Only a limited cohort of the population will reach those targets in each epoch. The seed cohort for the next epoch is selected taking into account the developmental goal for the next epoch.

This "spiritualization" is the developmental direction that will happen 'anyway' through [evolution](#) in the next cultural ages, epochs, and planetary stages. Schema FMCoo.130 above represents this in a high level overview.

However as always, not all entities reach the development goal of each developmental stage, resulting in the evolutionary 'funnel' whereby certain cohorts (groups) are left behind and 'pushed down' whereas the others move on and 'develop upwards'. In this way the current mineral, plant and animal kingdoms are the resulting 'lower kingdoms' of the entities that were not able to make the development targets at each stage – in comparison with Man. Another aspect of this evolutionary funnel is the creation of 'off-springs' such as elementals.

When Man, who has now received conscious awareness, and free will, actively starts this **work of self-improvement and development**, it is referred to as 'the great Work'. Specific development techniques exist, and to follow this process is called 'initiation'.

The spiritual guidance of Mankind by the teachers of humanity through the ages (see the [White Lodge](#)) serves to help and support Man with teachings that present the precepts for living the best life possible and fulfill the criteria for the correct development. An example is the 'golden rule' that can be found in all religions, see the [Golden rule](#).

Lectures

1908-06-26-GA104

presents Apostle's Paul's way of expressing Man's spiritualization. See also topic of [Second Adam](#)

Quote A

All men now possess the rudiments of the Spirit-Self, but one has more, another less. Many will still have to go through many incarnations before they have developed the Spirit-Self far enough to become aware of what they are working upon within their human

nature. But when the earth has reached its goal, when the seventh trumpet begins to sound, the following will be observed: that which exists of the physical body will be dissolved like salt in warm water. The human Spirit-Self will be developed to a high degree, so that man will repeat again and again the words of Paul, "Not I, but Christ in me does everything."

This will enable him to **dissolve the physical nature and make the ennobled etheric into a being which can live in the astralized earth.** Thus man, a new being, will live over into this spiritualized earth. We might say that the important stage of passing over into the earth which has become spiritualized, is wonderfully expressed in the Bible where it says that everything which man now accomplishes within himself in the physical body during the earth period is like a sowing whose fruit will appear when the earth has become spiritual.

"And that which thou sowest is not the body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat or of some other grain. But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body" (1 Cor. xv. 37)

That is, the body which is the expression of the soul of the individuality.

"There are also celestial bodies and bodies terrestrial, but the glory of the celestial body is one, and the glory of the terrestrial body is another."

The earthly bodies will be dissolved, the celestial will appear as the luminous expression of what the soul is.

"It is sown corruptible and will rise incorruptible."

The incorruptible body will then be resurrected.

"It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body."

Paul calls the etheric or life-body, spiritual body, after the physical has dissolved and the etheric passes into the astral earth. Paul here sees beforehand the incorruptible spiritual body, as he calls it. And now let us consider what it is that man will embody as the expression of his capacity for receiving the Christ. It is the same

that hovered before Paul in spirit, and that he calls "the last Adam," while he calls the first man who entered into existence in a physically visible body "the first Adam."

At the end of the Lemurian epoch we already find various animals below, but man is not yet visible to external eyes; he is still etheric. He condenses, and absorbs mineral constituents and appears in his first form; the physical man gradually appears, just as water condenses into ice, Physical evolution then proceeds so far that what is earthly can dissolve and eventually disappears. Hence the man who has the etheric body appears as the last Adam. The first Adam has the capacity of seeing the earth in the physical body through the physical senses; the last Adam, who assumes a spiritual body, is an expression of the inner capacity for receiving the Christ. Hence Christ is called by Paul the last Adam. This comprises the whole of human evolution; in spirit we see what man will become in the future, whereas before we saw how he descended to the earth.

Quote B

.. the fourth principle in human nature, that which makes man the crown of earthly creation, which makes him stand out above all the other beings, and enables him to develop as "I," as an individual self-conscious being in earthly existence. **In the future the evolution of Man will unfold in such manner that he will gradually work from his "I" upon the lower principles, so that the "I" becomes their ruler.**

- When the "I" has thoroughly worked upon the astral body and taken possession of it, so that in this astral body there are no more unconscious and unguarded impulses, instincts and passions, then the "I" will have developed what we call Spirit Self or Manas. Spirit-Self is none other than the astral body, only the astral body is the third principle before it is transformed by the "I."
- When the "I" transforms the etheric body also, Life-Spirit or Budhi is produced;
- and when in the remotest future the "I" transforms the physical body so that this is completely spiritualized by the "I"

itself (this is the most difficult work, because the physical body is the densest), then the physical body develops into the highest principle of human nature, namely, Atma or Spirit-Man.

Thus, if we conceive of man in his seven-fold nature, we have the physical body, the etheric body or life-body, the astral body and the "I." Further, we have that which man will develop in the future; Spirit-Self or Manas, Life-Spirit or Budhi and Spirit-Man or Atma. That is the sevenfold being of man.

However, he will only develop these higher principles in the far-distant future. It is not yet in Man's power while on the Earth to work so far upon himself as to bring all these higher spiritual parts to full development.

1909-04-18-GA110 ↗

It is a higher grade of development to be able to give, to bring sacrifices, than merely to store up for oneself all that the Cosmos gives. This is again mirrored in human life. What is this human development? Look backwards in spirit to the Atlantean and Lemurian times, and then look forwards!

Man receives the physical body, the etheric and astral bodies and the Ego, and then again *the Ego works back on the other members, transforming the astral body, the etheric and physical bodies, into Manas, Budhi, and Atma, into Spirit self, spirit-Life and Spirit-man.*

Primeval wisdom has always taught that **Man transforms his astral body in such a way that this astral body consists at first partly of Manas and partly of the old astrality, but that later it becomes completely transformed, completely penetrated by the work and action of the I.**

Let us take a man who has not yet reached that grade of development when the astral body is completely penetrated by the work of the Ego; almost all men, with very few exceptions, are in that condition. That which man has already transformed goes with him through all eternity; that which he has not yet changed in

which his Ego has had no part, must leave him, as a sort of astral shell, after he has passed through Kama-Loka; that shell dissolves in the astral world, not without its having brought about considerable mischief if as an astral body, it had bad desires and evil passions. Thus we can say that the development of man consists in his leaving always less and less behind him in the astral world. Let us follow the process; the man dies. Soon after death the etheric body is dissolved; and the extract of it remains. The man passes through Kama-Loka, and the untransformed shell detaches itself; that which has been re-worked goes with man through all eternity, it is brought back into each new incarnation. The more perfect the man is, the less there will be of those remnants left in the astral world; till at last he will have progressed so far that he leaves nothing of his astral body in Kama-Loka, so far – that he can injure no living being on earth through the remnants he leaves in Kama-Loka. Such a man has then the possibility of seeing into spiritual worlds. For it is not possible to reach this condition without having reached a certain degree of clairvoyance in the Astral. The whole astral body has then been spiritualised, it has become Spirit-Self, and the whole of it is taken with him by the man to the spiritual world. Formerly that which was bad was left behind, now the whole astral body can be taken with him into all futurity. And in the moment when the astral body is so far advanced that it is completely transformed, in that moment the whole of this new astral shape is impressed upon the etheric body, so that the etheric body becomes a counterpart of the astral body. The etheric body does not need to be as yet quite transformed, but that is impressed upon it which has been refashioned in the astral body. You see, that we have here described a particularly exalted being, one who is eminently far advanced, because he has developed the whole of the Spirit-self. This Being is called Nirmana-Kaya in Eastern Science; for his astral body, his astral Kaya, has reached the stage when it leaves no remnants in the astral world.

Man can always develop further; at last he influences or transforms his etheric body, then his physical body. What happens when the etheric and the physical body are transformed so that they are ruled by the man? When the etheric body is thus changed, when man has not only 'Spirit Self' in the astral body, but Budhi or 'Life Spirit' has also been gradually developed in his etheric body, and when this Life-Spirit or Budhi impresses itself upon the physical body – then yet a further stage of development is reached.

Man then reaches the point when his etheric body also leaves nothing behind it, so that he retains this etheric body in the same shape through all time, the etheric body in which he has formed the Life-Spirit or Budhi.

Through such transmutations man becomes more and more ruler over his astral and his etheric bodies. Such control enables him also to direct in a certain way his astral and etheric bodies. One who has not yet brought his astral body under the rule of his Ego must certainly wait until he has come thus far; but the man who already is lord of his astral and etheric bodies, has them at his free disposal. He can say: 'Because with my "I," I have passed through so many incarnations which have taught me to transform my astral and etheric bodies, I am now enabled, when I have to return to earth again, to form for myself out of astral and etheric substances, an astral and an etheric body which will be equally perfect.' He is also enabled to sacrifice his own astral and etheric bodies, to pass them on to others. You now see, that there are individualities who, because they have become rulers of their astral and etheric bodies, are able to sacrifice these bodies, because they have learnt how to build them. If they wish to return to earth again, they will themselves form them anew out of the existing material. The perfection to which they have attained, they pass on to other personalities who have to perform certain tasks in the world. Thus personalities of later days have woven into them, organised into them, the astral and etheric bodies of these who lived in times of yore. You see that when this happens the personality of olden times did not only influence the time in which he lived, but that his influence works on also into the future.

1910-09-11-GA123

In the course of his development Man evolves the consciousness-soul so that in it the spirit-self may appear. **When he has evolved the consciousness soul, the upper triad (spirit-self, life-spirit, and spirit-man) come to meet him, so that the opening flower of his being can receive into it this upper triad from above. This may be illustrated graphically to resemble the unfolding of a plant. When Man has made himself receptive by developing his consciousness soul, the higher triad draws near; this may be likened to a spiritual fructification coming towards him from on high. While with the**

other principles of his being he grows upwards from below, unfolding the blossom of the 'Son of Man,' there must come to meet him from on high, so that he may gain his I-consciousness, that which brings with it spirit-self, life-spirit, and spirit-man.

1912-11-03-GA140 ↗

Now in our life on earth there is only one member of our being whose development we can work at in the real sense, and that is our I.

What does it mean to work at the development of the I?

To answer this question we must realize what it is that makes this work necessary. Suppose a man goes to another and says to him, "You are wicked." If this is not the case the man has told an untruth. What is the consequence of the I having uttered an untruth such as this? The consequence is that from this moment the worth of the I is less than it was before the utterance was made. That is the objective consequence of the immoral deed. Before uttering an untruth our worth is greater than it is afterwards. For all time to come and in all spheres, for all eternity the worth of our I is less as the result of such a deed. But during the life between birth and death a certain means is at our disposal. We can always make amends for having lessened the worth of our ego; we can invalidate the untruth. To the one we have called wicked we can confess, "I erred; what I said is not true," and so on. In doing this we restore worth to our I and compensate for the harm done. In the case where our ego is involved it is still within our power during life to make the necessary adjustment. If, for example, we ought to have acquired knowledge of something but have forgotten all about it, our I has lost worth, but if we make efforts we can recall it to memory and thus compensate for the harm done. To sum up, we can lessen the worth of our I but we can also augment it. This faculty to correct a member of our being, to rectify its errors in such a way as to further its development, we possess in respect of the I.

For more on this extract, see [In Response to a Question](#) in the Appendix.

1913-03-29-GA145

the threefold soul and astral, etheric, physical body is linked to the intuition, inspiration and imagination soul (SWCC)

In our present age, the consciousness soul is first localized in the physical body, that is: it uses the physical organs. The intellectual soul, containing the inner feeling forces of sympathy and compassion, is located in the etheric body, which means that it uses etheric movements. The sentient soul, containing impulses, desires, passions, uses the forces localized in the astral body. When the sentient soul is changed into the intuition soul, you must imagine that in a kind of correspondence, the astral body becomes an instrument of this intuition soul. Similarly the inspiration soul is the transformed intellectual soul and its instrument is the human etheric body. The imagination soul or transformed consciousness soul uses the physical body as its instrument.

1917-01-14-GA174

The effect of poison in man's higher components. People who lag behind evolution fill their being with poisonous phantom of formative forces, the source of emptiness of soul, hypochondria, aggressive instincts. If spiritual life is possible, it must also be possible to go astray

1917-10-26-GA177 ✓

Humanity was able to unite with the earth because when it came down from heaven to earth, if we may put it like this, the spirits of darkness which came down with it laid an adequate foundation for human independence during the time when the laws of heredity, nationality and race prevailed.

What Lucifer and Ahriman had done became a good thing in so far as humanity was enabled to unite with the earth.

To show this in diagrammatic form, we may put it like this: before Lucifer took action, humanity was united with the whole cosmos including the earth; human beings united with the earth because hereditary traits – original sin in biblical terms – hereditary traits in scientific terminology – were implanted into them. This made human beings – I am using crosses to indicate them – part of the earth. You see, therefore, that Lucifer and Ahriman are here servants of the progressive powers.

Evolution then continued. We are now at the time when human beings live on earth and are united with it.

Luciferic and ahrimanic spirits, spirits of darkness, have been cast down from heaven to earth. Because of this, **human beings must be released from the earth, torn away from it, with part of their essential nature taken back into the spiritual world.**

Humanity must develop awareness of not being of this earth, and this must grow stronger and stronger.

In future, human beings must walk on this earth who say to themselves: *'Yes, at birth I enter into a physical body, but this is a transitional stage. I really remain in the spiritual world. I am conscious that only part of my essential nature is united with the earth, and that I do not leave the world where I am between death and rebirth with the whole of my essential nature.'*

A feeling of belonging to the spiritual world must develop in us.

In their souls human beings will tear themselves away from the physical and earthly element and be citizens of the worlds of the spirit.

And in those worlds there are no races or nations, but relationships of a different kind.

These things must be understood today when great, tremendous events happen in the world, unless you are going to be mulish – excuse the expression – and present old-established prejudices as new ideals.

But although these three higher principles of human nature are only present in embryo in the earthly life of the man of to-day, yet, albeit under the guardianship of higher spiritual Beings, **they develop in a very significant way between death and a new birth.** Thus when man dies and enters again into the spiritual world, these three principles develop very markedly, pointing, in a measure, to a future existence of humanity. Just as Man in his present life develops in soul and spirit between birth and death, so after death he goes through definite development, only then he is attached, as it were by an umbilical cord to the spiritual beings of the higher Hierarchies.

1920-10-31-GA200

the realism is sketched of the required transformative work on future forms and structures, already in the current cultural ages

... during earth-evolution only the germs of spirit-self, life-spirit and spirit-man will be able to evolve; for we shall have to wait for the transformation of the earth into its three following conditions for them to appear fully. .. Essentially, spirit-self is the transformation of the astral body into a higher stage, life-spirit is the transformation of the etheric body to a higher stage, and spirit-man is the transformation of the physical body to a higher stage. This transformation of the physical body, however, will not take place until the seventh condition – nor, correspondingly, the transformation of the other members.

Today, the human being can already understand that this has to happen, embrace the thought that it must happen. Indeed, the human being can grasp still more today if, without prejudice, he .. directs his soul's gaze upon its own nature. He will have to say to himself:

*'It is true that, during earth-existence, I cannot attain spirit-self in my astral body, nor life-spirit in my etheric body nor spirit-man in my physical body, but what I have to do is to prepare, to prefigure, them in my soul. And **by developing the consciousness-soul now I am preparing myself to take spirit-self into it in the next, the sixth, culture-epoch**.' I know that I cannot yet bring spirit-self into*

my entire astral body, but I have to bring it into my consciousness-soul. As a human being, I must learn to live inwardly in the way that I shall one day live when the earth has passed over, through a certain cosmic development, into its next stage of evolution. And I must prepare for these future conditions, at least inwardly, while still in earthly existence. I must prepare myself, in germ, inwardly so that in the future I shall be able to shape my outer form in the way which it is my task, even now, to understand.

Now try and sense clearly what is really involved here. The human being is already growing into spirit-self [in the current cultural age]. The human being is growing into states of consciousness of which he must say that they are really of such a nature that, during the period of earth-existence, they cannot emerge fully. These states of consciousness try to transform him even as regards his external sheaths – his astral body, etheric body and physical body – but, as earthly man, he cannot achieve this. He has to say to himself: *'I must pass through the rest of earth-evolution continually feeling that I am preparing myself inwardly for conditions of being I cannot yet develop'*. In future it will have to be the normal thing for a human being to say: *'I see the being of man as something which, in its inner nature, grows beyond what I can be as earthly man. As earthly man I am forced, in a sense, to feel myself as a dwarf compared with what the human being really is.'*





5 Human Character

The I "plays on the instrument of the soul and the different strings of human soul life". What comes out as music and the expression of individual soul life, is what we know as and call **human character**

1909-10-29-GAo68B



In every-day language we use the term 'human character', or a Man's character, to denote the sum of characteristics that describe a person in his behaviour and the way he reacts to the countless situations of everyday existence. These reactions differ according to the person, and we interpret this by saying that the characters of these individuals are different. Human character includes that person's physical characteristics, psychological attributes, and particular aspects of behaviour, as shown through a Man's actions. These characteristic sets of behaviors, cognitions, and emotional and mental patterns is related to Man's Personality and the complex nature of his constitution.

In human sciences, *psychology* attempts to describe and explain the tendencies that underlie differences in behavior, personality and human character. Psychologists have taken various approaches including biological, cognitive, learning, trait-based theories, and psychodynamic or humanistic approaches.

In the *arts*, a character or character sketch renders a thumbnail portrayal of an individual with descriptions, and particularly attempts to capture behavioural patterns, expressions or gestures that get to the essence of the individual. .

In *spiritual science*, the [development of the I](#) shows how Man received the fourth bodily principle of the human 'I' through the sacrifice of the Spirits of Form (SoF) that let their substance ripple in and take hold of

Man's astral, etheric and physical bodies. These faculties are called respectively the sentient, intellectual and consciousness soul, together making up the threefold soul. Man's individual spiritual I uses these lower bodies, and – as part of the development of humanity across the ages – grows into using the available faculties: starting with the sentient soul .. upto the consciousness soul. This aspect depends on:

- the maturity of the soul, as related to when the individual started incarnating, see [Planets hosting beings at various stages of evolution](#) ✓
- the soul's individual pathway of developing through incarnate experiences, and how successful it has been in accomplishing the target for each age, or partially or fully falling sideways in error, see [Sixteen paths of perdition](#) ✓

...

The natural development of the I is one of growth from the sentient soul experience growing into intellectual and later consciousness soul. Thereby the I uses an always larger part of Man's lower structure as a means to function and express. This is represented on Schema FMCo0.431 by the arrows to the right. The consciousness soul is pivotal as it brings fructification from the spiritual world and moral impulses that are brought down also to the intellectual and sentient souls. As a result, Man's human character is undergoes transformation as the I matures in the mastery and use of the threefold soul.

It is important to realize Man does not leave behind the one aspect for the other, but gains in spiritual maturity: the mastery of having grown into the intellectual soul changes the sentient soul, and similarly the consciousness soul fructifies and changes the intellectual and sentient souls.

Hence, the human 'I' is really alive in the three lower bodily principles or members of Man all the time, and these three aspects are called the threefold soul. How the I holds the middle (or can be seen in the workings) of the threefold soul is also described in the lectures below.

Lecture Coverage

Below are seven main lectures part of [1909-GA058](#) ✓ and GA068B.

- GA058 volume was first published in 1984, with the title *Metamorphoses of the Soul, Paths of Soul Experience*. Interestingly,

the lectures in that volume first have 1909-12-05-GA058 (anger: the chained Prometheus), then 1909-10-22-GA058 (Truth, and Goethe's Pandora), 1909-10-28-GA058 (Andacht), and then 1910-03-14-GA058 (Human character).

- The chronological ranking of lectures now shows that although four lectures constitute the headlines of this volume's title, Rudolf Steiner actually covered this quite differently. GA068B was published in a first edition in 2021, nearly 40 years later and over a century after the lectures were held.

This is another illustration that shows how the constitution of the original GA included the guiding principle to not include the publishing of what were regarded 'double' lectures with similar contents or coverage than other lectures. Indeed Rudolf Steiner sometimes held lectures that were quite similar or congruent in contents. These alternative or complementary lectures were only published as part of the GA2025, most typical examples of which are GA111 and GA117A. For the earnest student, these lectures sometimes contain important details, another phrasing or other differences.

The above example also shows that no 'contents based coherence' or 'study logic' was used for the assembly of the volumes, as lectures could have been presented differently.

Note that in 1910-GA059, Vol 2 of Metamorphoses of the soul, Rudolf Steiner goes into characteristics such as conscience, laughing and crying, human error, praying, positive and negative soul disposition, and so on.

1907-03-16-GA097

The below can be read/interpreted in the context of understanding dementia and diseases such as alzheimer (see [Memory](#)), but also more general the fact that certain soul faculties (may) weaken in old people (eg slower functioning etc)

From: Questions and answers on the lecture given in Leipzig on 16 March 1907

Why do old people grow weak-minded, seeing that the soul remains changed?

The soul does not change. It never descends from the level it has reached, if its instrument has grown weak. It is like a great pianist who cannot play well as before if the instrument is poor.

You will say the soul no longer knows its own level. Yes, for it cannot see itself for as long as it is in a physical body. There you altogether have only the reflection of the soul, the mirror reflection. When the mirror grows or breaks, it can no longer give a reflection.

It is only the occult student who is truly able to perceive his soul.

Another version of the answer:

The soul, indeed, does not change. It never descends from the stage once reached. But its instrument has become weak, like a great pianist who can no longer play as he played formerly, if he has a bad instrument.

You will say the soul no longer knows its own stage. Yes, the soul does not see itself as long as it is in a physical body. There is only to be found the reflection of the soul, the mirror image. Now the mirror becomes clouded or broken. Then it can no longer reflect.

1907-12-27-GA101

For a more specific quote on the consciousness soul, see: [Man's bodily principles#1907-12-27-GA101](#)↗

For the full lecture, see: [Group souls of humanity#1907-12-27-GA101](#)↗

1908-10-26-GA244 Q&A 172.1

(limited extract)

Where do we place the 'Gemüt' (mind or nous) in the structure of Man's nine bodily principles↗?

Mainly in the consciousness soul .. the 'I'.

...

The German word for the active force in the soul is 'Mut'. When an attribute or characteristic becomes intrinsic, then this is represented with the syllable 'Ge' .. so 'Gemuoet' is the same as 'Gemüt'. The German word 'Gemüt' as an encompassing concept. .. The I develops in the consciousness soul. .. Through the consciousness the active element of the feeling comes in: Muot or Mut, the active that works in the soul.

'Gemüet, Gemüot' .. means 'Gemüt' .. is the part of the soul that develops itself from intellectual soul, consciousness soul, where the Willing impulse hits in.

In Eastern Orthodox Christianity, this is often referred to as the 'nous'.
~Anthony

1909-10-21-GA068B: The Purpose of Anger (Prometheus Bound)

1909-10-22-GA058: The Mission of Truth ↗

Synopsis:

The I is confined between losing itself and egoism. Lessing demands that man strive for truth. A sense of truth leads to selflessness. The one-sided point of view does not lead to truth. Passions, desires, have to be overcome; to the same extent peace and harmony rules among man. There is the truth of reflective thought about outer observation, as well as truth which comes about by creative thought. Among the latter are the truths of spiritual science. Reflective thinking can lead to egoism; truths arrived at by creative thinking, which lead into the future, liberate us from our self. This is the contrast between Epimetheus and Prometheus. Both the Titan brothers must work together. Wisdom and the Word have to unite with the deed.

1909-10-28-GA058: The Mission of Reverence ↗

Synopsis:

The "Unio mystica" is the union with the eternal-feminine within human reach. The human being should strengthen his I but he must not harden it into egoism. The will is able to develop devotion towards the unknown, the feeling develops love for the unknown. When both are united reverence

comes into being, which leads to knowledge of the unknown. Love without judgement leads to sentimental enthusiasm. Love and devotion imbued with the right kind of self-feeling lead upwards.

Gestures of reverence are the bended knee, folded hands, the lifted face. The soul purifies within itself a feeling for what is beautiful and what is good. The will, purified by reverence, builds up moral ideals. In old age the strength arises to be active in life. We draw near to the almighty, increasingly rich knowledge is the result of educating the consciousness soul. The "eternal-masculine" must permeate all reverence. The strong I ascends to higher regions.

1909-10-29-GA068B: Human character (1)

1909-12-05-GA058: The Mission of Anger ↗

Synopsis:

There are hidden faculties in the soul. Soul and spirit can issue only from soul and spirit. The fact of repeated earth lives is a consequence of this. The sentient soul is connected with the sentient body, the Intellectual soul with the ether body and the consciousness soul with the physical body. In the sentient soul lie images, antipathy and sympathy. The intellectual soul forms thoughts and judgements with the outside world. We have to make ourselves as many-sided as possible and overcome egoism. Anger can educate the human being to calmness and true gentleness.

Prometheus brought language, knowledge, writing and fire to mankind, all of them gifts which educate the I. The wrath of Zeus extinguishes the power of the I in Prometheus. Zeus is succeeded by Christ, anger by the loving I.

1910-03-12-GA068B: Andacht (for translation of this word, see "Discussion" below)

1910-03-14-GA058: Human Character (2) ↗

Note: the date on [RSArchive](#) ↗ has the wrong year (checked against V1 in the German edition)

When someone is born, his I and astral body, including his sentient soul, intellectual soul and consciousness soul, are by no means featureless; they are endowed with definite attributes and characteristics brought from previous lives.

Synopsis:

The divisions in the being of Man must be overcome by the unified character. At its foundation lies the harmony brought forth by the I from the interaction of the three soul members. The human being ripens through experience and wisdom learnt from life. Experiences are transformed into abilities. They are limited by the disposition of the physical and ether bodies. The forces which we have woven into archetype can only enter existence in a new life. The outer is an expression of the inner being.

Laocoon, an image of the human being from which the I is absent. True ripeness of experience is not attained until the 35th year of age. Joy and love fill the physical body of the child with strength. Then there are fewer obstacles for the I in the period of the consciousness soul. Similar links exist between the ether body and the intellectual soul and the periods when they manifest themselves. The experience of authority in the period from 7 to 14 provides the foundation for courage. The ideals presented to the human being in the period from 14 to 21 are imprinted on the sentient soul. Immersion in the cosmic secrets further remoulds the character.

Character is evident in facial expression, the physiognomy and the formation of the skull.

[1910-06-09-GA121](#)

See long extract on: [Folk souls#1910-06-09-GA121](#) – advised to read in full

If we wish to throw light upon the present inner being of man, we find it necessary to picture it as being threefold, as being divided into:

- The sentient soul, which is, as it were, the lowest member of the inner human being,
- The intellectual soul, the central member, and
- The consciousness (or spiritual) soul, the highest member of the inner nature of the human being, in which the human 'I' is first actually brought to a state of consciousness.

In the spiritual-soul is first to be found that which is called human self-consciousness. Nevertheless the ' I ' of Man is active in all three parts of his inner life, in the sentient soul as well as in the intellectual soul , and in the consciousness soul.

In the sentient-soul the ' I ' is active in such a way that man is hardly aware of his I. In the sentient-soul, therefore, he is thus far given up to all his desires and passions. The ' I ' broods dully in what we call the sentient-soul. It first works itself out and begins to appear in the intellectual-soul or mind-soul, and only becomes quite apparent in the spiritual-soul.

If we wish to examine each of these three members of the human inner being separately, we must look upon them as **three modifications, as three parts within the astral body**. It certainly is the case, that these modifications, **these three members of the astral body, prepare the transformation of the astral body itself, of the etheric body and of the physical body**. But these transformations are still not what meets us as the actual human inner being or soul. The soul, the inner part of Man; consists of three modifications of the astral body. The three modifications must make use of certain instruments, and these express themselves in such a way, that

- in the astral body the sentient soul is a sort of instrument,
- in the etheric body the intellectual soul soul, and
- in the physical body the consciousness soul.

Thus we can distinguish the human inner being from that which is the human envelope or covering; so that therefore the inner nature of man consists of three modifications of the astral body.

...

[see [full lecture](#) as it describes what is contained in these three members of the soul, how to distinguish them from one another]

..

In Man the 'I', his highest member, **encloses within itself the sentient, the intellectual and consciousness souls**.

1917-10-08-GA177 ↗

Important lecture, see: [Thinking Feeling Willing#1917-10-08-GA177](#) ↗

Laocoön and Niobe groups

1917-01-24-GA292 ↗

This is the famous **Laocoön group** – the starting-point, as you know, of many an artistic discussion, ever since Lessing's Laocoön of the 18th century. It is the work of three sculptors of the School of Rhodes. Lessing's writings on this subject are, indeed, most interesting. He tried to show, you will remember, how the poet describes is not placed before the eyes. We must call it to life in our imaginations. Whereas what the plastic artist has created is there before our eyes. Therefore, says Lessing, what the plastic artist portrays must contain far more repose; it must represent moments which can at least be imagined – for a single moment – in repose.

Much has been said and written about this Laocoon group, especially in relation to Lessing's explanations. It is interesting how the aestheticist, Robert Zimmermann, – without, of course, having any knowledge of Spiritual Science – arrived at an explanation which needs, no doubt, to be supplemented, but which was none the less correct for an age that had not Spiritual Science. His explanation contains – albeit only as an instinctive suggestion – some element of what I have been setting forth today. We see the priest, Laocoon, with his two sons, wound around by the serpents and going towards their death. Now we cannot but be struck by the peculiar way in which the body has been moulded. Much has been written on this subject. Robert Zimmermann rightly pointed out: The whole representation is such that we have before us the very moment where the life (or, as we should say, the etheric body) is already fleeing away. It is already a moment of unconsciousness. Hence the artist represents it as though the body of Laocoon were already falling asunder. That is the marvellous quality about this figure. The body is already being differentiated into its parts. Thus even in this late product we see how the Greek was aware of the etheric body. He brings to expression the actual moment where life is passing into death. It is the quick withdrawal of the etheric body through the shock – the shock that is expressed by the awful snakes coiling around. This effect of the etheric body withdrawing from the physical, and the physical falling asunder, is the

characteristic thing in the Laocoon; not the other things that are so often said, but the peculiar way the body becomes differentiated. We could not imagine the body thus, unless we conceived it as the moment when the etheric body is drawing away.

...

To the same epoch belongs the famous **Niobe group**, Niobe losing all her children through the wrath of Apollo.

Discussion

[1] - Terminology: 'Andacht'

The German term Andacht is used and imported into English language for use within spiritual science, because the specific and rich intended meaning by Rudolf Steiner of this German word cannot be translated appropriately to English, without causing major misunderstandings when an existing equivalent English word would be used.

This is an example where words fall short of intended meaning in a spiritual scientific context. In normal everyday use and waking consciousness there is no single word for the subtle meaning described and intended. In fact any word is just a 'label' for what is intended and described here.

Hence, in this context and framework, translating the single word literally just does not work. 'Andacht' cannot be (truly, accurately) translated by: attention, attentiveness, reverence, devotion, 'on-thought', or any single word.

As described in 1910-03-12-GAo68B:

Andacht is that what gets aroused in the soul as inner impulses for the unknown, for what we do not know yet, as we cannot understand it yet.

Did we not have anything in us that points us to what we cannot understand, then this urge and longing could not awaken, to come to the unknown. All that we want to understand and can only

understand once we have entered into it, this first has to work in us in a dark way as yearning or longing in our soul.

That what draws us into that, what we have not yet grown into, under what we do not find ourselves yet, but rather find ourselves outside of still, that is Andacht.





6

Human Temperaments



Man's personality (see [Appendix](#)) in incarnation is characterized by one of four temperaments, depending on what bodily principle is dominant as the spirit clothes and wraps itself with these bodily principles for an incarnation. This temperamental characteristic varies and is balanced across incarnations.

The temperament places a major stamp in how Man places himself in the world in terms of experience and action. The four temperaments can be linked to the [four elements](#)↗, and this plays an important role as Man strives for elemental balance as part of [Initiation](#)↗.

Lectures

1903-11-04-GA088

In the Middle Ages people who knew about such things still spoke about substances through which the self was drawn into the physical, and they called these substances the humors. 'What in our physical world are the various conditions of matter—solid, fluid, gas, and etheric—are in the psychic world the four humors; but we can name them only according to their reflection as they are in us, as they live in us. **The physical conditions of matter—solid, fluid, gas, and etheric—correspond in the astral world to what we call the four temperaments.** What causes us to have a certain temperament corresponds to a very specific condition of matter. Those who have a choleric temperament in their astral body have the humor especially well developed that corresponds to the state of matter called choleric (cholae). Thus in the astral world there are temperaments that correspond to the four conditions of matter. Just as the ancients spoke of earth, water, air, and fire, so too they spoke of the four conditions of matter in the astral world, which consist of astral substance. According to which astral substance predominates, a person will have a specific temperament.

The Mystery of the Human Temperaments

In the great gap between what we may call human nature in general and what confronts us in each individual, we see nevertheless many homogeneous characteristics in whole human groups. To these belong those human qualities which today form the subject of our consideration, and which we usually call the *temperament*. We need only utter the word 'temperament' to see that there are as many riddles as men. Within the basic types, the basic colorings, we have such a multiplicity and variety among individuals that we can indeed say that the real enigma, of existence is expressed in the peculiar basic disposition of the human being which we call temperament. And when the riddles intervene directly in practical life, the basic coloring of the human being plays a role. When a person stands before us, we feel that we are confronted by something of this basic disposition. Therefore it is to be hoped that spiritual science is able to give also the necessary information about the nature of the temperaments. For though we must admit that the temperaments spring from within, they nevertheless express themselves in the whole external appearance of the individual. By means of an external observation of nature, however, the riddle of man is not to be solved; we can approach the characteristic coloring of the human being only when we learn what spiritual science has to say about him.

It is of course true that each person confronts us with his own temperament, but we can still distinguish certain groups of temperaments. We speak chiefly of **four types, as you know: the sanguine, the choleric, the phlegmatic, and the melancholic temperament**. And even though this classification is not entirely correct in so far as we apply it to individuals – **in individuals the temperaments are mixed in the most diverse way, so we can only say that one temperament or another predominates in certain traits** – still we shall in general classify people in four groups according to their temperaments.

The fact that the temperament is revealed on the one side as something which inclines toward the individual, which makes people different, and on the other side joins them again to groups, proves to us that the temperament must on the one side have something to do with the innermost essence of the human being, and on the

other must belong to universal human nature. Man's temperament, then, is something which points in two directions; and therefore it will be necessary, if we wish to solve the mystery, to ask on the one hand:

In how far does the temperament point to what belongs to universal human nature?

and then again on the other:

How does it point to the essential kernel, to the actual inner being of the individual?

[Mediation between two streams = temperament]

We see then in a person confronting us the **flowing together of two streams**; of these two streams each human being is composed. In him we see

- on the one side what comes to him from his family, and
- on the other what has developed from the individual's innermost being; namely, a number of predispositions, characteristics, inner capacities and outer destiny.

An agreement must be effected. We find that a man must adapt himself to this union, in accordance with his innermost being on the one side, and on the other in accordance with that which is brought to him from the line of heredity. We see how a man bears to a great degree the physiognomy of his ancestors; we could put him together, so to speak, from the sum of his various ancestors. Since at first the inner essential kernel has nothing to do with what is inherited, but must merely adapt itself to what is most suitable to it, we shall see that **it is necessary for a certain mediation to exist** for that which has lived perhaps for centuries in an entirely different world and is again transplanted into another world; the spirit being of man must have something here below to which it is related; there must be a bond, a connecting link, between the special individual human being and humanity in general, into which he is born through family, people, race.

Between these two, namely what we bring with us from our earlier life and what our family, ancestors and race imprint upon us, there is a **mediation, something which bears more general characteristics, but at the same time is capable of being individualized.**

That which occupies this position between the line of heredity and the line which represents our individuality is expressed by the word TEMPERAMENT.

In that which confronts us in the temperament of a person we have something in a certain way like a physiognomy of his innermost individuality. We understand thus how the individuality colors, by means of the qualities of temperament, the attributes inherited in the succession of generations. **Temperament stands right in the middle between what we bring with us as individuals and what originates from the line of heredity.**

When the two streams unite, the one stream colors the other. They color each other reciprocally. Just as blue and yellow, let us say, unite in green, so do the two streams in man unite in what we call temperament. That which mediates between all inner characteristics which he brings with him from his earlier incarnation, on the one side, and on the other what the line of heredity brings to him, comes under the concept temperament. It now takes its place between the inherited characteristics and what he has absorbed into his inner essential being. It is as if upon its descent to earth this kernel of being were to envelop itself with a spiritual nuance of that which awaits it here below, so that in proportion as this kernel of being is able best to adapt itself to this covering for the human being, the kernel of being colors itself according to that into which it is born and to a quality which it brings with it. Here shine forth the soul qualities of man and his natural inherited attributes. Between the two is the temperament – between that by which a man is connected with his ancestors and that which he brings with him from his earlier incarnations. ***The temperament balances the eternal with the transitory.***

[How the balancing is done]

This **balancing occurs through the fact that what we have learned to call the members of human nature come into relation with one another in a quite definite way.** We understand this in detail, however, only when we place before our mind's eye the complete

human nature in the sense of spiritual science. Only from spiritual science is the mystery of the human temperament to be discovered.

This human being as he confronts us in life, formed by the flowing together of these two streams, we know as a four-membered being. So we shall be able to say when we consider the entire individual: This complete human being consists of the *physical* body, the *etheric* body or *body of formative forces*, the *astral body*, and *the ego*.

In that part of man perceptible to the outer senses, which is all that materialistic thought is willing to recognize, we have first, according to spiritual science, only a single member of the human being, the *physical* body, which man has in common with the *mineral world*. That part which is subject to physical laws, which man has in common with all environing outer nature, the sum of chemical and physical laws, we designate in spiritual science as the *physical* body.

Beyond this, however, we recognize *higher super-sensible* members of human nature which are as actual and essential as the outer physical body. As first super-sensible member, man has the etheric body, which becomes part of his organism and remains united with the physical body throughout the entire life; only at death does a separation of the two take place. Even this first super-sensible member of human nature – in spiritual science called the etheric or life body; we might also call it the glandular body – is no more visible to our outer eyes than are colors to those born blind. But it exists, actually and perceptibly exists, for that which *Goethe* calls the eyes of the spirit, and it is even more real than the outer physical body, for it is the builder, the moulder, of the physical body. During the entire time between birth and death this etheric or life body continuously combats the disintegration of the physical body. Any kind of mineral product of nature – a crystal, for example – is so constituted that it is permanently held together by its own forces, by the forces of its own substance. That is not the case with the physical body of a living being; here the physical forces work in such a way that they destroy the form of life, as we are able to observe after death, when the physical forces destroy the life-form. That this destruction does not occur during life, that

the physical body does not conform to the physical and chemical forces and laws, is due to the fact that the etheric or life-body is ceaselessly combating these forces.

The third member of the human being we recognize in the bearer of all pleasure and suffering, joy and pain, instincts, impulses, passions, desires, and all that surges to and fro as sensations and ideas, even all concepts of what we designate as moral ideals, and so on. That we call the *astral body*. Do not take exception to this expression. We could also call it the "nerve-body." Spiritual science sees in it something real, and knows indeed that this body of impulses and desires is not an effect of the physical body, but the cause of this body. It knows that the soul-spiritual part has built up for itself the physical body.

Thus we already have three members of the human being, and as man's highest member we recognize that by means of which he towers above all other beings, by means of which he is the crown of earth's creation: namely, the bearer of the human ego, which gives him in such a mysterious, but also in such a manifest way, the power of self-consciousness.

Man has the *physical body* in common with his *entire visible environment*, the *etheric body* in common with the *plants and animals*, the *astral body* with *the animals*. The fourth member, however, the *ego*, he has *for himself alone*; and by means of it he towers above the other visible creatures. We recognize this fourth member as the *ego-bearer*, as that in human nature by means of which man is able to say "I" to himself, to come to independence.

Now what we see physically, and what the intellect which is bound to the physical senses can know, is only an expression of these four members of the human being. Thus,

- the expression of the *I*, of the actual ego-bearer, is the *blood* in its circulation. This "quite special fluid" is the expression of the *I*.
- The physical sense expression of the *astral body* in man is, for example, among other things, the *nervous system*.
- The expression of the *etheric body*, or a part of this expression, is the *glandular system*;

- and the *physical body* expresses itself in the *sense organs*.

These four members confront us in the human being. So we shall be able to say, when we observe the complete human being, that he consists of physical body, etheric body, astral body, and ego. That which is primarily physical body, which the human being carries in such a way that it is visible to physical eyes, clearly bears, first of all, when viewed from without, the marks of heredity. Also those characteristics which live in man's etheric body, in that fighter against the disintegration of the physical body, are in the line of heredity.

Then we come to his astral body, which in its characteristics is much more closely bound to the essential kernel of the human being. If we turn to this innermost kernel, to the actual ego, we find what passes from incarnation to incarnation, and appears as an inner mediator, which rays forth its essential qualities.

Now in the whole human nature all the separate members work into each other; they act reciprocally. Because two streams flow together in man when he enters the physical world, there arises a varied mixture of man's four members, and one, so to speak, gets the mastery over the others, and impresses its color upon them. Now according as one or another of these members comes especially into prominence, the individual confronts us with this or that temperament. The particular coloring of human nature, what we call the actual shade of the temperament, depends upon whether the forces, the different means of power, of one member or of another predominate, have a preponderance over the others. Man's eternal being, that which goes from incarnation to incarnation, so expresses itself in each new embodiment that it calls forth a certain reciprocal action among the four members of human nature: ego, astral body, etheric body and physical body; and from the interaction of these four members arises the nuance of human nature which we characterize as temperament.

When the essential being has tinged the physical and etheric bodies, that which arises because of the coloring thus given will act upon each of the other members; so that the way an individual appears to us with his characteristics depends upon whether the inner kernel acts more strongly upon the physical body, or whether the physical body acts more strongly upon it. According to his nature the human being is able to influence one of the four members, and

through the reaction upon the other members the temperament originates. The human essential kernel, when it comes into re-embodiment, is able through this peculiarity to introduce into one or another of its members a certain surplus of activity. Thus it can give to the ego a certain surplus strength; or again, the individual can influence his other members because of having had certain experiences in his former life.

When the *ego* of the individual has become so strong through its destiny that *its* forces are noticeably dominant in the fourfold human nature, and it dominates the other members, then the *choleric* temperament results. If the person is especially subject to the influence of the forces of the *astral body*, then we attribute to him a *sanguine* temperament. If the *etheric* or *life-body* acts excessively upon the other members, and especially impresses its nature upon the person, the *phlegmatic* temperament arises. And when the physical body with its laws is especially predominant in the human nature, so that the spiritual essence of being is not able to overcome a certain hardness in the *physical body*, then we have to do with a *melancholic* temperament. Just as the eternal and the transitory intermingle, so does the relation of the members to one another appear.

I have already told you how the four members express themselves outwardly in the physical body. Thus, a large part of the *physical body* is the direct expression of the *physical life principle* of man. The physical body as such comes to expression only in the physical body; hence it is the *physical body* which gives the keynote in a *melancholic*.

We must regard the *glandular system* as the physical expression of the *etheric* body. The etheric body expresses itself physically in the glandular system. Hence in a *phlegmatic* person the *glandular system* gives the keynote in the physical body.

The *nervous system* and, of course, what occurs through it we must regard as the physical expression of the *astral body*. The astral body finds its physical expression in the nervous system; therefore in a *sanguine* person the *nervous system* gives the keynote to the physical body.

The *blood* in its circulation, the force of the pulsation of the blood, is the expression of the actual *ego*. The ego expresses itself in the circulation of the blood, in the predominating activity of the blood;

it shows itself especially in the fiery vehement blood. One must try to penetrate more subtly into the connection which exists between the ego and the other members of the human being. Suppose, for example, that the ego exerts a peculiar force in the life of sensations, ideas, and the nervous system; suppose that in the case of a certain person everything arises from his ego, everything that he feels he feels strongly, because his ego is strong – we call that the choleric temperament. That which has received its character from the ego will make itself felt as the predominating quality. Hence, in a choleric the *blood system* is predominant.

The choleric temperament will show itself as active in a strongly pulsating blood; in this the element of force in the individual makes its appearance, in the fact that he has a special influence upon his blood. In such a person, in whom spiritually the ego, physically the blood, is particularly active, we see the innermost force vigorously keeping the organization fit. And as he thus confronts the outer world, the force of his ego will wish to make itself felt. That is the effect of this ego. By reason of this, the choleric appears as one who wishes to assert his ego in all circumstances. All the aggressiveness of the choleric, everything connected with his strong will-nature, may be ascribed to the circulation of the blood.

When the astral body predominates in an individual, the physical expression will lie in the functions of the nervous system, that instrument of the rising and falling waves of sensation; and that which the astral body accomplishes is the life of thoughts, of images, so that the person who is gifted with the sanguine temperament will have the predisposition to live in the surging sensations and feelings and in the images of his life of ideas.

We must understand clearly the relation of the astral body to the ego. The astral body functions between the nervous system and the blood system. So it is perfectly clear what this relation is. If only the sanguine temperament were present, if only the nervous system were active, being quite especially prominent as the expression of the astral body, then the person would have a life of shifting images and ideas; in this way a chaos of images would come and go. He would be given over to all the restless flux from sensation to sensation, from image to image, from idea to idea. Something of that sort appears if the astral body predominates, that is, in a sanguine person, who in a certain sense is given over to the tide of sensations, images, etc., since in him the astral body

and the nervous system predominate. It is the forces of the ego which prevent the images from darting about in a fantastic way. Only because these images are controlled by the ego does harmony and order enter in. Were man not to check them with his ego, they would surge up and down without any evidence of control by the individual.

In the physical body it is the blood which principally limits, so to speak, the activity of the nervous system. Man's blood circulation, the blood flowing in man, is that which lays fetters, so to speak, upon what has its expression in the nervous system; it is the restrainer of the surging feelings and sensations; it is the tamer of the nerve-life. It would lead too far if I were to show you in all its details how the nervous system and the blood are related, and how the blood is the restrainer of this life of ideas. What occurs if the tamer is not present, if a man is deficient in red blood, is anemic? Well, even if we do not go into the more minute psychological details, from the simple fact that when a person's blood becomes too thin, that is, has a deficiency of red corpuscles, he is easily given over to the unrestrained surging back and forth of all kinds of fantastic images, even to illusion and hallucination – you can still conclude from this simple fact that the blood is the restrainer of the nerve-system. A balance must exist between the ego and the astral body – or speaking physiologically, between the blood and the nervous system – so that one may not become a slave of his nervous system, that is, to the surging life of sensation and feeling.

If now the astral body has a certain excess of activity, if there is a predominance of the astral body and its expression, the nerve-system, which the blood restrains to be sure, but is not completely able to bring to a condition of absolute balance, then that peculiar condition arises in which human life easily arouses the individual's interest in a subject, but he soon drops it and quickly passes to another one; such a person cannot hold himself to an idea, and in consequence his interest can be immediately kindled in everything which meets him in the outer world, but the restraint is not applied to make it inwardly enduring; the interest which has been kindled quickly evaporates. In this quick kindling of interest and quick passing from one subject to another we see the expression of the predominating astral element, the sanguine temperament. The sanguine person cannot linger with an impression, he cannot hold fast to an image, cannot fix his attention upon one subject. He

hurries from one life impression to another, from perception to perception, from idea to idea; he shows a fickle disposition. That can be especially observed with sanguine children, and in this case it may cause one anxiety. Interest is easily aroused, a picture begins easily to have an effect, quickly makes an impression, but the impression soon vanishes again.

When there is a strong predominance in an individual of the etheric or life-body – that which inwardly regulates the processes of man's life and growth – and the expression of this etheric body – that system which brings about the feeling of inner well-being or of discomfort – then such a person will be tempted to wish just to remain in this feeling of inner comfort. The etheric body is a body which leads a sort of inner life, while the astral body expresses itself in outer interests, and the ego is the bearer of our activity and will, directed outward. If then this etheric body, which acts as life-body, and maintains the separate functions in equilibrium, an equilibrium which expresses itself in the feeling of life's general comfort – when this self-sustained inner life, which chiefly causes the sense of inner comfort, predominates, then it may occur that an individual lives chiefly in this feeling of inner comfort, that he has such a feeling of well-being, when everything in his organism is in order, that he feels little urgency to direct his inner being toward the outer world, is little inclined to develop a strong will. The more inwardly comfortable he feels, the more harmony will he create between the inner and outer. When this is the case, when it is even carried to excess, we have to do with a phlegmatic person.

In a melancholic we have seen that the physical body, that is, the densest member of the human being, rules the others. A man must be master of his physical body, as he must be master of a machine if he wishes to use it. But when this densest part rules, the person always feels that he is not master of it, that he cannot manage it. For the physical body is the instrument which he should rule completely through his higher members. But now this physical body has dominion and sets up opposition to the others. In this case the person is not able to use his instrument perfectly, so that the other principles experience repression because of it, and disharmony exists between the physical body and the other members. This is the way the hardened physical system appears when it is in excess. The person is not able to bring about flexibility where it should exist. The inner man has no power over his physical system; he feels inner obstacles. They show themselves through the fact that

the person is compelled to direct his strength upon these inner obstacles. What cannot be overcome is what causes sorrow and pain; and these make it impossible for the individual to look out upon his contemporary world in an unprejudiced way. This constraint becomes a source of inner grief, which is felt as pain and listlessness, as a sad mood. It is very easy to feel that life is filled with pain and sorrow. Certain thoughts and ideas begin to be enduring; the person becomes gloomy, melancholic. There is a constant arising of pain. This mood is caused by nothing else than that the physical body sets up opposition to the inner ease of the etheric body, to the mobility of the astral body, and to the ego's certainty of its goal.

And if we thus comprehend the nature of the temperaments through sound knowledge, many a thing in life will become clear to us; but it will also become possible to handle in a *practical* way what we otherwise could not do. Look at much which directly confronts us in life! What we see there as the mixture of the four members of human nature meets us clearly and significantly in the outer picture. We need only observe how the temperament comes to expression externally.

Let us, for instance, take the *choleric* person, who has a strong firm center in his inner being. If the ego predominates, the person will assert himself against all outer oppositions; he wants to be in evidence. This ego is the restrainer. Those pictures are consciousness-pictures. The physical body is formed according to its etheric body, the etheric body according to its astral body. This astral body would fashion man, so to speak, in the most varied way. But because growth is opposed by the ego in its blood forces, the balance is maintained between abundance and variety of growth. So when there is a surplus of ego, growth can be retarded. It positively retards the growth of the other members; it does not allow the astral body and the etheric body their full rights. In the choleric temperament you are able to recognize clearly in the outer growth, in all that confronts us outwardly, the expression of what is inwardly active, the actual deep inner force-nature of the man, of the complete ego. Choleric persons appear as a rule as if growth had been retarded. You can find in life example after example; for instance, from spiritual history the philosopher, *Johann Gottlieb Fichte*, the German choleric. Even in external appearance he is recognizable as such, since in his outer form he gave the impression of being retarded in growth. Thereby he reveals clearly that the

other members of his being have been held back by the excess of ego. Not the astral body with its forming capacity is the predominant member, but the ego rules, the restrainer, the limiter of the formative forces. Hence we see as a rule in those who are preeminently men of strong will, where the ego restrains the free formative force of the astral body, a small compact figure. Take another classical example of the choleric: *Napoleon*, the "*little General*," who remained so small because the ego held back the other members of his being. There you have the type of the retarded growth of the choleric. There you can see how this force of the ego works out of the spirit, so that the innermost being is manifest in the outer form. Observe the physiognomy of the choleric! Take in comparison the phlegmatic person! How indefinite are his features; how little reason you have to say that such a form of forehead is suited to the choleric. In one organ it is shown especially clearly whether the astral body or the ego works formatively, that is in the eye, in the steady, assured aspect of the eye of the choleric. As a rule we see how this strongly-kindled inner light, which turns everything luminously inward, sometimes is expressed in a black, a coal-black eye, because, according to a certain law, the choleric does not permit the astral body to color that very thing which his ego-force draws inward, that which is colored in another person. Observe such an individual in his whole bearing. One who is experienced can almost tell from the rear view whether a certain person is a choleric. The firm walk proclaims the choleric, so to speak. Even in the step we see the expression of strong ego-force. In the choleric child we already notice the firm tread; when he walks on the ground, he not only sets his foot on it, but he treads as if he wanted to go a little bit farther, into the ground.

The complete human individual is a copy of this innermost being, which declares itself to us in such a way. But naturally, it is not a question of my maintaining that the choleric person is short and the sanguine tall. We may compare the form of a person only with his own growth. It depends upon the relation of the growth to the entire form.

Notice the *sanguine* person! Observe what a strange glance even the sanguine child has; it quickly lights upon something, but just as quickly turns to something else; it is a merry glance; an inner joy and gaiety shine in it; in it is expressed what comes from the depths of the human nature, from the mobile astral body, which

predominates in the sanguine person. In its mobile inner life this astral body will work upon the members; and it will also make the person's external appearance as flexible as possible. Indeed, we are able to recognize the entire outer physiognomy, the permanent form and also the gestures, as the expression of the mobile, volatile, fluidic astral body. The astral body has the tendency to fashion, to form. The inner reveals itself outwardly; hence the sanguine person is slender and supple. Even in the slender form, the bony structure; we see the inner mobility of the astral body in the whole person. It comes to expression for example in the slim muscles. It is also to be seen in his external expression. Even one who is not clairvoyant can recognize from the rear whether a person is of sanguine or choleric temperament; and to be able to do this one need not be a spiritual scientist. In a sanguine person we have an elastic and springing walk. In the hopping, dancing walk of the sanguine child we see the expression of the mobile astral body. The sanguine temperament manifests itself especially strongly in childhood. See how the formative tendency is expressed there; and even more delicate attributes are to be found in the outer form. If in the choleric person we have sharply-cut facial features, in the sanguine they are mobile, expressive, changeable. And likewise there appears in the sanguine child a certain inner possibility to alter his countenance. Even to the color of the eyes we could confirm the expression of the sanguine person. The inwardness of the ego-nature, the self-sufficient inwardness of the choleric, meets us in his black eye. Look at the sanguine person in whom the ego-nature is not so deep-rooted, in whom the astral body pours forth all its mobility – there the blue eye is predominant. These blue eyes are closely connected with the individual's invisible inner light, the light of the astral body.

Thus many attributes could be pointed out which reveal the temperament in the external appearance. Through the four-membered human nature we learn to understand clearly this soul riddle of the temperaments. And indeed, a knowledge of the four temperaments, springing from a profound perception of human nature, has been handed down to us from ancient times. If we thus understand human nature, and know that the external is only the expression of the spiritual, then we learn to understand man in his relation even to the externalities, to understand him in his whole process of becoming; and we learn to recognize what we must do concerning ourself and the child with regard to temperament. In education especially notice must be taken of the kind of

temperament that tends to develop in the child. For life's wisdom, as for pedagogy, an actual living knowledge of the nature of the temperaments is indispensable, and both would profit infinitely from it.

And now let us go further. Again we see how the *phlegmatic* temperament also is brought to expression in the outer form. In this temperament there predominates the activity of the etheric body, which has its physical expression in the glandular system and its soul expression in a feeling of ease, in inner balance. If in such a person everything is not only normally in order within, but if, beyond this normality, these inner formative forces of ease are especially active, then their products are added to the human body; it becomes corpulent, it expands. In the largeness of the body, in the development of the fatty parts, we see that which the inner formative forces of the etheric body are especially working on. The inner sense of ease of the phlegmatic person meets us in all that. And who would not recognize in this lack of reciprocal action between the inner and the outer the cause of the oftentimes slovenly, dragging gait of the phlegmatic person, whose step will often not adapt itself to the ground; he does not step properly, so to speak; does not put himself in relation to things. That he has little control over the forms of his inner being you can observe in the whole man. The phlegmatic temperament confronts one in the immobile, indifferent countenance, even in the peculiarly dull, colorless appearance of the eye. While the eye of the choleric is fiery and sparkling, we can recognize in that of the phlegmatic the expression of the etheric body, focused only upon inner ease.

The *melancholic* is one who cannot completely attain mastery over the physical instrument, one to whom the physical instrument offers resistance, one who cannot cope with the use of this instrument. Look at the melancholic, how he generally has a drooping head, has not the force in himself to stiffen his neck. The bowed head shows that the inner forces which adjust the head perpendicularly are never able to unfold freely. The glance is downward, the eye sad, unlike the black gleam of the choleric eye. We see in the peculiar appearance of the eye that the physical instrument makes difficulties for him. The walk, to be sure, is measured, firm, but not like the walk of the choleric, the firm tread of the choleric; it has a certain kind of dragging firmness.

All this can be only indicated here; but the life of the human being will be much, much more understandable to us if we work in this way, if we see the spirit activating the forms in such a way that the external part of the individual can become an expression of his inner being. So you see how significantly spiritual science can contribute to the solution of this riddle; but *only if you face the whole reality, to which the spiritual also belongs, and do not stop merely with the physical reality, can this knowledge be practically applied in life.* Therefore only from spiritual science can this knowledge flow in such a way as to benefit the whole of humanity as well as the individual.

Now if we know all that, we can also learn to apply it. Particularly it must be of interest to learn how we can handle the temperaments *pedagogically* in childhood. For in education the kind of temperament must be very carefully observed; with children it is especially important to be able to guide and direct the developing temperament. But later also it is still important, for anyone in self-education. For the person who wishes to train himself it is invaluable that he observe what is expressed in his temperament.

I have pointed out to you here the fundamental types, but naturally in life they do not often appear thus pure. Each person has only the fundamental tone of a temperament, besides which he has something of the others. Napoleon, for example, had in him much of the phlegmatic temperament, although he was a choleric. If we would govern life practically, it is important to be able to allow that which expresses itself physically to work upon our soul.

How important this is we can see best of all if we consider that the temperaments can degenerate, that what may appear to us as one-sidedness can also degenerate. What would the world be without the temperaments – if people had only one temperament? The most tiresome place you could imagine! The world would be dreary without the temperaments, not only in the physical, but also in the higher sense. All variety, beauty, and all the richness of life are possible only through the temperaments. Do we not see how everything great in life can be brought about just through the one-sidedness of the temperaments, but also how these can degenerate in their one-sidedness? Are we not troubled about the child because we see that the choleric temperament can degenerate to malice, the sanguine to fickleness, the melancholic to gloom, etc.?

In the question of education in particular, and also in self-education, will not the knowledge and estimation of the temperaments be of essential value to the educator? We must not be misled into depreciating the value of the temperament because it is a one-sided characteristic. *In education the important thing is not to equalize the temperaments, to level them, but to bring them into the right track.* We must clearly understand that the temperament leads to one-sidedness, that the most radical phase of the melancholic temperament is madness; of the phlegmatic, imbecility; of the sanguine, insanity; of the choleric, all those explosions of diseased human nature which result in frenzy, and so forth. Much beautiful variety results from the temperaments, because opposites attract each other; nevertheless, the deification of the one-sidedness of temperament very easily causes harm between birth and death. In each temperament there exists a small and a great danger of degeneracy. With the *choleric* person there is the danger that in youth his ego will be determined by his irascibility, by his lack of self-control. That is the small danger. The great danger is the folly which wishes to pursue, from the impulse of his ego, some kind of individual goal. In the *sanguine* temperament the small danger is that the person will lapse into fickleness. The great danger is that the rising and falling tide of sensations may result in insanity. The small danger for the *phlegmatic* is lack of interest in the outer world; the great danger is stupidity or idiocy. The small danger in the *melancholic* is gloominess, the possibility that he may not be able to extricate himself from what rises up within him. The great danger is madness.

When we contemplate all that, we shall see that a tremendously significant task in practical life lies in the directing and guiding of the temperaments. It is important for the educator to be able to say to himself: What will you do, for example, in the case of a sanguine child? Here one must try to learn from the knowledge of the entire nature of the sanguine temperament how to proceed. If other points of view must be considered concerning the education of the child, it is also necessary that temperament, as a subject in itself, be taken into account. *But in order to guide the temperaments the principle to be observed is that we must always reckon with what is there and not with what is not there.*

We have a child of *sanguine* temperament before us, which could easily degenerate into fickleness, lack of interest in important things, and, instead, become quickly interested in other things. The sanguine child is the quickly comprehending, but also the quickly forgetting child, whose interest it is difficult to hold upon anything whatever, just because interest in one subject is quickly lost and passes over to another. This can grow into the most frightful one-sidedness, and it is possible to notice the danger if we look into the depths of human nature. In the case of such a child a material-minded person will immediately come forward with a prescription and say: If you have a sanguine child to bring up, you must bring it into reciprocal activity with other children. But a person who thinks realistically in the right sense says: If you begin with the sanguine child by working upon forces which it does not at all possess, you will accomplish nothing with it. You could exert your powers ever so seriously to develop the other members of human nature, but these simply do not predominate in this child. If a child has a sanguine temperament, we cannot help him along in development by trying to beat interests into him; we cannot pound in something different from what his sanguine temperament is. We should not ask, What does the child lack? What are we to beat into him? But we should ask, What as a rule does a sanguine child possess? And that is what we must reckon with. Then we shall say to ourselves: We do not alter these characteristics by trying to induce any sort of opposite quality in this child. With regard to these things which are rooted in the innermost nature of man we must take into consideration that we can only bend them. Thus we shall not be building upon what the child does not possess, but upon what he does possess. We shall build exactly upon that sanguine nature, upon that mobility of the astral body, and not try to beat into him what belongs to another member of human nature. With a sanguine child who has become one-sided we must just appeal to his sanguine temperament.

If we wish to have the right relation with this child, we must take special notice of something. For from the first it becomes evident to the expert that if the child is ever so sanguine, there is still something or other in which he is interested, that there is *one* interest, *one* genuine interest for each sanguine child. It will generally be easy to arouse interest in this or that subject, but it will quickly be lost again. There is one interest, however, which can be enduring even for the sanguine child. Experience shows this; only it must be discovered. And that which is found to hold a special interest must be kept in mind. And whatever it is that the child

does not pass by with fickle interest we must try to bring before him as a special fact, so that his temperament extends to something which is not a matter of indifference to him. Whatever he delights in, we must try to place in a special light; *the child must learn to use his sanguineness*. We can work in such a way that we begin first of all with the one thing that can always be found, with the forces which the child has. He will not be able to become lastingly interested in anything through punishment and remonstrance. For things, subjects, events, he will not easily show anything but a passing, changeable interest; but for one *personality*, especially suited to a sanguine child – experience will show this – there will be a permanent, continuous interest, even though the child is ever so fickle. If only we are the right personality, or if we are able to bring him into association with the right personality, the interest will appear. It is only necessary to search in the right way. Only by the indirect way of *love for one personality*, is it possible for interest to appear in the sanguine child. But if that interest, love for one person, is kindled in him, then through this love straightway a miracle happens. This love can cure a child's one-sided temperament. *More than any other temperament, the sanguine child needs love for one personality*. Everything must be done to awaken love in such a child. Love is the magic word. All education of the sanguine child must take this indirect path of attachment to a certain personality. Therefore parents and teachers must heed the fact that an enduring interest in things cannot be awakened by drumming it into the sanguine child, but they must see to it that this interest is won by the roundabout way of attachment to a personality. The child must develop this personal attachment; one must make himself lovable to the child; that is one's duty to the sanguine child. It is the responsibility of the teacher that such a child shall learn to love the personality.

We can still further build up the education upon the child's sanguine nature itself. The sanguine nature reveals itself, you know, in the inability to find any interest which is lasting. We must observe what is there. We must see that all kinds of things are brought into the environment of the child in which he has shown more than the ordinary interest. We should keep the sanguine child busy at regular intervals with such subjects as warrant a passing interest, concerning which he is permitted to be sanguine, so to speak, subjects not worthy of sustained interest. These things must be permitted to affect the sanguine nature, permitted to work upon

the child; then they must be removed so that he will desire them again, and they may again be given to him. We must cause these things to work upon the child as the objects of the ordinary world work upon the temperament. In other words, it is important to seek out for a sanguine child those objects toward which he is permitted to be sanguine.

If we thus appeal to what exists rather than to something which does not exist, we shall see – and practical experience will prove it – that as matter of fact the sanguine force, if it becomes one-sided, actually permits itself to be captured by serious subjects. That is attained as by an indirect path. It is good if the temperament is developed in the right way during childhood, but often the adult himself has to take his education in hand later in life. As long, indeed, as the temperaments are held in normal bounds, they represent that which makes life beautiful, varied, and great. How dull would life be if all people were alike with regard to temperament. But in order to equalize a one-sidedness of temperament, a man must often take his self-education in hand in later life. Here again one should not insist upon pounding into oneself, as it were, a lasting interest in any sort of thing; but he must say to himself: According to my nature I am sanguine; I will now seek subjects in life which my interest may pass over quickly, in which it is right that the interest should not be lasting, and I will just occupy myself with that in which I may with complete justification lose interest in the very next moment.

Let us suppose that a parent should fear that in his child the *choleric* temperament would express itself in a one-sided way. The same treatment cannot be prescribed as for the sanguine child; the choleric will not be able easily to acquire love for a personality. He must be reached through something else in the influence of person upon person. But in the case of the choleric child also there is an indirect way by which the development may always be guided. What will guide the education here with certainty is: *Respect and esteem for an authority*. For the choleric child one must be thoroughly worthy of esteem and respect in the highest sense of the word. Here it is not a question of making oneself loved through the personal qualities, as with the sanguine child, but the important thing is that the choleric child shall always have the belief that the teacher understands the matter in hand. The latter must show that he is well informed about the things that take place in the child's environment; he must not show a weak point. He must endeavor

never to let the choleric child notice that he might be unable to give information or advice concerning what is to be done. The teacher must see to it that he holds the firm reins of authority in his hands, and never betray the fact that he is perhaps at his wits' end. The child must always keep the belief that the teacher knows. Otherwise he has lost the game. If love for the personality is the magic word for the sanguine child, then respect and esteem for the worth of a person is the magic word for the choleric.

If we have a choleric child to train we must see to it before everything else that this child shall unfold, bring to development, his strong inner forces. It is necessary to acquaint him with what may present difficulties in the outer life. For the choleric child who threatens to degenerate into one-sidedness, it is especially necessary to introduce into the education that which is difficult to overcome, so as to call attention to the difficulties of life by producing serious obstacles for the child. Especially must such things be put in his way as will present opposition to him. Oppositions, difficulties, must be placed in the path of the choleric child. The effort must be put forth not to make life altogether easy for him. Hindrances must be created so that the choleric temperament is not repressed, but is obliged to come to expression through the very fact that certain difficulties are presented which the child must overcome. The teacher must not beat out, educate out, so to speak, a child's choleric temperament, but he must put before him just those things upon which he must use his strength, things in connection with which the choleric temperament is justified. *The choleric child must of inner necessity learn to battle with the objective world.* The teacher will therefore seek to arrange the environment in such a way that this choleric temperament can work itself out in overcoming obstacles; and it will be especially good if these obstacles pertain to little things, to trifles; if the child is made to do something on which he must expend tremendous strength, so that the choleric temperament is strongly expressed, but actually the facts are victorious, the strength employed is frittered away. In this way the child gains respect for the power of facts which oppose what is expressed in the choleric temperament.

Here again there is another indirect way in which the choleric temperament can be trained. Here it is necessary first of all to awaken reverence, the feeling of awe, to approach the child in such a way as actually to arouse such respect, by showing him that we can overcome difficulties which he himself cannot yet overcome;

reverence, esteem, particularly for what the teacher can *accomplish*, for his ability to overcome objective difficulties. That is the proper means: *Respect for the ability of the teacher is the way by which the choleric child in particular may be reached in education.*

It is also very difficult to manage the *melancholic* child. What must we do if we fear the threatened one-sidedness of the melancholic temperament of the child, since we cannot cram in what he does not possess? We must reckon with the fact that it is just repressions and resistance that he has power within himself to cling to. If we wish to turn this peculiarity of his temperament in the right direction, we must divert this force from subjective to objective activity. Here it is of very special importance that we do not build upon the possibility, let us say, of being able to talk him out of his grief and pain, or otherwise educate them out of him; for the child has the tendency to this excessive reserve because the physical instrument presents hindrances. We must particularly build upon what is there, we must cultivate what exists. With the melancholic child it will be especially necessary for the teacher to attach great importance to showing him that there is suffering in the world. If we wish to approach this child as a teacher, we must find here also the point of contact. The melancholic child is capable of suffering, of moroseness; these qualities exist in him and we cannot flog them out, but we can divert them.

For this temperament too there is one important point: *Above all we must show the melancholic child how people can suffer.* We must cause him to experience justifiable pain and suffering in external life, in order that he may come to know that there are things concerning which he can experience pain. That is the important thing. If you try to entertain him, you drive him back into his own corner. Whatever you do, you must not think you have to entertain such a child, to try to cheer him up. You should not divert him; in that way you harden the gloominess, the inner pain. If you take him where he can find pleasure, he will only become more and more shut up within himself. It is always good if you try to cure the young melancholic, not by giving him gay companionship, but by causing him to experience justifiable pain. Divert his attention from himself by showing him that sorrow exists. He must see that there are things in life which cause suffering. Although it must not be carried too far, the important point is to arouse pain in connection with external things in order to divert him.

The melancholic child is not easy to guide; but here again there is a magic means. As with the sanguine child the magic word is love for a personality, with the choleric, esteem and respect for the worth of the teacher, so *with the melancholic child the important thing is for the teachers to be personalities who in some way have been tried by life, who act and speak from a life of trial.* The child must feel that the teacher has really experienced suffering. Bring to his attention in all the manifold occurrences of life the trials of your own destiny. Most fortunate is the melancholic child who can grow up beside a person who has much to give because of his own hard experiences; in such a case soul works upon soul in the most fortunate way. If therefore at the side of the melancholic child there stands a person who, in contrast to the child's merely subjective, sorrowful tendencies, knows how to tell in a legitimate way of pain and suffering that the outer world has brought him, then such a child is aroused by this shared experience, this sympathy with justified pain. A person who can show in the tone and feeling of his narration that he has been tried by destiny, is a blessing to such a melancholic child.

Even in arranging the melancholic child's environment, so to speak, we should not leave his predispositions unconsidered. Hence, it is even advantageous if – strange as it may sound – we build up for the child actual hindrances, obstructions, so that he can experience legitimate suffering and pain with regard to certain things. It is the best education for such a child if the existing tendency to subjective suffering and grief can be diverted by being directed to outer hindrances and obstructions. Then the child, the soul of the child, will gradually take a different direction.

In self-education also we can again use this method: we must always allow the existing tendencies, the forces present in us, to work themselves out, and not artificially repress them. If the choleric temperament, for example, expresses itself so strongly in us that it is a hindrance, we must permit this existing inner force to work itself out by seeking those things upon which we can in a certain sense shatter our force, dissipate our forces, preferably upon insignificant, unimportant things. If on the other hand we are melancholic, we shall do well to seek out justifiable pain and suffering in external life, in order that we may have opportunity to work out our melancholy in the external world; then we shall set ourselves right.

Let us pass on to the *phlegmatic* temperament. With the phlegmatic child it will be very difficult for us if his education presents us with the task of conducting ourselves in an appropriate way toward him. It is difficult to gain any influence over a phlegmatic person. But there is one way in which an indirect approach may be made. Here again it would be wrong, very wrong indeed, if we insisted upon shaking up a person so inwardly at ease, if we thought we could pound in some kind of interests then and there. Again we must take account of what he has.

There is something in each case which will hold the attention of the phlegmatic person, especially the phlegmatic child. If only through wise education we build up around him what he needs, we shall be able to accomplish much. *It is necessary for the phlegmatic child to have much association with other children.* If it is good for the others also to have playmates, it is especially so for the phlegmatic. He must have playmates with the most varied interests. There is nothing to appeal to in the phlegmatic child. He will not interest himself easily in objects and events. One must therefore bring this child into association with children of like age. He can be trained through the sharing of the interests – as many as possible – of other personalities. If he is indifferent to his environment, his interest can be kindled by the effect upon him of the interests of his playmates. Only by means of that peculiar suggestive effect, only through the interests of others, is it possible to arouse his interest. An awakening of the interest of the phlegmatic child will result through the incidental experiencing of the interest of others, the sharing of the interests of his playmates, just as sympathy, sharing of the experience of another human destiny, is effective for the melancholic. Once more: *To be stimulated by the interest of others is the correct means of education for the phlegmatic.* As the sanguine child must have attachment for one personality, so must the phlegmatic child have friendship, association with as many children as possible of his own age. That is the only way the slumbering force in him can be aroused. Things as such do not affect the phlegmatic. With a subject connected with the tasks of school and home you will not be able to interest the little phlegmatic; but indirectly, by way of the interests of other souls of similar age you can bring it about. If things are reflected in this way in others, these interests are reflected in the soul of the phlegmatic child.

Then also we should particularly see to it that we surround him with things and cause events to occur near him concerning which apathy is appropriate. *One must direct the apathy to the right objects, those toward which one may rightly be phlegmatic.* In this way quite wonderful things can sometimes be accomplished in the young child. But also one's self-education may be taken in hand in the same way in later life, if it is noticed that apathy tends to express itself in a one-sided way; that is, by trying to observe people and their interests. One thing more can also be done, so long as we are still in a position to employ intelligence and reason at all: we can seek out the very subjects and events which are of the greatest indifference to us, toward which it is justifiable for us to be phlegmatic.

We have now seen again how, in the methods of education based upon spiritual science, we build upon what one has and not upon what is lacking.

So we may say that it is best for the sanguine child if he may grow up guided by a firm hand, if some one can show him externally aspects of character through which he is able to develop personal love. Love for a personality is the best remedy for the sanguine child. Not merely love, but respect and esteem for what a personality can accomplish is the best for the choleric child. A melancholic child may be considered fortunate if he can grow up beside some one who has a bitter destiny. In the corresponding contrast produced by the new insight, by the sympathy which arises for the person of authority, and in the sharing of the justifiably painful destiny, – in this consists what the melancholic needs. They develop well if they can indulge less in attachment to a personality, less in respect and esteem for the accomplishment of a personality, but can reach out in sympathy with suffering and justifiably painful destinies. The phlegmatic is reached best if we produce in him an inclination towards the interests of other personalities, if he can be stirred by the interests of others.

- The *sanguine* should be able to develop *love and attachment for one personality.*
- The *choleric* should be able to develop *esteem and respect* for the *accomplishments* of the personality.
- The *melancholic* should be able to develop a *heartfelt sympathy with another's destiny.*

- The *phlegmatic* child should be led to the *sharing* of the interests of others.

Thus do we see in these principles of education how spiritual science goes right into the practical questions of life; and when we come to speak about the intimate aspects of life, spiritual science shows just in these very things how it works in practice, shows here its eminently practical side. Infinitely much could we possess of the art of living, if we would adopt this realistic knowledge of spiritual science. *When it is a case of mastering life, we must listen for life's secrets, and these lie behind the sense perceptible.* Only real spiritual science can explain such a thing as the human temperaments, and so thoroughly fathom them that we are able to make this spiritual science serve as a benefit and actual blessing of life, whether in youth or in age.

We can also take self-education in hand here; for when it is a question of self-education, the temperaments can be particularly useful to us. We become aware with our intellect that our sanguineness is playing us all kinds of tricks, and threatens to degenerate to an unstable way of life; we hurry from subject to subject. This condition can be countered if only we go about it in the right way. The sanguine person will not, however, reach his goal by saying to himself: You have a sanguine temperament and you must break yourself of it. The intellect applied directly is often a hindrance in this realm. On the other hand, used indirectly it can accomplish much. Here the intellect is the weakest soul-force of all. In presence of the stronger soul-forces, such as the temperaments, the intellect can do very little; it can work only indirectly. If some one exhorts himself ever so often: "For once now hold fast to one thing" – then the sanguine temperament will again and again play him bad tricks. He can reckon only with a force which he *has*. Behind the intellect there must be other forces. Can a sanguine person count upon anything at all but his sanguine temperament? And in self-education too it is necessary to try to do also what the intellect can do directly. A man must reckon with his sanguineness; self-exhortations are fruitless. *The important thing is to show sanguineness in the right place.* One must try to have no interest in certain things in which he is interested. We can with the intellect provide experiences for which the brief interest of the sanguine person is justified. Let him try to place himself artificially in such situations; to put in his way as much as possible what is of no interest to him. If then we bring about such situations in ever such

small matters, concerning which a brief interest is warranted, it will call forth what is necessary. Then it will be noticed, if only one works at it long enough, that this temperament develops the force to change itself.

The *choleric* can likewise cure himself in a particular way, if we consider the matter from the point of view of spiritual science. For the choleric temperament it is good to choose such subjects, to bring about through the intellect such conditions as are not changed if we rage, conditions in which we reduce ourselves ad absurdum by our raging. When the choleric notices that his fuming inner being wishes to express itself, he must try to find as many things as possible which require little force to be overcome; he must try to bring about easily superable outer facts, and must *always try to bring his force to expression in the strongest way upon insignificant events and facts*. If he thus seeks out insignificant things which offer him no resistance, then he will bring his one-sided choleric temperament again into the right course.

If it is noticed that *melancholia* is producing one-sidedness, one must try directly to create for himself legitimate outer obstacles, and then will to examine these legitimate outer obstacles in their entire aspect, *so that what one possesses of pain and the capacity for suffering is diverted to outer objects*. The intellect can accomplish this. Thus the melancholic temperament must not pass by the pain and suffering of life, but must actually seek them, must experience sympathy, in order that his pain may be diverted to the right objects and events.

If we are *phlegmatic*, have no interests, then it is good for us to occupy ourselves as much as possible with quite uninteresting things, to surround ourselves with many sources of ennui, so that we are thoroughly bored. Then we shall completely cure ourselves of our apathy, completely break ourselves of it. The phlegmatic person therefore does well to decide with his intellect that he must take interest in a certain thing, that he must search for things which are really only worthy to be ignored. *He must seek occupations in which apathy is justified, in which he can work out his apathy*. In this way he conquers it, even when it threatens to degenerate into one-sidedness.

Thus we reckon with what is there and not with what is lacking. Those however who call themselves realists believe, for example, that the best thing for a melancholic is to produce conditions that

are opposed to his temperament. But anyone who actually thinks realistically will appeal to what is already in him.

So you see spiritual science does not divert us from reality and from actual life; but it will illuminate every step of the way to the truth; and it can also guide us everywhere in life to take reality into consideration. For those people are deluded who think they can stick to external sense appearance. We must go deeper if we wish to enter into this reality; and we shall acquire an understanding for the variety of life if we engage in such considerations.

Our sense for the practical will become more and more *individual* if we are not impelled to apply a general prescription: namely, you must not drive out fickleness with seriousness, but see what kind of characteristics the person has which are to be stimulated. If then man is life's greatest riddle, and if we have hope that this riddle will be solved for us, we must turn to this spiritual science, which alone can solve it for us. Not only is man in general a riddle to us, but each single person who confronts us in life, each new individuality, presents a new riddle, which of course we cannot fathom by considering it with the intellect. We must penetrate to the *individuality*. And here too we can allow spiritual science to work out of the innermost center of our being; we can make spiritual science the greatest impulse of life. *So long as it remains only theory, it is worthless. It must be applied in the life of the human being.* The way to this goal is possible, but it is long. It becomes illuminated for us if it leads to reality. Then we become aware that our views are transformed. Knowledge is transformed. It is prejudice to believe that knowledge must remain abstract; on the contrary, when it enters the spiritual realm it permeates our whole life's work; our entire life becomes permeated by it. Then we face life in such a way that we have discernment for the individuality, which enters even into feeling and sensation and expresses itself in these, and which possesses great reverence and esteem. Patterns are easy to recognize; and to wish to govern life according to patterns is easy; but life does not permit itself to be treated as a pattern. Only insight will suffice, insight which is transformed into a feeling one must have toward the individuality of man, toward the individuality in the whole of life. Then will our conscientious spiritual knowledge flow into our feeling, so to speak, in such a way that we shall be able to estimate correctly the riddle which confronts us in each separate human being.

How do we solve the riddle which each individual presents to us? We solve it by approaching each person in such a way that harmony results between him and us. If we thus permeate ourselves with life's wisdom, we shall be able to solve the fundamental riddle of life which is the individual man. It is not solved by setting up abstract ideas and concepts. The general human riddle can be solved in pictures; this individual riddle, however, is not to be solved by this setting up of abstract ideas and concepts; but rather must we approach each individual person in such a way that we bring to him direct understanding.

That is possible, however, only when we know what lies in the depths of the soul. Spiritual science is something which slowly and gradually pours itself into our entire soul so that it renders the soul receptive not only to the large relations but also to the finer details. In spiritual science it is a fact that, when one soul approaches another, and this other requires love, love is given. If it requires something else, that will be given. Thus by means of such true life wisdom we create social foundations, and that means at each moment to solve a riddle. *Anthroposophy works not by means of preaching, exhortation, harping on morals, but by creating a social basis on which one man is able to understand another.*

Spiritual science is thus the sub-soil of life, and love is the blossom and fruit of such a life, stimulated by spiritual science. Therefore spiritual science may claim that it is establishing something which will provide a base for the most beautiful goal of the mission of man: genuine, true, *human love*. In our sympathy, in our love, in the manner in which we approach the individual human being, in our conduct, we should learn the art of living through spiritual science. If we would permit life and love to stream into feeling and sensibility, human life would be a beautiful expression of the fruit of this spiritual science.

We learn to know the individual human being in every respect when we perceive him in the light of spiritual science. We learn to perceive even the child in this way; we learn little by little to respect, to value, in the child the peculiarity, the enigmatic quality of the individuality, and we learn also how we must treat this individual in life, because spiritual science gives to us, so to speak, not merely general, theoretical directions, but it guides us in our relation to the individual in the solving of the riddles which are there to be solved: namely, to love him as we must love him if we

not merely fathom him with the mind, but let him work upon us completely, let our spiritual scientific insight give wings to our feelings, our love. That is the only proper soil which can yield true, fruitful, genuine human love; and this is the basis from which we discover what we have to seek as the innermost essential kernel in each individual. And if we permeate ourselves thus with spiritual knowledge, our social life will be regulated in such a way that each single person, when he approaches any other in esteem and respect and understanding of the riddle "man," will learn how to find and to regulate his relation to the individual. Only one who lives in abstractions as a matter of course can speak from prosaic concepts, but he who strives for genuine knowledge will find it, and will find the way to other people; he will find the solution of the riddle of the other person in his own attitude, in his own conduct.

Thus we solve the individual riddle according as we relate ourselves to others. We find the essential being of another only with a view of life which comes from the spirit. Spiritual science must be a life-practice, a spiritual life-factor, entirely practical, entirely living, and not vague theory.

This is knowledge which can work into all the fibers of man's being, which can rule each single act in life. Thus only does spiritual science become the true art of living – and that could be particularly shown in the consideration of those intimate peculiarities of man, the temperaments. Thus the finest relation is engendered between man and man when we look a person in the face and understand not only how to fathom the riddle, but how to love, that is, to let love flow from individuality to individuality. Spiritual science needs no theoretical proofs; life brings the proofs. Spiritual science knows that something can be said "for" and "against" everything, but the true proofs are those which life brings; and only step by step can life show the truth of what we think when we consider the human being in the light of spiritual-scientific knowledge; for this truth exists as a harmonious, life-inspired insight which penetrates into the deepest mysteries of life

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is called 'The Secret of the Human Temperaments'

It has frequently been emphasized that man's greatest riddle is himself. Both natural and spiritual science ultimately try to solve this riddle – the former by understanding the natural laws that govern our outer being, the latter by seeking the essence and purpose inherent in our existence. Now as correct as it may be that man's greatest riddle is himself, it must also be emphasized that each individual human being is a riddle, often even to himself. Every one of us experiences this in encounters with other people.

Today we shall be dealing not with general riddles, but rather with those posed to us by every human being in every encounter, and these are just as important. For how endlessly varied people are! We need only consider temperament, the subject of today's lecture, in order to realize that there are as many riddles as there are people. Even within the basic types known as the temperaments, such variety exists among people that the very mystery of existence seems to express itself within these types. Temperament, that fundamental coloring of the human personality, plays a role in all manifestations of individuality that are of concern to practical life. We sense something of this basic mood whenever we encounter another human being. Thus we can only hope that spiritual science will tell us what we need to know about the temperaments.

Our first impression of the temperaments is that they are external, for although they can be said to flow from within, they manifest themselves in everything we can observe from without. However, this does not mean that the human riddle can be solved by means of natural science and observation. Only when we hear what spiritual science has to say can we come closer to understanding these peculiar colorations of the human personality.

Spiritual science tells us first of all that the human being is part of a line of heredity. He displays the characteristics he has inherited from father, mother, grandparents, and so on. These characteristics he then passes on to his progeny. The human being thus possesses certain traits by virtue of being part of a succession of generations.

However, this inheritance gives us only one side of his nature. Joined to that is the individuality he brings with him out of the spiritual world. This he adds to what his father and mother, his

ancestors, are able to give him. Something that proceeds from life to life, from existence to existence, connects itself with the generational stream. Certain characteristics we can attribute to heredity; on the other hand, as a person develops from childhood on, we can see unfolding out of the center of his being something that must be the fruit of preceding lives, something he could never have inherited from his ancestors. We come to know the law of reincarnation, of the succession of earthly lives and this is but a special case of an all-encompassing cosmic law.

An illustration will make this seem less paradoxical. Consider a lifeless mineral, say, a rock crystal. Should the crystal be destroyed, it leaves nothing of its form that could be passed on to other crystals.* A new crystal receives nothing of the old one's particular form. When we move on to the world of plants, we notice that a plant cannot develop according to the same laws as does the crystal. It can only originate from another, earlier plant. Form is here preserved and passed on.

Translator's note: The reader may conclude from this remark – for it was, after all, a remark, not a published claim – that Steiner was ignorant of the concept of seed crystals. However, a likelier explanation is that Steiner, whose audience was very likely not a scientifically knowledgeable one, was simply indulging in a bit of rhetorical hyperbole. He doubtless knew that a seed crystal will hasten the crystallization process in a saturated salt solution, but this fact is not really relevant to his point, which comes out only gradually in this paragraph. His point is not that a newly-forming crystal *cannot* receive some contribution from a previously existing one, only that it need not; this is in contrast to living things, which require a progenitor.

Moving on to the animal kingdom, we find an evolution of the species taking place. We begin to appreciate why the nineteenth century held the discovery of evolution to be its greatest achievement. In animals, not only does one being proceed from another, but each young animal during the embryo phase recapitulates the earlier phases of its species' evolutionary development. The species itself undergoes an enhancement.

In human beings not only does the species evolve, but so does the individual. What a human being acquires in a lifetime through education and experience is preserved, just as surely as are the evolutionary achievements of an animal's ancestral line. It will someday be commonplace to trace a person's inner core to a previous existence. The human being will come to be known as the

product of an earlier life. The views that stand in the way of this doctrine will be overcome, just as was the scholarly opinion of an earlier century, which held that living organisms could arise from nonliving substances. As recently as three hundred years ago, scholars believed that animals could evolve from river mud, that is, from nonliving matter. Francesco Redi, an Italian scientist, was the first to assert that living things could develop only from other living things. For this he was attacked and came close to suffering the fate of Giordano Bruno. Today, burning people at the stake is no longer fashionable. When someone attempts to teach a new truth, for example, that psycho-spiritual entities must be traced back to earlier psycho-spiritual entities, he won't exactly be burned at the stake, but he will be dismissed as a fool. But the time will come when the real foolishness will be to believe that the human being lives only once, that there is no enduring entity that unites itself with a person's inherited traits.

Now the important question arises:

How can something originating in a completely different world, that must seek a father and a mother, unite itself with physical corporeality? How can it clothe itself in the bodily features that link human beings to a hereditary chain? How does the spiritual-psychic stream, of which man forms a part through reincarnation, unite itself with the physical stream of heredity?

The answer is that a **synthesis** must be achieved. When the two streams combine, each imparts something of its own quality to the other. In much the same way that blue and yellow combine to give green, the two streams in the human being combine to yield what is commonly known as temperament. Our inner self and our inherited traits both appear in it. **Temperament stands between the things that connect a human being to an ancestral line, and those the human being brings with him out of earlier incarnations.** Temperament strikes a balance between the eternal and the ephemeral. And it does so in such a way that the essential members of the human being, which we have come to know in other contexts, enter into a very specific relationship with one another.

How it is done – the four types

Human beings as we know them in this life are beings of four members. The first, the physical body, they have in common with

the mineral world. The first super-sensible member, the etheric body, is integrated into the physical and separates from it only at death. There follows as third member the astral body, the bearer of instincts, drives, passions, desires, and of the ever-changing content of sensation and thought. Our highest member, which places us above all other earthly beings, is the bearer of the human ego, which endows us in such a curious and yet undeniable fashion with the power of self-awareness. These four members we have come to know as the essential constituents of a human being.

The way the four members combine is determined by the flowing together of the two streams upon a person's entry into the physical world. In every case, one of the four members achieves predominance over the others, and gives them its own peculiar stamp.

- Where the bearer of the I predominates, a choleric temperament results.
- Where the astral body predominates, we find a sanguine temperament.
- Where the etheric or life-body predominates, we speak of a phlegmatic temperament.
- And where the physical body predominates, we have to deal with a melancholic temperament.

The specific way in which the eternal and the ephemeral combine determines what relationship the four members will enter into with one another.

The way the four members find their expression in the physical body has also frequently been mentioned.

- The I expresses itself in the circulation of the blood. For this reason, in the choleric the predominant system is that of the blood.
- The astral body expresses itself physically in the nervous system; thus in the sanguine, the nervous system holds sway.
- The etheric body expresses itself in the glandular system; hence the phlegmatic is dominated physically by his glands.

- The physical body as such expresses itself only in itself; thus the outwardly most important feature in the melancholic is his physical body.

This can be observed in all phenomena connected with these temperaments.

[Characterization]In the **choleric**, the ego and the blood system predominate. The choleric thus comes across as someone who must always have his way. His aggressiveness, everything connected with his forcefulness of will, derives from his blood circulation.

In the nervous system and astral body, sensations and feelings constantly fluctuate. Any harmony or order results solely from the restraining influence of the ego. People who do not exercise that influence appear to have no control over their thoughts and sensations. They are totally absorbed by the sensations, pictures, and ideas that ebb and flow within them. Something like this occurs whenever the astral body predominates, as, for example, in the **sanguine**. Sanguines surrender themselves in a certain sense to the constant and varied flow of images, sensations, and ideas since in them the astral body and nervous system predominate.

The nervous system's activity is restrained only by the circulation of the blood. That this is so becomes clear when we consider what happens when a person lacks blood or is anaemic, in other words, when the blood's restraining influence is absent. Mental images fluctuate wildly, often leading to illusions and hallucinations.

A touch of this is present in sanguines. Sanguines are incapable of lingering over an impression. They cannot fix their attention on a particular image nor sustain their interest in an impression. Instead, they rush from experience to experience, from percept to percept. This is especially noticeable in sanguine children, where it can be a source of concern. The sanguine child's interest is easily kindled, a picture will easily impress, but the impression quickly vanishes.

We proceed now to the **phlegmatic** temperament. We observed that this temperament develops when the etheric or life-body, as we call it, which regulates growth and metabolism, is predominant. The result is a sense of inner well-being. The more a human being lives

in his etheric body, the more is he preoccupied with his internal processes. He lets external events run their course while his attention is directed inward.

In the **melancholic** we have seen that the physical body, the coarsest member of the human organization, becomes master over the others. As a result, the melancholic feels he is not master over his body, that he cannot bend it to his will. His physical body, which is intended to be an instrument of the higher members, is itself in control, and frustrates the others. This the melancholic experiences as pain, as a feeling of despondency. Pain continually wells up within him. This is because his physical body resists his etheric body's inner sense of well-being, his astral body's liveliness, and his ego's purposeful striving.

[External appearance]The varying combinations of the four members also manifest themselves quite clearly in external appearance. People in whom the ego predominates seek to triumph over all obstacles, to make their presence known. Accordingly their ego stunts the growth of the other members; it withholds from the astral and etheric bodies their due portion. This reveals itself outwardly in a very clear fashion.

Johann Gottlieb Fichte, that famous German choleric, was recognizable as such purely externally. [see **Note 3**] His build revealed clearly that the lower essential members had been held back in their growth. Napoleon, another classic example of the choleric, was so short because his ego had held the other members back. [see **Note 4**] Of course, one cannot generalize that all choleric are short and all sanguines tall. It is a question of proportion. What matters is the relation of size to overall form.

In the **sanguine** the nervous system and astral body predominate. The astral body's inner liveliness animates the other members, and makes the external form as mobile as possible. Whereas the choleric has sharply chiseled facial features, the sanguine's are mobile, expressive, changeable. We see the astral body's inner liveliness manifested in every outer detail, for example, in a slender form, a delicate bone structure, or lean muscles. The same thing can be observed in details of behavior.

Even a non-clairvoyant can tell from behind whether someone is a choleric or a sanguine; one does not need to be a spiritual scientist for that. If you observe the **gait** of a choleric, you will notice that

he plants each foot so solidly that he would seem to want to bore down into the ground. By contrast, the sanguine has a light, springy step. Even subtler external traits can be found. The inwardness of the ego, the choleric's self-contained inwardness, express themselves in eyes that are dark and smoldering. The sanguine, whose ego has not taken such deep root, who is filled with the liveliness of his astral body, tends by contrast to have blue eyes. Many more such distinctive traits of these temperaments could be cited.

The **phlegmatic** temperament manifests itself in a static, indifferent physiognomy, as well as in plumpness, for fat is due largely to the activity of the etheric body. In all this the phlegmatic's inner sense of comfort is expressed. His gait is loose-jointed and shambling, and his manner timid. He seems somehow to be not entirely in touch with his surroundings.

The **melancholic** is distinguished by a hanging head, as if he lacked the strength necessary to straighten his neck. His eyes are dull, not shining like the choleric's; his gait is firm, but in a leaden rather than a resolute sort of way.

Thus you see how significantly spiritual science can contribute to the solution of this riddle. Only when one seeks to encompass reality in its entirety, which includes the spiritual, can knowledge bear practical fruit. Accordingly, only spiritual science can give us knowledge that will benefit the individual and all mankind. In education, very close attention must be paid to the individual temperaments, for it is especially important to be able to guide and direct them as they develop in the child. But the temperaments are also important to our efforts to improve ourselves later in life. We do well to attend to what expresses itself through them if we wish to further our personal development.

The four fundamental types I have outlined here for you naturally never manifest themselves in such pure form. **Every human being has one basic temperament, with varying degrees of the other three mixed in.** Napoleon, for example, although a choleric, had much of the phlegmatic in him. To truly master life, it is important that we open our souls to what manifests itself as typical. When we consider that the temperaments, each of which represents a mild imbalance, can degenerate into unhealthy extremes, we realize just how important this is.

[Developmental challenges]

Yet, without the temperaments the world would be an exceedingly dull place, not only ethically, but also in a higher sense. The temperaments alone make all multiplicity, beauty, and fullness of life possible. Thus in education it would be senseless to want to homogenize or eliminate them, but an effort should be made to direct each into the proper track, for in every temperament there lie two dangers of aberration, one great, one small.

- One danger for the young choleric is that he will never learn to control his temper as he develops into maturity. That is the small danger. The greater is that he will become foolishly single-minded.
- For the sanguine the lesser danger is flightiness; the greater is mania, induced by a constant stream of sensations.
- The small danger for the phlegmatic is apathy; the greater is stupidity, dullness.
- For the melancholic, insensitivity to anything other than his own personal pain is the small danger; the greater is insanity.

In light of all this it is clear that to guide and direct the temperaments is one of life's significant tasks. If this task is to be properly carried out, however, one basic principle must be observed, which is always to reckon with what is given, and not with what is not there. For example, if a child has a sanguine temperament, he will not be helped if his elders try to flog interest into him. His temperament simply will not allow it. Instead of asking what the child lacks, in order that we might beat it into him, we must focus on what he has, and base ourselves on that. And as a rule, there is one thing we can always stimulate the sanguine child's interest in. However flighty the child might be, we can always stimulate his interest in a particular personality. If we ourselves are that personality, or if we bring the child together with someone who is, the child cannot but develop an interest. Only through the medium of love for a personality can the interest of the sanguine child be awakened. More than children of any other temperament, the sanguine needs someone to admire. Admiration is here a kind of magic word, and we must do everything we can to awaken it.

We must reckon with what we have. We should see to it that the sanguine child is exposed to a variety of things in which he has shown a deeper interest. These things should be allowed to speak to him, to have an effect upon him. They should then be withdrawn, so that the child's interest in them will intensify; then they may be restored. In other words, we must fashion the sanguine's environment so that it is in keeping with his temperament.

The choleric child is also susceptible of being led in a special way. The key to his education is respect and esteem for a natural authority. Instead of winning affection by means of personal qualities, as one does with the sanguine child, one should see to it that the child's belief in his teacher's ability remains unshaken. The teacher must demonstrate an understanding of what goes on around the child. Any showing of incompetence should be avoided. The child must persist in the belief that his teacher is competent, or all authority will be lost. The magic potion for the choleric child is respect and esteem for a person's worth, just as for the sanguine child it was love for a personality. Outwardly, the choleric child must be confronted with challenging situations. He must encounter resistance and difficulty, lest his life become too easy.

The melancholic child is not easy to lead. With him, however, a different magic formula may be applied. For the sanguine child this formula was love for a personality; for the choleric, it was respect and esteem for a teacher's worth. By contrast, the important thing for the melancholic is for his teachers to be people who have in a certain sense been tried by life, who act and speak on the basis of past trials. The child must feel that the teacher has known real pain. Let your treatment of all of life's little details be an occasion for the child to appreciate what you have suffered. Sympathy with the fates of those around him furthers the melancholic's development. Here too one must reckon with what the child has. The melancholic has a capacity for suffering, for discomfort, which is firmly rooted in his being; it cannot be disciplined out of him. However, it can be redirected. We should expose the child to legitimate external pain and suffering, so that he learns there are things other than himself that can engage his capacity for experiencing pain. This is the essential thing. We should not try to divert or amuse the melancholic, for to do so only intensifies his despondency and inner suffering; instead, he must be made to see that objective occasions

for suffering exist in life. Although we mustn't carry it too far, redirecting the child's suffering to outside objects is what is called for.

The phlegmatic child should not be allowed to grow up alone. Although naturally all children should have play-mates, for phlegmatics it is especially important that they have them. Their playmates should have the most varied interests. Phlegmatic children learn by sharing in the interests, the more numerous the better, of others. Their playmates' enthusiasms will overcome their native indifference towards the world. Whereas the important thing for the melancholic is to experience another person's fate, for the phlegmatic child it is to experience the whole range of his playmates' interests. The phlegmatic is not moved by things as such, but an interest arises when he sees things reflected in others, and these interests are then reflected in the soul of the phlegmatic child. We should bring into the phlegmatic's environment objects and events toward which "phlegm" is an appropriate reaction. Impassivity must be directed toward the right objects, objects toward which one may be phlegmatic.

From the examples of these pedagogical principles, we see how spiritual science can address practical problems. These principles can also be applied to oneself, for purposes of self-improvement. For example, a sanguine gains little by reproaching himself for his temperament. Our minds are in such questions frequently an obstacle. When pitted directly against stronger forces such as the temperaments, they can accomplish little. Indirectly, however, they can accomplish much. The sanguine, for example, can take his sanguinity into account, abandoning self-exhortation as fruitless. The important thing is to display sanguinity under the right circumstances. Experiences suited to his short attention span can be brought about through thoughtful planning. Using thought in this way, even on the smallest scale, will produce the requisite effect.

Persons of a choleric temperament should purposely put themselves in situations where rage is of no use, but rather only makes them look ridiculous. Melancholics should not close their eyes to life's pain, but rather seek it out; through compassion they redirect their suffering outward toward appropriate objects and events. If we are phlegmatics, having no particular interests, then we should occupy ourselves as much as possible with uninteresting things, surround

ourselves with numerous sources of tedium, so that we become thoroughly bored. We will then be thoroughly cured of our "phlegm;" we will have gotten it out of our system. Thus does one reckon with what one has, and not with what one does not have.

By filling ourselves with practical wisdom such as this, we learn to solve that basic riddle of life, the other person. It is solved not by postulating abstract ideas and concepts, but by means of pictures. Instead of arbitrarily theorizing, we should seek an immediate understanding of every individual human being. We can do this, however, only by knowing what lies in the depths of the soul. Slowly and gradually, spiritual science illuminates our minds, making us receptive not only to the big picture, but also to subtle details. Spiritual science makes it possible that when two souls meet and one demands love, the other offers it. If something else is demanded, that other thing is given. Through such true, living wisdom do we create the basis for society. This is what we mean when we say we must solve a riddle every moment.

Anthroposophy acts not by means of sermons, exhortations, or catechisms, but by creating a social groundwork, upon which human beings can come to know each other. Spiritual science is the ground of life, and love is the blossom and fruit of a life enhanced by it. Thus spiritual science may claim to lay the foundation for humankind's most beautiful goal – a true, genuine love for man.

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[Temperaments and elements]

Now strangely enough, **there exists in the Elementary World a mysterious relationship between the aforesaid four elements and the four temperaments,**

- between the melancholic temperament and the element of "earth",
- between the phlegmatic temperament and the element of "water",
- between the sanguine temperament and the element of "air",
and

- between the choleric temperament and the element of "fire".

This relationship is expressed in the fact that

- the choleric man has a stronger inclination to merge with beings living in the "fire" of the Elementary World than with the others;
- the sanguine man is more inclined to merge with the beings living in the element of "air";
- the phlegmatic man with the beings living in the element of "water"; and
- the melancholic man with the beings living in the element of "earth".

Thus different factors play a part in the experiences of the Elementary World. This helps us to realise that **different people may give entirely different accounts of the Elementary World, and none of them need be quite wrong if he is relating his own experiences.**

Anyone versed in these matters will know that when a man with a melancholic temperament describes the Elementary World in his own particular way, saying that there is so much that repels him, this is quite natural; for his temperament has a hidden kinship with everything earthy in the Elementary World and he overlooks all the rest.

The choleric man will speak of how fiery everything appears, for to him it all glows in the elemental fire. You need not therefore feel any surprise if there is considerable variation in accounts of the Elementary World given by people possessed of a lower form of clairvoyance, for very exact self-knowledge is necessary before it is possible to describe that world as it really is. If a man knows to what degree his temperament is choleric or melancholic, he knows why the Elementary World reveals itself in the form it does, and then this self-knowledge impels him to divert his attention from the things with which, because of his natural make-up, he has the greatest kinship.

It is now possible for him to acquire concepts of what is called in Spiritual Science, true self-knowledge. This self-knowledge presupposes that we are able as it were to slip out of ourselves and look at our own being as though it were a complete Stranger, and that is by no means easy. It is relatively easy to acquire knowledge of soul-qualities which we have made our own, but to gain clear insight into the temperaments which work right down into the bodily nature, is difficult. Most people in life always consider themselves in the right. It is a very general egoistic attitude and need not be criticised too severely, for it is a perfectly natural tendency in human beings.

How far would a man get in ordinary life if he had not this quality of firm self-confidence?

But all the qualities that belong to his temperament go to form it.

To be detached from a particular temperament is extremely difficult, and we need much self-training if we are to learn to confront ourselves objectively. Every genuine spiritual investigator will say that no particular degree of maturity is any help in penetrating into the spiritual world if a man is incapable of accepting the fundamental principle that **he can reach the truth only by ignoring his own opinion.**

He must be able to regard his own opinion as something of which he may possibly say: 'I will ask myself at what period of life I formed this or that definite opinion' – let us suppose, for example, that it had a particular political trend. Before such a man can penetrate into the higher world he must be able to put this question to himself quite objectively: 'What is it in life that has given my thought this particular trend? Would my thinking have been different if karma had assigned me to some other situation in life?'

If we can put this question to ourselves over and over again while trying to picture how our present personality has been produced, it becomes possible for us to take the first step towards emerging from the self. Otherwise we remain permanently enclosed within ourselves. But in the Macrocosm it is not as easy to be outside things as it is in the physical world. In the physical world we stand outside a rose-bush, for example, because of its natural make-up; but in the Elementary World we grow right into the things there, identify ourselves with them. If we are incapable of distinguishing ourselves from the things while we are actually within them, we can

never understand conditions in that world. Our choleric temperament, for example, becomes merged in the element of fire. And we can no longer distinguish between what is flowing from us into a being of the Elementary World or from that being into us unless we have learned how to do so. We must therefore first learn how to be within a being and yet to distinguish our own identity from it.

There is only one being who can help us here, namely, our own. If we gradually succeed in judging ourselves as in ordinary life we judge another person, then we are on the right path.

Now what is it that distinguishes a judgment about oneself from a judgment about another?

We usually think that we ourselves are in the right and that the other person, if he holds a contrary opinion, is wrong. This is what happens in the ordinary way. But there is nothing more useful than to begin to train ourselves by saying: 'I have this opinion, the other person has a different one. I will adopt the standpoint that his opinion is just as sound and valuable as my own.' – This is the kind of self-training that makes it possible for us to carry into the Elementary World the habit that enables us to distinguish ourselves from the things there, although we are within them.

Certain subtleties in our experiences are necessary if we are to ascend consciously into the higher worlds. This example too shows what justification there was for saying in the lecture yesterday that when a man ascends into the Macrocosm he always faces the danger of losing his Ego. In ordinary life the Ego is nothing but the aggregate of opinions and feelings connected with our personality and most people will find that it is exceedingly difficult to think, to feel or to will anything, once they have taken leave of what life has made of them. It is accordingly very important before attempting an ascent into the higher worlds to be acquainted with what spiritual investigation has already brought to light. It is therefore emphasised over and over again that nobody who has had experience in this domain will ever help to lead another into the higher worlds until the latter has grasped through his reason, through his ordinary, healthy faculty of judgment, that what Spiritual Science states is not nonsense. It is quite possible to form a sound judgment about the findings of spiritual investigation. Although it is not possible to investigate personally in the spiritual worlds without the vision of the seer, a healthy judgment can be

formed as to the correctness or incorrectness of what is communicated by those who are able to see. On this basis we can study life and observe whether the statements made by the spiritual investigator make it more intelligible. If they do, then they can be assumed to be correct.

Such judgments will always have one peculiarity, namely, that we shall always, by holding them, transcend ordinary human ways of thinking in a certain respect. If we speak with unprejudiced minds our ordinary sympathies and antipathies are discarded and we shall find ourselves able to be in harmony even with people who hold the most contrary opinions. In this way we transcend the ordinary way of forming human opinions. Thus in Spiritual Science we gain something which we retain even when we have relinquished our ordinary opinions and which ensures that our Ego is not immediately lost when we enter the higher world for the first time. For the Ego is not lost when it is able to be active, when it can think and feel; it is only when thinking, feeling and perception cease that we have lost our bearings altogether. Thus a certain store of spiritual-scientific knowledge protects us from losing our Ego.

The loss of the Ego on entering the spiritual world would, however, have other consequences in many cases. We come here to something that must be briefly mentioned. These consequences often show themselves in ordinary life. It is important to know about them when describing the paths that can lead into the spiritual worlds.

The spiritual investigator must not be in any sense a dreamer, a visionary. He must move with inner assurance and vigour in the spiritual world as an intelligent man does in the physical world. Any nebulosity or lack of clarity would be dangerous on entering the higher worlds. It is therefore so very essential to acquire a sound judgment about the things of normal, everyday life. At the present time especially there are factors in everyday life which could be highly obstructive on entering the spiritual world if no heed were paid to them. If we reflect about our life and about influences that have affected us from birth onwards, we shall recall many things even by a superficial retrospect, but we shall also have to admit that very much has sunk into oblivion. We shall have to admit too that we have no clear or definite consciousness of influences that had a share in forming our character and educating us.

...[Temperaments across incarnations] As human beings we pass from incarnation to incarnation. If in this present incarnation we are melancholic, we can say to ourselves that in another incarnation – either in the past or in the future – we may have had or shall have a sanguine temperament. **The one-sidedness of each temperament will be balanced in the different incarnations.** Here we have arrived at the idea that we, as beings, are after all something more than appears, that even though now we may be melancholic, we are something else as well. As the same being we may have been choleric in an earlier life and may become sanguine in a following one. Our whole being is not contained in particular temperamental traits. There is something else as well. When a clairvoyant, observing someone in the Elementary World, sees him as a melancholic, he must say to himself: that is a transitory manifestation, it is merely the manifestation of one incarnation. The person who now, as a melancholic type, represents the element of earth, will in another incarnation represent, as a sanguine type, the element of air, or, as a choleric, the element of fire. Melancholics, with their tendency to introspective brooding, repel us when viewed from the vantage-point of the Elementary World; choleric appear as if they were spreading flames of fire – as an elemental force, of course, not physical fire.

To avoid misunderstanding I must here mention that in manuals on Theosophy, the Elementary World is usually called the Astral World; what we call the World of Spirit in there called the lower sphere of Devachan-Lower Devachan. What is there called the higher sphere of Devachan – Arupa-Devachan – is here called the World of Reason.

When we pass from the World of Spirit into the World of Reason we meet with something similar to what has already been experienced if we are revealed to ourselves as beings who are mastering our temperaments and developing balance from one life to another. Thus do we approach the boundary of the World of Spirit. When we reach it we find spiritual facts and Beings expressed as if in a cosmic clock through the movements of the planets. **The Beings are expressed in the constellations of the Zodiac, the facts in the planets. But these analogies do not take us very far; we must pass on to the Beings themselves – the *Hierarchies*.**

Now we should be unable to form any conception of the still higher worlds unless with clairvoyant consciousness we were to pass on to the Beings themselves—the Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones, and so on.—In one incarnation a man may have a melancholic temperament, in another a sanguine temperament. His real being is more than either. His real being breaks through such classifications. If we are now clear in our minds that the Beings we designate as Seraphim, Cherubim, Spirits of Will, Thrones, and so forth, and who express themselves in physical space in the constellations of the Zodiac — if we are clear that these Beings are more than their names designate, then we are beginning to form a true concept of this upper boundary of the Macrocosm.

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Thus you bear in mind that the inner experience of the etheric body is different in character from the etheric body manifested outwardly to the observation of the seer. This must be borne clearly in mind. When later in esoteric development you learn to regard the mood, according to the fundamental temperaments founded in the etheric body and described in the last lecture, it will appear that with respect to the lowest part of the etheric body the feeling there is perceived to be of a choleric nature. Thus the several temperaments are to be distinguished in the various parts of our etheric bodies. The upper part of the etheric body is of a melancholy nature, the middle part alternates between phlegmatic and sanguine, and the lower has a choleric tone. And I beg you definitely to notice that this description applies to the etheric body. Not to consider this carefully, brings easily a fall into error if these matters are taken externally. But the student who takes this carefully into consideration will be greatly struck by the agreement of what has been adduced with certain phenomena of life. Let us for a moment study a choleric person — it is highly interesting so to do.

According to what has just been said, in the case of the choleric person the lower part of the etheric body would be conspicuous; it would predominate over the other parts. Thereby the person is shown to be choleric. The other parts are also developed, of course; but the lower part would be particularly prominent. Now when the lower part of the etheric body, as etheric body, is particularly

developed and has its strong forces there, something else is always evident, that is, the physical body receives short measure in these parts, it manifests a certain lack of development in the parts which underlie this portion of the etheric body. The result of this in pronounced choleric cases, those, for example, who are true to type, is that the anatomic state of certain organs which correspond to this part of the etheric body comes off badly. Please read about the anatomic condition of Napoleon, and you will be struck by the proof it presents of what I am telling you. Only when we begin to study these hidden sides of human nature shall we really learn to comprehend it.

You might now ask the question: How does what was said in the last lecture agree with what has been said to-day? It agrees perfectly. We then spoke of the four temperaments; these are predetermined by the forces of the etheric body. And, in fact, the life of the etheric body is related to time in the same way that the division into members, the differentiation, is related to space. The physical body becomes more keenly alive in space, differentiating its several members as it were; the etheric body becomes more alive, as its parts differentiate themselves in time; that is, as the time-life in its consecutive order is sympathetically experienced in its independent parts and members. The fundamental characteristic of the melancholic person is that he always carries within him something he has experienced in time, a past. He who is able to understand the etheric body of the melancholic finds that it always has within it the after-vibrations of what it experienced in bygone times. I do not now mean what was here referred to in the case of the human brain, which relates to primeval times, but to what is usually called melancholy; the etheric life of the head is particularly stirred at some definite time, in youth, let us say; and then having been thus stirred, it is so strongly influenced, that in late life the melancholic still carries with him in his etheric body the vibrations which were imprinted in his youth, while with the non-melancholic these vibrations soon cease. In the case of either a phlegmatic or sanguine person, there is a sort of floating with time; but in the phlegmatic person there is, as it were, a perfectly uniform floating with the stream of time, while the sanguine person oscillates between a quicker or slower inner experience with respect to the externally flowing stream of time. On the other hand, the choleric person resists – and that is the peculiarity – the approaching time which flows to us, as it were, from the future. The choleric person in a sense repulses time, and quickly rids himself of the vibrations

which time calls forth in his etheric body. Hence the melancholic person carries within him the greatest number of after-vibrations of past experiences, the choleric person the least. If you take the somewhat grotesque illustration of the well-inflated ball, which was compared with the etheric body of the choleric, you may also use that illustration here. The ball is only with difficulty impressed by the consecutive events; it repulses them, and therefore does not allow the events which come in the stream of time to leave strong vibrations within it. Hence the choleric does not carry them for long within him. The melancholic person who allows the events to work very deeply into his etheric body, has for a long time to bear the vibrations which he carries with him into the future from the past.

1915-01-30-GA161 ↗

The first thing, he [Brunetto Latini – see [Appendix](#)] tells us, which he now learned to know were **the forces of the soul**. Diving down into himself, man does indeed learn to know what otherwise remains unconscious in him – the forces of his soul. This recognition of his own soul-forces is a thing from which man will often flee, when he draws near to it. For when we perceive the forces of the soul, it often seems to us that we say to ourselves: 'What an unsympathetic soul that is!' We do not like this feeling, any more than the worthy professor did when he saw his own form, which was distasteful to him. We do not want to see. For with the chorus of the soul's forces we often see many a thing we have within us, which we by no means attribute to ourselves in ordinary life. We see it as something that is at work in the totality of our own being – enhancing our being, or making it smaller; making us of greater or lesser value for the Universe.

Thus, to begin with, we rise into the soul-forces.

At the next stage, we experience the four temperaments. There it becomes clear to us how we are woven together, of the choleric, melancholic, sanguine, and phlegmatic, and how this weaving together lies deeper down than the soul-forces.

Then, when we have gone through the temperaments, we come to what may be called **the five senses – in the occult sense**. For in the way man ordinarily speaks of the five senses, he only knows them

from outside. You cannot learn to know the senses inwardly till you have descended through the temperaments into the deeper regions of your own self. Then you behold the eyes, the ears, the other senses from within. You experience your own eyes, for instance, or your ears – filling them from within. You must imagine it thus. Just as you came into this hall through this door, and perceived the objects and persons that were already here, so when you undergo this descent into yourself you come into the region of your eyes or your ears. There you perceive how the forces are working from within outward, to bring about your seeing and your hearing. You perceive an altogether complicated world, of which a man who only knows the outer physical plane has no idea at all.

Some, no doubt, will say: 'Maybe, but this world of the eyes and the ears will not impress me greatly. The world of the physical plane which I have around me here is great, and the world of the eyes and ears is very small. I should be gazing into a minute world.'

That, however, is maya. What you envisage when you are within your ears or within your eyes is far greater, fuller in content, than the outer physical world. You have a far more abundant world around you there.

Then and then only, when you have gone through this region, you come **into the realm of the four elements**. We have already spoken of all the properties of the several elements; but it is only at this stage that you feel really within them – within the earthy, the watery, the airy, and the element of warmth.

This new world is the world of cosmic fluids which create the temperaments of man: choleric, sanguinic, melancholic and phlegmatic.

When we review the different temperaments – and it was an overwhelming experience for [Brunetto Latini](#) when the Goddess Natura opened his eyes to the existence and nature of the temperaments – we conclude that the life between death and rebirth has determined the nature of these various temperaments that we associated with the circulation of the fluids. If we now probe deeper, we find that karma, the arbiter of destiny, plays its part in this.





Appendix

I. Human Thinking

1917-10-08-GA177 ↗

We shall not understand how human beings really relate to their thoughts unless we first consider the true nature of the world of thought.

[the elemental world - made up of thought substance, see elementals ↗]

In reality we are always, wherever we are — whether sitting, standing or lying down — not only in the world of air and light and so on, but also in a world of surging thoughts. You will find it easiest to get an idea of this if you look at it like this: When you walk on earth as an ordinary physical human being you are also a breathing human being, walking in a space filled with air. And in more or less the same way you move in a space filled with thoughts. **Thought-substance fills the space around you.** It is not a vague ocean of thoughts, nor the kind of nebulous ether people sometimes like to imagine. No, **this thought-substance is actually what we call the elemental world.** When we speak of **entities which are part of the elemental world in the widest sense of the word, they consist of thought-substance, actual thought-substance.**

There is, however, a difference between

- the thoughts flitting around out there, which really are living entities,
- and the thoughts we have in our minds. ...

... [reference to book where RS covers this difference] ...

[thoughts in Man <-> elemental world or thought space]

If there is such an elemental principle out there in thought-space and if I, too, have thoughts in my head — what is the relationship between the two?

To get the right idea of how your own thoughts relate to the thought-entities out there you have to visualize the difference between a human corpse which has been left behind when someone has died and a living person who is walking about. The kind of thoughts you have to consider in this respect are the kind you gain from the world you perceive with the senses when in waking consciousness.

- **Our own thoughts are actually thought-corpse.** **This is the essential point.** The thoughts coming from the world we perceive with the senses and drag around with us when in waking consciousness are thought-corpse — thoughts that have been killed.
- **Outside us they are alive, which is the difference.**

We are part of the elemental world of thought in so far as we kill its living thoughts when we develop ideas on the basis of what our senses have perceived in the world around us.

Our thinking consists in having those corpses of thoughts inside us, and this makes our thoughts abstract. We have abstract thoughts because we kill living thoughts. It is really true that **in our state of [waking] consciousness we walk around bearing thought corpses which we call our thoughts and ideas. This is the reality.**

The rest of the human being — let us call it 'b' and to begin with let us simply consider it to be this elemental, airy principle — is a manifestation of the higher hierarchies, from the Spirits of Form (SoF) downwards.

[intermediate paragraph with examples]

The living thoughts in the outside world are certainly not unrelated to us; there is a living relationship.

I can demonstrate this to you, but do not be frightened by the grotesque nature of this unaccustomed idea. Imagine you are lying in bed and it is morning. You can get up in two different

ways. Ordinarily, you are not aware of the difference between them because you are not in the habit of making the distinction, and anyway you do not pay attention to this particular moment of getting up. Nevertheless,

- you can get up out of habit, without thinking about it,
- or you can actually produce the thought: I am now going to get up.

There are people, however, who get themselves up out of sheer habit, and yet there is just a touch of the idea: I am going to get up now. To repeat, many people do not make the distinction, but it can be made in the abstract, and **the difference is enormous.**

- If you get up without giving it a thought, out of sheer habit and training, you are following impulses given by the Spirits of Form when they created human beings as dwellers on earth at the beginning of earth evolution. So you see, if you switch off your own thinking and always get up like a machine, you are not getting up without thought having gone into it, but it is not your own thought. The form of movement involved in getting up involves thoughts — objective, not subjective, inner thoughts; these are not your thoughts but those of the Spirits of Form.
- If you were a terribly lazy person who really did not want to get up at all, if it really was not in your nature to get up and you would only get up on reflection, against your nature, out of purely subjective thought, you'd be following ahrimanic tendencies; you would be following only your head, and therefore Ahriman. As I said, the distinction is not made in ordinary life.

And everything else we do is really done in the same way as our getting up.

[Head and the rest - original intent before Luciferic infection]

Human beings truly are made up of two entities which can be outwardly distinguished as the head and the rest of the body.

The human head is an extraordinarily significant instrument and much older than the rest of the body. The construction of the human head is such — I spoke about this last year [oa 1916-10-21-GA171] — that the basic shape arose during Old Moon evolution, though the head has, in fact, come down through Old Saturn, Old Sun and Old Moon evolution. Humans would look quite different if they still had the shape they had during Old Moon evolution.

In very general terms we might say **people would look like spectres, with only the form of the head emerging somewhat more clearly, which was the original intent. The rest of the body was not meant to be as visible as it is now.** These things have to be considered, otherwise we cannot really understand human evolution on Earth.

The rest of the body was meant to be purely elemental by nature. In the head, everything would come into effect which has come down as Old Moon existence transformed by earth; let us call it 'a'. But this inherited Old Moon existence transformed by earth is the actual human being, for the human being is really a head with only a very insignificant attachment.

[Man as made up of the hierarchies, SoF downwards]

The rest of the human being — let us call it 'b' and to begin with let us simply consider it to be this elemental, airy principle — is a manifestation of the higher hierarchies, from the Spirits of Form downwards.

The right and only way of seeing the human being is to realize that everything shown here as 'b' has been created by the cosmic hierarchies. The human being which has evolved from the Old Saturn stage emerged against the background of the cosmic hierarchies. If you visualize the essential nature of the parts of the human being which are not head — you must think of it as all spirit, or at least all air — then you have the body of cosmic hierarchies (drawing on the board).

However, luciferic seduction entered into the whole process of evolution. The outcome was that this whole, more elemental, body condensed to become the rest of the human body, which of course also had an effect on the head. This will give you an idea of the true nature of the human being.

[Condensation of physical matter - see [cleansed phantom](#)↗]

Apart from the head, which is their own, having come from earlier evolution, human beings would be an outward manifestation of the SoF if their bodies had not become sensuous flesh. It is entirely due to the temptations of Lucifer that this outward manifestation of the SoF has condensed to become flesh.

Something very strange has arisen as a result, an important secret to which I have referred a number of times.

What has happened is that the human being has become the image of the gods in the very organs which are normally called the organs of his lower nature. This image of the gods has been debased in human beings as they are on earth.

The highest principle in human beings, the spiritual principle coming from the cosmos, has become their lower nature.

Please, do not forget that this is an important secret of human nature.

Our lower nature, which is due to Lucifer's influence, was actually destined to be our higher nature. This is the contradictory element in human nature. Rightly understood, it will solve countless riddles in the world and in life.

We are thus able to say: In the course of human evolution man has, thanks to the luciferic element, made the part of him that should be constantly emerging from the cosmos into his lower nature.

[understanding ancient symbols]

Many historical phenomena will find their explanation if you consider that this was known to the leaders of the ancient Mysteries, people who were not as facetious, cynical and narrow-minded as people are today. **Certain symbols** taken from the lower nature and used in the past, symbols that **today are merely seen as sexual symbols**, are explained by the fact that the priests who used them **in the ancient Mysteries** did so in order to **give expression to the higher reality of the lower nature of man.**

You can see how sensitive we have to be in dealing with these things if we are not to be facetious. Modern people slip easily into facetiousness, because they cannot even imagine that there is more to human beings than mere sensuality — which, in fact, is the luciferic element in our higher nature. Thus historical symbols are easily given entirely the wrong interpretation. It takes some nobility of spirit not to interpret the old symbols in a lower sense, even though they often can be interpreted in that way.

[real living thoughts vs today's 'dead' head thinking]

With this, you will also begin to realize that if thoughts from the elemental world come to us — they are **living thoughts, not abstract, dead ones that come from the head — they must be coming out of the whole human being.** Mere reflection will not achieve this.

Today the idea is that we only arrive at our thoughts by reflection. Today the idea is: If human beings will just reflect, they can think about anything, providing the things they want to think about are accessible. This is nonsense, however.

The truth is that the human race is in a process of evolution, and the thoughts developed by Copernicus, for example, or Galileo, at a particular time could not be reached by mere reflection before that time.

You see, people fabricate the thoughts they have in their heads. But **when a thought which marks a real change arises in world history, this thought is given by the gods and through the whole human being. It flows through the human being, overcoming the luciferic element, and only reaches the head out of the whole human being.**

[in perspective]

I think this is something you can understand. In certain ages, particular thoughts just have to be waited for and expected; then human beings are not merely reflecting, nor is something conveyed through their eyes or ears, but inspiration comes from the world of the hierarchies and it comes through the whole essential human being, which is the image of the hierarchies.

If you consider this, some of the things I said yesterday can also tell you great deal. In the present fifth post-Atlantean age, we are living much more inwardly than before — in ancient Greek times, for example, when the outer environment provided much more that was spiritual. This inwardness of life relates to the process in which thoughts come up through the whole human being. In earlier times, in the fourth post-Atlantean age, the relationship between human beings and the gods was much more of an exterior thing; today it has become much more intimate. Human beings are always associating with the gods; **their heads do not normally know anything about this, however, because they only hold human thoughts, or rather the corpses of thoughts.**

Below is an example of a schema that provides a synthesis to two major points from an important didactic lecture.

The first point (right, and left text boxes) is about the twofold nature of the human being as a result of the luciferic infection in the Lemurian epoch.

The second point (upper and lower text boxes in grey) is about the true nature of thinking: 'dead' thinking whereby our head takes in and processes living astral elementals, versus 'living' thinking whereby these thoughts are coming through the spiritual world and spiritual hierarchies, flowing through the lower part of the body and filled with feeling and willing.

In reality, wherever we are, we are always not only in the world of air and light but also in a world of surging thoughts .. When you walk on earth you are a breathing human being, walking in a space filled with air. In more or less the same way you move in a space filled with thoughts.

Thought-substance fills the space around you .. this thought-substance is what we call the elemental world. When we speak of entities which are part of the elemental world in the widest sense of the word, they consist of actual thought-substance.

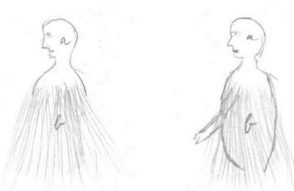
Please, do not forget that this is an important secret of human nature. Slightly understood ... this contradictory element in human nature ... will solve countless riddles in the world and in life.

In the course of human evolution Man has, due to the luciferic element, made the part of him that should be constantly emerging from the cosmos, into his lower nature.

... the human being has become the image of the gods in the very organs which are normally called the organs of his lower nature.

The highest principle in human beings, the spiritual principle coming from the cosmos, has become their lower nature.

Our lower nature, which is due to Lucifer's influence, was actually destined to be our higher nature.



There is a major difference between:

- the thoughts around us are living, they are really living entities
- the thoughts we have in our minds, our own thoughts are actually thought-corpses. The thoughts coming from the world we perceive with the senses and drag around with us when in waking consciousness are thought-corpses — thoughts that have been killed. We are part of the elemental world of thought and kill its living thoughts when we develop ideas on the basis of what our senses have perceived in the world around us.

Our thinking consists in having those corpses of thoughts inside us, and this makes our thoughts abstract ... in our state of [waking] consciousness we walk around bearing thought corpses which we call our thoughts and ideas. This is the reality.

[real living thoughts vs today's 'dead' head thinking]

thoughts from the elemental world come to us: they are living thoughts (not abstract, dead ones that come from the head): **they must be coming out of the whole human being.**

Thoughts that make a change arise in world history are given by the gods and **flow through the whole human being**, overcoming the luciferic element, and only **reaches the head out of the whole human being.**

Human beings truly are made up of two entities which can be outwardly distinguished as the head and the rest of the body.

The human head is ... much older than the rest of the body ... the basic shape arose during Old Moon evolution, though the head has, in fact, come down through Old Saturn, Old Sun and Old Moon evolution. Humans would look quite different if they still had the shape they had during Moon evolution.

[without Luciferic infection]

... people would look like spectres, with only the form of the head emerging somewhat more clearly ... which was the original intent. The rest of the body was not meant to be as visible as it is now. The rest of the body was meant to be purely elemental by nature.

In the head, everything would come into effect which has come down as Old Moon existence transformed by Earth; let us call it 'a'. This inherited Old Moon existence transformed by Earth is the actual human being, for the human being is really a head with only a very insignificant attachment.

[Man as made up of the hierarchies]

The rest of the human being — let us call it 'b' (and to begin with let us simply consider it to be this elemental, airy principle) is a manifestation of the higher hierarchies, from the Spirits of Form (SoF) downwards. Everything shown here as 'b' has been created by the hierarchies. If you visualize the essential nature of the parts of the human being which are not head - think of it as all spirit, or at least all air - then you have the body of cosmic hierarchies.

[Impact of Luciferic infection]

However, luciferic seduction entered into the whole process of evolution: the outcome was that this elemental body condensed to become the rest of the human body, which also had an effect on the head.

Apart from the head, which is its own (having come from earlier evolution), human beings would be an outward manifestation of the SoF ... if their bodies had not become sensuous flesh. This entirely due to the temptations of Lucifer that this outward manifestation of the SoF has condensed to become flesh.

1917-10-06-GA177

1920-12-19-GA202 ✓

This lecture is important because it develops the poles of Thinking and Willing to come to Freedom and Love.

Man stands in the world as thinking, contemplative being on the one hand, and as a doer, a being of action, on the other; with his feelings he lives within both these spheres. With his feeling he responds, on the one side, to what is presented to his observation; on the other side, feeling enters into his actions, his deeds. We need only consider how a man may be satisfied or dissatisfied with the success or lack of success of our deeds, how in truth all action is accompanied by impulses of feeling, and we shall see that feeling links the two poles of our being: the pole of thinking and the pole of deed, of action. Only through the fact that we are thinking beings are we *Man* in the truest sense. Consider too, how everything that gives us the consciousness of our essential manhood is connected with the fact that we can inwardly picture the world around us; we live in this world and can contemplate it. To imagine that we cannot contemplate the world would entail forfeiting our essential manhood. As doers, as men of action, we have our place in social life and fundamentally speaking, everything we accomplish between birth and death has a certain significance in this social life.

In so far as we are contemplative beings, *thought* operates in us; in so far as we are doers, that is to say, social beings, *will* operates in us. It is not the case in human nature, nor is it ever so, that things can simply be thought of intellectually side by side with one another; the truth is that whatever is an active factor in life can be characterized from one aspect or another; the forces of the world interpenetrate, flow into each other. Mentally, we can picture ourselves as beings of thought, also as beings of will. But even when we are entirely engrossed in contemplation, when the outer world is completely stilled, the will is continually active. And again, when we are performing deeds, thought is active in us. It is inconceivable that anything should proceed from us in the way of actions or deeds — which may also take effect in the realm of social life — without our identifying ourselves in thought with what thus takes place. In everything that is of the nature of will, the element of thought is contained; and in everything that is of the nature of thought, will is present. It is essential to be quite clear about what is involved here if we seriously want to build the bridge between the moral-spiritual world-order and natural-physical world-order.

Imagine that you are living for a time purely in reflection as usually understood, that you are engaging in no kind of outward activity at all, but are wholly engrossed in thought. You must realize, however, that in this life of thought, *will* is also active; will is then at work in your inner being, raying out its forces into the realm of thought. When we picture the thinking human being in this way, when we realize that the will is radiating all the time into his thoughts, something will certainly strike us concerning life and its realities. If we review all the thoughts we have formulated, we shall find in every case that they are linked with something in our environment, something that we ourselves have experienced. Between birth and death we have, in a certain respect, no thoughts other than those brought to us by life. If our life has been rich in experiences we have a rich thought-content; if our life experiences have been meagre, we have a meagre thought-content. The thought-content represents our inner destiny — to a certain extent. But within this life of thought there is something that is inherently our own; what is inherently our own is *how* we connect thoughts with one another and dissociate them again, *how* we elaborate them inwardly, *how* we arrive at judgments and

draw conclusions, *how* we orientate ourselves in the life of thought — all this is inherently our own. The will in our life of thought is our own.



II. The Phantom

The **phantom** is the invisible form body of the physical bodily principle, a purely spiritual structure with no mineral matter as content.

The phantom was created by the various contributing spiritual hierarchies starting from [Old Saturn](#) - see also [Zodiac man](#) - and evolved and adapted throughout with the incorporation of the different bodily principles in the following planetary stages.

Polluted or corrupted phantom by the Luciferic infection

With the 'fall into matter' in the [Lemurian epoch](#), the luciferic infection of certain formative forces into the astral body caused external mineral matter to be attracted, thus penetrating the phantom and Man's invisible physical structure, and causing the balance between the bodily principles. One consequence was the appearance of the mineral-physical death process, the final step of a slow but continuous falling apart process of Man throughout life. The [luciferic influence](#) affected or 'infected' the phantom and form of Man.

Hence, physical-mineral Man as we perceive him with our senses on the physical plane consists of mineral matter woven into or filled into the phantom or invisible physical form body, worked by the etheric formative forces.

Preventive action: the Nathan soul or 'Adam sister soul'

The guiding powers who had foreseen this had catered for this, and to prevent that the entire etheric body would be infected by Luciferic influences, they separated part of the etheric body of Adam and kept it

back in the spiritual world. This etheric body is the pure soul or clean higher self (see [Man's higher triad](#)↗) with which we are again to be united.

The Christ Impulse - MoG and resurrection

The 'Nathan soul' is the first Adam's 'sister-soul' and part of primordial man Adam Kadmon, un-affected by 'the Fall', that incarnated in the Nathan-Jesus child and later merged with the Zarathustra-Jesus child to provide the lower bodies in which the Christ being would incarnate. See more on [The two Jesus children](#)↗.

"Through the fact that this etheric body of Adam for the first time was united with a physical human body, it became subject to the law that every spiritual thing that descends into matter is subject to: the law of duplication. As a seed is laid in the Earth that brings forth ears with many seeds, so too the body of Jesus was the womb of the Earth for the etheric body of Adam, the transit point for duplication, and these reproduced etheric bodies are waiting for us." (1909-12-07-GA266A)

See also: [Christ Module 8 - Resurrection](#)↗

Future process for humanity

In a "mystical Christological process" analogous to the multiplication of cells (1911-10-11-GA131), the human beings that give (and will give) rise to their **cleansed phantom or resurrection body**, are connected to the first pure phantom of the Christ.

The Christ becomes like a "group soul for humanity" (1911-09-21-GA130), unifying these souls at the end of the Earth planetary stage and at the transition to Future Jupiter.

See also [Second Adam](#)↗ and [Unification](#)↗.

This means that through the process of [initiation](#)↗, each human being can purify astral, etheric and physical bodies and reach the state described above. This process will take a long time for humanity, and not all will reach this stage in the current cycles, but an important segment will in the next [Sixth epoch](#)↗.



III. The Forces of Eros and Demeter in the Ether Body

If we look back to the original sources of European artistic and spiritual life, we find there two figures, figures which have a deep significance for a truly theosophical grasp of the whole of modern spiritual life — two figures which stand out as symbolical presentations of great spiritual impulses. To those who can look below the surface of the spiritual life of today these figures appear like two beams of prophetic light: they are Persephone and Iphigenia. With these two names we are in a way touching upon what are really two souls in modern man, two souls whose union is only achieved through the severest ordeals. In the course of the next few days we shall see more clearly how Persephone arouses in our hearts the thought of an impulse to which we have often alluded in our spiritual-scientific studies. Once upon a time it was given to mankind to acquire knowledge in a way different from that of today. From earlier lectures we know of an ancient clairvoyance which in primeval times welled forth in human nature, so that clairvoyant pictures took shape in men's souls, as inevitably as hunger and thirst and the need for air arise in their bodies — pictures filled with the secrets of the spiritual worlds. This was the primeval gift of seership which man once possessed, and of which he was so to say bereft by the gradual birth in him of knowledge in its later form. The ancient Greek partly felt that in his own time the rape of ancient clairvoyance by modern knowledge was already taking place and partly foresaw that this would happen more and more in the future — a future which has become our own present. He thus turned his gaze upwards to that divine figure who released in the human soul directly out of elemental Nature the forces which led to that ancient clairvoyance. He looked up to that goddess called Persephone, who was the regent of this old clairvoyance bound up with human nature. And then this ancient Greek said to himself: 'In place of this ancient clairvoyance another culture will become more and

more widespread, a civilisation directed by men themselves and born of them, born of men to whom the ancient clairvoyance is already lost.'

In the civilisation which the ancient Greek associated with the names of Agamemnon, Odysseus, Menelaus, we find the external civilisation which we know today, untouched by forces of clairvoyance. It is a civilisation whose knowledge of nature and her laws is assumed to be as useful for finding a philosophical basis for the secrets of existence as it is for making armaments. But men no longer feel that this kind of mental culture requires a sacrifice — they no longer feel that in order to achieve it they must offer sacrifice in a deeper sense to the higher spiritual Beings who direct the super-sensible worlds. These sacrifices are in fact being made, but men are as yet too inattentive to notice them. The ancient Greek did notice that this external culture which he traced back to Agamemnon, Menelaus, Odysseus, involved sacrifice; it is the daughter of the human spirit who in a certain way has to be sacrificed ever anew. And he represented this perpetual sacrifice demanded by intellectual culture as the sacrifice of Iphigenia, daughter of Agamemnon. Thus to the question raised by the sacrifice of Iphigenia there resounds a wonderful answer! If nothing but that external culture which can be traced back, as the ancient Greek understood it, to Agamemnon, Menelaus, Odysseus, were given to mankind, then under its influence men's hearts, the deepest forces of souls, would have withered away. It is only because mankind retained the feeling that it should make perpetual sacrifice and should single out, set apart from this general intellectual culture, rites which, not superficially, but in a more profound sense, may be called sacerdotal — it is only because of this that this intellectual civilisation has been saved from drying up completely. Just as Iphigenia was offered to Artemis as a sacrifice, but through her sacrifice became a priestess, so in the course of bygone millennia certain elements of our intellectual civilisation have had repeatedly to be cleansed and purified and given a sacerdotal-religious character in sacrifice to the higher gods, so that they should not cause the hearts and souls of men to wither up. Just as Persephone stands for the leader of the ancient clairvoyant culture, so Iphigenia represents the perpetual sacrifice which our intellectuality has to make to the deeper religious life.

These two factors have already been alive in European cultural life from the time of ancient Greece right up to the present time — from the time when Socrates first wrested scientific thinking from the old unified culture, right up to the time when poor Nietzsche, in travail of his soul, had recourse to the separation of the three branches of culture — science, art and religion — and lost his balance as a result. Because forces are already working towards the reunification of what for millenia has had to be separated, because the future already lights up the present with its challenge, the present age, through its representatives — men inspired by the Spirits of the Age — has had to realise anew the two impulses just characterised, and to connect them with the names of Persephone and Iphigenia. And if one realises this, it brings home to one the significance of Goethe's action in immersing himself in the life of ancient Greece and expressing in the symbol of Iphigenia what he himself felt to be the culmination of his art. When he wrote his *Iphigenia*, which in a way brings to symbolic expression the whole of his work, Goethe made his first contact with the spiritual riches of European antiquity. Out of that deed of Goethe's there resounds to us today the secret thought: 'If Europe is not to be blighted by her intellectuality we must remember the perpetual sacrifice which intellectual culture has to make to religious culture.' The whole compass of intellectual civilisation furnishes for the higher spiritual life an atmosphere as harsh as King Thoas in *Iphigenia*. But in the figure of Iphigenia herself we meet gentleness and harmony, which do not hate with those that hate but love with those who love. Thus when Goethe was inspired in presenting his *Iphigenia* to Europe to testify to the perpetual sacrifice of intellectuality it was a first reminder of all-important impulses for the spiritual life of Europe. We may indeed feel that his soul was enlightened by the spiritual inspirers of modern times.

A second reminder was needed, for which we have had to wait a little longer — one which points to an age when the old clairvoyant culture was still alive, the culture associated with the name of Persephone. In that chapter of *Les Grands Initiés* which rises to a certain climax in the description of the Mystery of Eleusis, one again feels inspirers of European spiritual life working to conjure up out of the glimmering darkness of the age a growing recognition that the old clairvoyant culture represented by Persephone must light up again. One pole of modern European spiritual life was given in the revival of the ancient *Iphigenia*-

figure; the other pole comes with the recreation of the Mystery of Eleusis by Edouard Schuré. And we must regard it as one of the most fortunate of the stars that rule our efforts, that this performance of The Mystery of Eleusis is allowed to shed its light upon our anthroposophical life in the presence of its recreator, who has now for several years rejoiced us by his presence.

What I have just said is only partly a matter of feeling. From another aspect it is a thought springing from the most sober and objective conviction. If I have expressed this conviction today, it is because I agree with Goethe that 'only what proves fruitful is true' — a pearl of wisdom for our whole pursuit of knowledge. If there is any sign of fruitfulness in what we have been doing for years past, we may acknowledge that the thinking which has inspired our work for many years, the thinking which has always been present with us as a hidden guest, as a comrade in arms, has shown itself to be true by its fruitfulness. In the next few days, when we come to talk about 'Wonders of Nature, Ordeals of the Soul and Revelations of the Spirit' we shall have much to say in illustration of our theme which will have a bearing upon what I have just said about Iphigenia and Persephone. Here let me preface that as Iphigenia is the daughter of Agamemnon — one of those Heroes to whom the ancient Greek traced the cult of its intellectuality in its widest sense, with the practical and aggressive forms it takes — so Persephone is the daughter of Demeter. Now we shall see that Demeter is the ruler of the greatest wonders of Nature, she is an archetypal form which points to a time when the life of the human brain was not yet cut off from the general bodily life, a time when nutrition by external foodstuffs and thinking through the instrument of the brain were not separate functions. When the crops were thriving in the fields it was still felt at that time that thinking was alive there, that hope was outpoured over the fields and penetrated the activity of Nature's wonder like the song of the lark. It was still felt that along with material substance spiritual life is absorbed into the human body, becomes purified, becomes spirit — as the archetypal mother, out of whom what is born elementally becomes Persephone in the human being himself. The name of Demeter points us back to those far distant times when human nature was so unified that all bodily life was at the same time spiritual, that all bodily assimilation went hand in hand with spiritual assimilation, assimilation of thought. Today we can only learn what things were like then from the Akashic record. It is from the Akashic record that we learn that

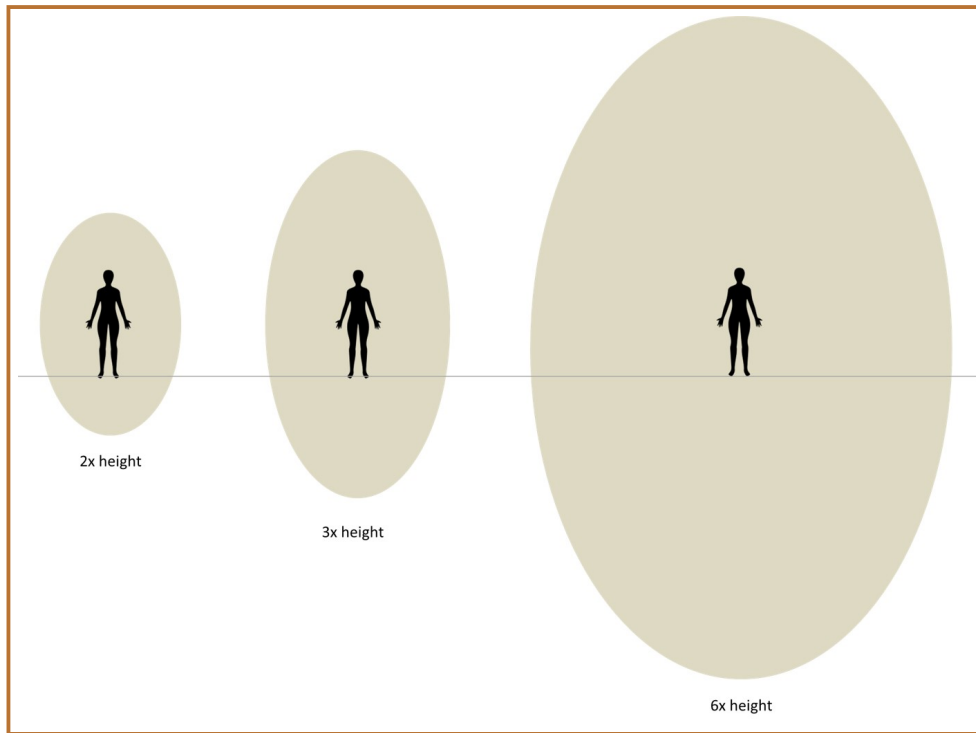
Persephone is the true daughter of Demeter. It is there too that we learn that Eros, another figure who appears in the reconstruction of the Mystery of Eleusis, represents the means whereby, according to Greek sentiment, the forces of Demeter in the course of human development have become what they are today. When Demeter stands before us on the stage, with the stern admonition of a primeval force, for ever and as if by enchantment permeating all human feeling, the whole marvel of human nature is immediately conjured up before our souls. Something stands before us there in Demeter which speaks throughout all ages of time as an impulse of human nature. When Demeter is on the stage we feel it streaming towards us. She is the mightiest representative of 'chastity' — as today we abstractly call it — that archetypal force with all its fruitful efficacy when it is not mere asceticism, but embraces humanity's archetypal love. On the other hand what speaks to us in the figure of Eros? It is budding, innocent love. Eros is its ruler ... that is what the Greeks felt.

Now the drama unfolds. What are the forces which are at work with supporting life-giving power throughout the whole drama from beginning to end? Chastity, which is at the same time archetypal love in all its fruitfulness, in its interplay with budding, innocent love. This is what holds sway in the drama, just as positive and negative electricity hold sway in the everyday wonders of Nature. Thus throughout the space into which this pregnant archetypal drama is poured, there may be more or less consciously sensed something of the forces which have been at work since the beginning of time and which still permeate our modern life; though those archetypal currents, the Demeter current and the Eros current, will in the future become more and more absorbed in a way by the tendencies represented in the three figures Luna, Astrid and Philia. This will be further elucidated in the next few days. We shall be shown a living relationship between the currents which are those of man's origin — Demeter and Eros with Persephone between them—and on the other hand something which dawns in us today in a form as yet impersonal; it is like a spiritual conscience which as yet calls to us from the unknown and does not venture upon the stage; it is only a voice from without. I am speaking of the three figures Luna, Astrid, Philia, the true daughters of Persephone.

Source: 1911-08-18-GA129 ↗



IV. The Human Aura



The above is intended to imaginatively depict the size of the 'auric egg', normally two to three times, but - in the case for initiates - can become as large a 6 times (or more) the height of the physical body.

The **human physical body** - that we observe and feel with our senses and **waking consciousness** - is surrounded by a threefold aura that can be observed by **clairvoyant or supersensory perception**, and which shows the expression, in many coloured forms, of:

- the different **Human temperaments** and dispositions of people
- the stages of spiritual development
- all varying moods, inclinations, joys and pains.

The aura has the form of a so-called 'auric egg' and is sized 2 to 3 (upto 6) times the height, and 4 times the width of the physical body.

The three members, body, soul and spirit, come to expression in the aura:

- The first aura is a mirror of the influence the body exercises on the human soul;
- the second characterizes the life of the soul itself, the soul that has raised itself above the direct influence of the senses, but is not yet devoted to the service of the eternal;
- the third mirrors the eternal spirit, see causal body and [Man's higher triad](#) ✓



V. Evolutionary Cycles: An Introduction

Our Current Stage in Evolution



Humanity is currently in the Fifth Cultural Age of the Fifth Post-Atlantean Epoch, of the Fourth Incarnation/Stage of the Earth's evolution.

[Evolution](#) ✓ is an essential foundation for an understanding of Spiritual Science, but it is also a vast and complex theme to study. Such evolution should not be confused with Darwinism.

Man developed in the various stages of evolution by 'pushing down' and living by the grace of building on and using the other kingdoms of nature. Man rises in his development thanks to the lower kingdoms. Man therefore owes these lower kingdoms his development, and will redeem the kingdoms in his ascent during the future cycles and planetary stages.

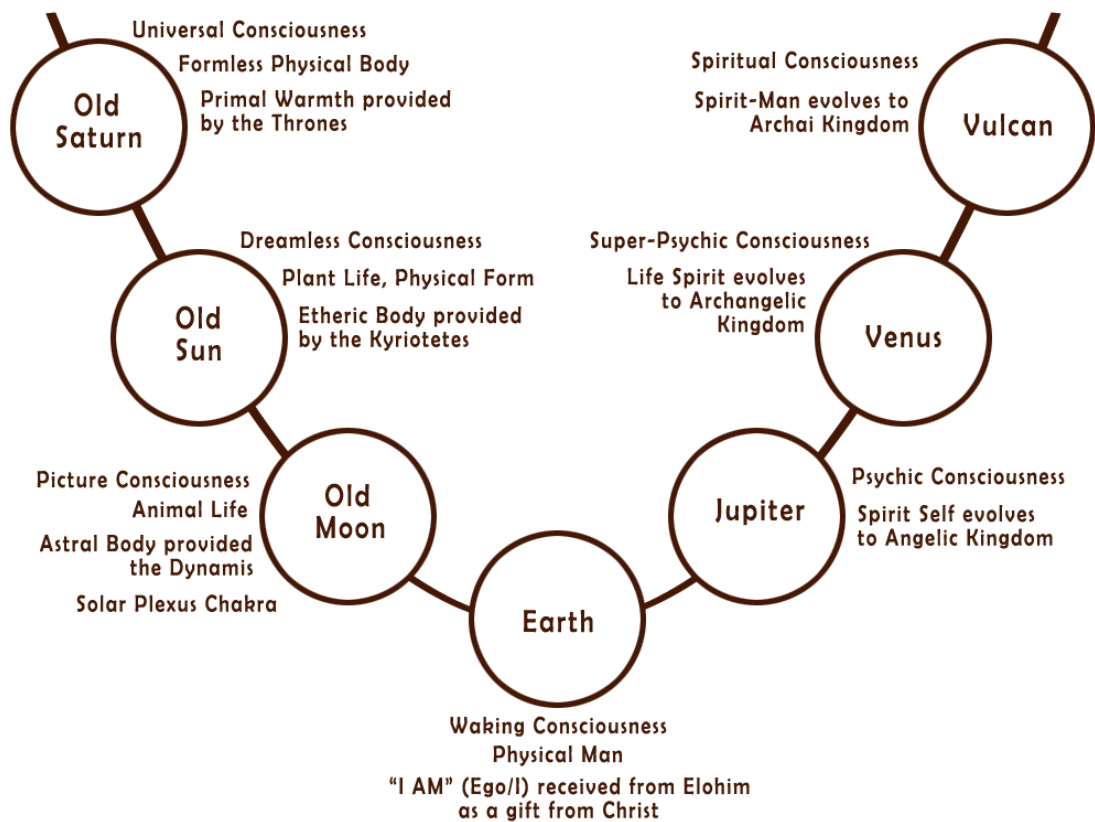
Before the separation of Sun and Moon from the Earth, Man carried the various forces and kingdoms in him, in order to become a self contained being he had to expel certain temperaments, passions and attributes of what lives in animals, plants. For example, when Man formed his bones he expelled the mineral world (1908-09-13-GA106).

In short, all of creation, all that exists, has been, and remains, focused on God's greatest creation: the Human Being. However, it seems to me (Anthony) that most, if not all — including main-stream Christian — creation stories are a vastly oversimplified depiction of a far more complex series of stages of development that include the efforts — and sacrifices — of Spiritual Beings. The material below is only an overview of these complex stages.

Earth's Evolutionary Stages

Note: There are several terms used for Earth's evolutionary incarnations. Most used by Steiner is the term "planetary stages". I have also found the terms "Aeons" or "Ages" used. To help distinguish each division of where we are in the overall scheme of cosmic development, I use preserve Steiner's term "planetary stage".

Earth Incarnations in the Development of Man



Within each incarnation of the Earth, a certain, specific aspect of the Human Being was developed. It is true that Humanity is intimately connected to the Earth. As the Earth evolves, so do we - the Earth through each of its incarnations, we through each of our own incarnations i.e. the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth.

The Earth is currently in its Fourth Incarnation or Age. The first three Ages were "Old Saturn," "Old Sun," and "Old Moon," respectfully. Subsequently, the next three are "Jupiter," "Venus," and "Vulcan." The following is an overview of the stages of Human development with each past incarnation of the Earth and what is intended for future Earth incarnations.

-
1. The First Planetary Stage was called Old Saturn. Here we are told that human beings first acquired a rudimentary form of

the physical body – human beings have this physical body in common with the minerals of the earth and this is what constitutes the bony system. We all know how in our bones we are mineralised.

2. The Second Planetary Stage is called Old Sun where human beings are said to have first acquired an Etheric body or Life body, human beings have this in common with the plant kingdom of the earth and it is this Etheric force that has been integral in the building up of the seven main organs of the body and the blood.
3. The Third Planetary Stage is the called Old Moon where human beings acquired the Astral body or body of feelings and sensations – human beings have this in common with the animal kingdom of the earth. The relevant organs here have to do with the nervous system and the brain.
4. The Fourth Planetary Stage is our present Earth stage where human beings first acquired an Ego, that is, self-awareness or self-consciousness, the ability to realise separateness from the world. This is what Rudolf Steiner calls man's first spiritual member.
5. The Fifth Planetary Stage will occur in what Rudolf Steiner Characterizes as Jupiter. This phase of earthly evolution will enable human beings to acquire another spiritual member Manas or Spirit Self. For this to occur there must be a spiritualisation of the Astral body through the workings of the Ego consciousness. This will mean that the ego conscious will work on the purification of thoughts, feelings, desires and passions. This perfected Astral body will lead to a perception of the Astral world in the same way that the Astral or sentient body led to a perception of the physical world. It will be an addition to the perception of the physical world - the consciousness of Angels.
6. The Sixth Planetary Stage will be the Venus stage of world evolution. Here humanity will have perfected the Etheric body through the workings of the Ego and transformed it into a vehicle for another spiritual member, Buddhi or Life Spirit. The habits and moral life will become transformed into all

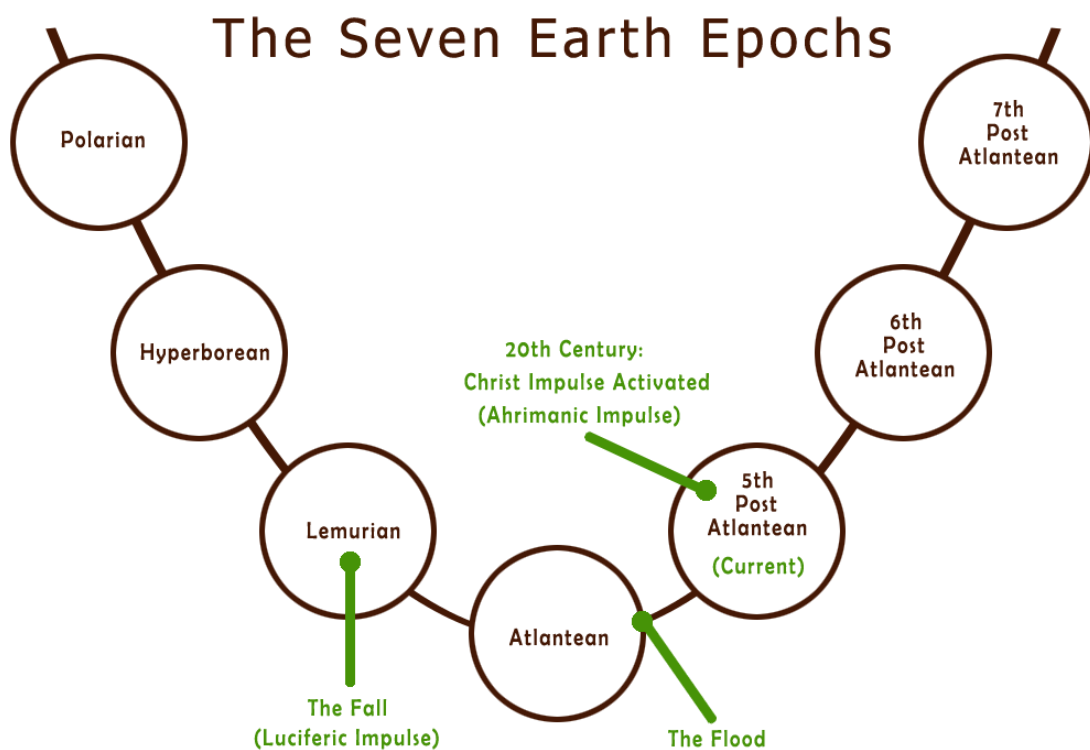
that is good, true and the beautiful and man's perception will extend into the lower regions of Devachan — the Consciousness of Archangels.

7. The Seventh Planetary Stage will be the Vulcan stage where the physical body of human beings will become purified and resound with Light, Life and Word. Humanity will be able to attain another spiritual member Spirit Man or Atma. With this new spiritual member humanity will reach with its consciousness all the way to the higher reaches of Devachan — the consciousness of the Archai (the source, origin or root of all things that exist).

(The source of the above has been lost.)

The Seven Epochs of the Earth Planetary Stage

The Earth Planetary Stage is comprised of seven epochs of development.



The two Epochs directly preceding our current Epoch are important to understand for our purposes here. You can read about the Polarian Epoch [here](#) and the Hyperborean Epoch [here](#).

Lemurian Epoch



Ancient Lemuria (The land of Mu). Note the remnants of Lemuria identified.

As we today use the powers asleep in coal, in Lemurian times the seed forces of the animals were used. But everywhere that the growth forces of animals are misused, horrendous forces of fire, the volcanic element, are awakened. And so it was that mighty volcanic flames of fire destroyed ancient Lemuria.

In the beginning, the Lemurians lived where ever nature provided, in caves, for example. Later as the civilization progressed they began to purposefully build structures to live in, in areas where the volcanic activity was less. The volcanic activity was so widespread throughout Lemuria the people could not settle for long in one place without new eruptions causing them to move on. It was this constant volcanic activity that finally tore the world apart and sunk Lemuria.

Some Lemurians did escape the destruction and migrated. They left descendants in Capoid race, the Congoid race, the Dravidians, and the Australoid race. Other Lemurians were deliberately relocated to specific area to prepare to seed the next race of Atlantians. The end of the Lemurian civilization marked the end of phenomenal development for mankind both by achieving physical existence and then splitting the individual into two genders.

The Tamil people of southern India are descendants of the Dravidian race. In their culture they have a legend of a sunken continent called Kamari Kandam which they say was the cradle of civilization. It was located just south of India in the Indian Ocean precisely where part of Lemuria is said to have been.

Early man had a great deal of help in his development from higher entities, both in physical and non-physical form. In the Third Race long before speech Lemurians were directed telepathically by superior beings in all aspects of their everyday life. Atlantians too enjoyed a close direct link with beings of great intelligence murmuring in their ears but the experience of the Fifth Race has not been like that of our predecessors. The higher beings are still with us but they do not direct us any longer. Being denied such communication may seem as though we are unworthy or that we are not spiritual enough or perhaps we are not meditating properly but Rudolf Steiner has another explanation. We in the Fifth Race are developing thought and with thought comes judgment. We have the freedom to think for ourselves and make decisions for ourselves. We have freedom Lemurians and Atlantians could never have dreamed of. We can excel or degenerate.

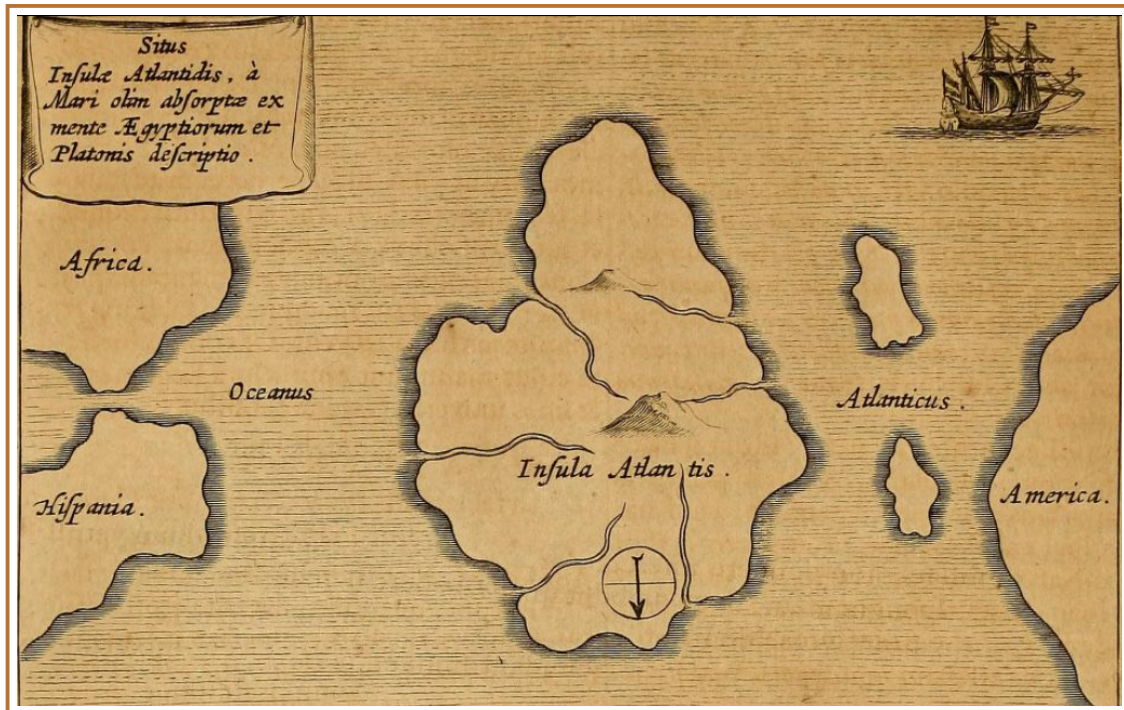
Source:

[https://theosophy.wiki/en/Lemuria_\(Steiner\)#The_End_of_Lemuria](https://theosophy.wiki/en/Lemuria_(Steiner)#The_End_of_Lemuria)

More on the Lemurian Epoch:

https://anthroposophy.eu/Lemurian_epoch

Atlantean Epoch



Ancient Atlantis. Redrawn copy of the map found in the Vatican by Athanasius Kircher, published in 1669. Note that North is below. The (original) map was supposedly created in Egypt and brought to Italy in the Roman Era around 30 B.C.

Just as we have methods of motion in our steam engines, so the Atlanteans had devices which they fueled — in a manner of speaking — with plant seeds, and in which the life force was transformed into technologically utilizable power. The vehicles of the Atlanteans, which floated a short distance above the ground, were moved in this way. ... Today, the above-mentioned vehicles of the Atlanteans would be useless. Their usefulness depended on the fact that at that time the cover of air which enveloped the earth was much denser than it is now.

Let us now consider ancient Atlantean culture once more. In the earliest period man possessed strong magical powers. With these powers he controlled the seed forces, mastered the forces of nature and in a certain way was still able to see into the spiritual world. Clairvoyance then gradually faded because human beings were destined to found the culture belonging to the earth; they were to descend to earth in the real sense. Thus at the end of Atlantis there were two kinds of human beings within the peoples and races. Firstly, at the height of Atlantean culture there were seers, clairvoyants and powerful magicians who worked by means of magical forces and were able to see into the spiritual world.

Besides them were people who were preparing to be the founders of present humanity. They already had within them the rudiments of the faculties possessed by people today.

At the late age of Atlantis, man's consciousness began to shift. He became aware of himself, aware of his I. With this awareness, his memory-filled consciousness started transforming into an ego-centered consciousness, and thoughts started to arise within. This was the result of the impression that the physical world had left within him.

Not all of humanity was evolving this way, but the ones who did were taken under the wing of the initiates, who taught them wisdom and how to develop their intellect. However, with this evolution, a corresponding faculty was lost: To be able to see into the spiritual worlds, whether during dreams or during the day.

In Atlantis, there were different Oracles that guarded certain mysteries. There was the Mercury Oracle, the Venus Oracle, the Mars Oracle, the Moon Oracle, The Jupiter Oracle, the Saturn Oracle, and the Sun Oracle. Out of all of these, the greatest one was the Sun Oracle.

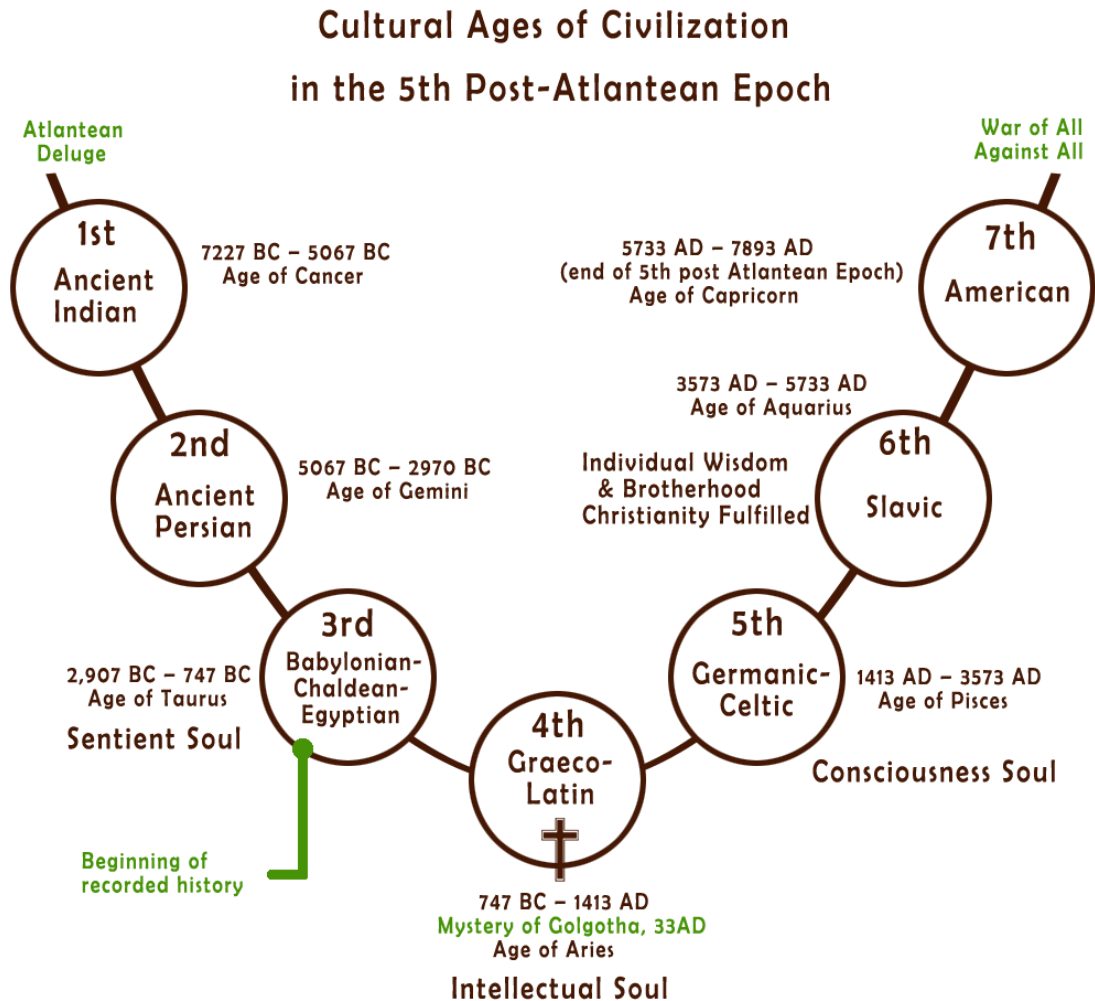
The greatest initiate of the Sun Oracle was called Manu. Manu had seen the decadence that the general populace of Atlantis had submerged themselves into. They had given way to their own selfishness and sought to manipulate the life-force powers that had previously been used to build a harmonious society to benefit only themselves. This caused a great disturbance in the water and air forces, and the entire mist that pervaded it all turned into massive amounts of water that drowned the continent.

Source: Rudolf Steiner: [Atlantis — The Fate of a Lost Land and Its Secret Knowledge Six Lectures](#) ✓ from GA's 11, 136, 109-111, 13, and 104

More on the Atlantean Epoch:
https://anthroposophy.eu/Atlantean_epoch ✓.

We are currently in the Fifth (Post-Atlantean) Epoch of Earth's Fourth Planetary Stage. This Epoch is composed of Seven Cultural Ages.

Cultural Ages of the Fifth Post Atlantean Epoch



1. Indian 7227 BC – 5067 BC – Age of Cancer
2. Persian 5067 BC – 2970 BC – Age of Gemini
3. Egypto Chaldean 2,907 BC – 747 BC – Age of Taurus
4. Greco Roman 747 BC – 1413 AD – Age of Aries
5. Anglo German* 1413 AD – 3573 AD – Age of Pisces
6. Russian* 3573 AD – 5733 AD – Age of Aquarius

7. American* 5733 AD – 7893 AD (end of 5th Post Atlantean Age) – Age of Capricorn

Recorded history begins only with the Egypto-Chaldean Epoch; what is generally known of ancient Indian and Persian culture derives from records made in the third epoch. The epochs last approximately 2160 years; and the present, Fifth Post Atlantean Cultural Epoch began about 1413 AD. The time periods of these Epochs should not be considered to be sharply differentiated; transitions happen gradually, future developments being prepared in advance, and past influences lingering after.

**1. The Task of the Indian Epoch:
Brahma – The acquisition of
knowledge through the Etheric
Body – The seed.**

The term "ancient India" refers here to a time not recorded by human beings. The people now commonly known as Indians belong to a stage of historic evolution developed long afterwards. *This is not to say that at this time there was no other civilization it is only that the first post-Atlantean period of the Earth was that time in which the civilization here described as Indian was dominant.*



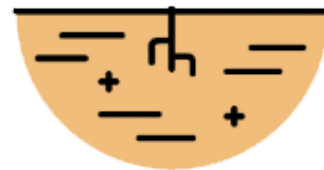
This epoch stands under the sign of Cancer symbolising the end of an old world and the beginning of a new one. The Seven Holy Rishis, the great leaders of the Indian people were the ancestors of the Ancient Atlanteans who migrated from the continent before its downfall. They brought with them a memory of the ancient clairvoyance and could still communicate with the spiritual world. It was the case that at this time if a man wanted to work in the every day world he worked with the organs of his physical senses, but if he wanted to acquire knowledge he had to enter into a different state of consciousness, a state of consciousness acquired through the organs of the Etheric Body. Through his Etheric body the ancient Indian could experience the spiritual world in the same way he could experience the physical world through his physical body. This gave him a feeling of spiritual 'oneness' with higher beings a state that resembled the state

of 'oneness' of the first earthly age and the first planetary condition. This spirit of 'oneness' was summed up by the Indian as Brahma. The Indian felt that the world he could see with his Etheric organs in its unity was his primeval home. In contrast the physical world was to the ancient Indian a fallacy of his perception an illusion. This led to the doctrine of Maya. The Indian person had no interest in the Earth except as a veil (Maya) of the supersensible, and sought to free himself from its bondage.

A faint echo of the spiritual wisdom of the Indians is contained in the Vedas, the Ramayana and the Bhagavad-Gita wherein there is an undertone of the longing for what the Indian man has lost; we can hear it even today in traditional Indian music. This was the beginning of the withdrawal of the spirit from humanity and was necessary so that the human being could develop a means to raise himself through his own efforts to the Gods.

2. The Task of the Persian Epoch: Ormuz and Ahriman - The battle of Light and Darkness – the Acquisition of knowledge through the Astral Body – The Root.

The Persian Epoch stands under the sign of Gemini and it is interesting to note that the ancient Persian did not long for unity and developed instead a sense for duality; he could look out to the world of the stars and see it in all its clarity and brilliance, he was at once with the stars he belonged to them; while at the same time the power to look outwards to the world through the vehicle of the Astral body gradually unfolded. The two aspects of 'seeing' coexisted together. Unlike the ancient Indian the Persian found that the world of Cosmic space held the same interest as the physical world.

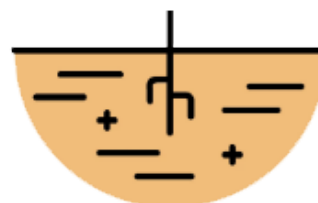


The principles of light and darkness were observed by the great initiate Zarathustra as the opposition between two beings, one of which was personified in the sun and the other in the moon. Ahura Mazda or Ormuzd, the Light-aura, is the

being whom the Persians worshiped as the highest god and Ahriman the evil spirit who represented all the beings who belonged to earth-plus-moon.

3. The Task of the Third Cultural Epoch - Egypto Chaldean – Osiris, Isis, Horus – The Triniy of the Gods - Acquisition of knowledge through the Sentient Soul – The Stem.

The Egypto/Chaldean Epoch stands under the sign of the Bull or Taurus (we see this reflected in the Mithras mysteries) and its task was in giving humanity opportunities for acquiring knowledge through the



Sentient soul. This means that the human being of that time could take the impressions received from the outer world and could make them more inwardly felt. Similarly, human beings could also bring their experiences of the spiritual worlds to intimate consciousness within. The Sentient or Feeling soul then did not experience merely light and darkness but something of the element of life that is present in sympathies and antipathies.

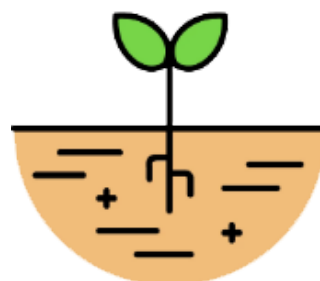
From their Temples the Egyptians could observe the world of stars and find their relationship to the physical world (Geometry, Architecture, Mathematics). And it was also in a Temple or pyramid that the acolyte or student of the mysteries would undergo an elaborate initiation rite called the "Temple Sleep" in order to see into the worlds of Spirit.

From this inward and outward observation there arose the veneration of a divine trinity, Osiris, Isis and Horus. We can see how this mirrors the Moon Planetary stage and the Lemurian age insofar as it was during the Moon stage firstly and the Lemurian age finally that the physical Moon and all beings related to it made their break from the earth leaving now three bodies to be observed by the human being - Sun, Moon and Earth - Osiris being the representative of the Sun the divine source of Life, the fertiliser of all things the father. Isis was the Goddess of the Moon the fertile mother who gave birth to Horus the Son who was connected to the Earth.

It was now the case that the physical world became more prominent in the consciousness of the Egyptian than ever before. The world of Spirit was receding from view.

4. **The Task of the Fourth Cultural Epoch – Greco Roman or Latin – Acquisition of knowledge through the Intellectual Soul – Hierarchy of the Gods – The Leaf.**

The Greco Latin age stood under the sign of the Ram or Lamb and this was the epoch in which human beings began working on the task of acquiring knowledge through the Intellectual soul.



During this epoch we can see how the age of Atlantis is mirrored in the Hellenic hierarchy of the gods. It remembered the God-like figures of Atlantis. At the same time the Ego began to receive all its impressions from the outside world and very little now could be gained from the old clairvoyant sight into worlds of spirit. A door was shut so to speak on the worlds of Spirit and man had to learn to rely instead on the power of his own thinking (Philosophy and Theology).

The Greek saying 'better to be a beggar on earth than a king in the realm of shades' shows us the darkening of spiritual consciousness. The spiritual world was nothing more than a realm of shades.

Another way to see the gradual descent of human consciousness is to observe the manner in which the humanity of each epoch chose to worship. The Indians withdrew into their own being to find the spirit we can see this in the Buddha (blackboard figure) whose gaze is turned inward, eyes always closed. Persians worshiped on the mountains gazing outward at the world making sacrificial offerings to the Sun God Ahura Mazda. The Egyptians worshiped in their Pyramids or initiation Temples built with the knowledge that proceeded from the stars, from the position of the planets using laws of geometry, which were

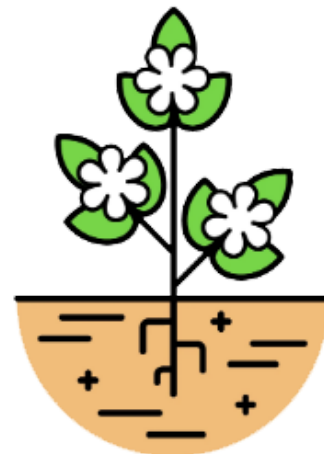
relevant to the earthly sphere. By way of contrast the Greek Temples were built so that the Gods could descend into them – the temples were the physical bodies of the Gods and needed no human beings in them at all. Conversely, the Latin human being who was losing his ability to reach the spirit built himself great vaulted churches that reached upwards to the heavens surrounded by windows of coloured glass through which they could observe light diffused as an image of the diversity of the universe. Wherein the voice of the priests bouncing from the great stonewalls brought them a memory of the music of the spheres.

This descent of consciousness into the material world spiralled even further. Further in fact than had been intended by the wise guidance of human evolution. Had something not intervened, humanity would not have been able to rise up out of matter through its own power. This 'forgetting' would have led humanity to become ever more hardened to the spirit and drawn to matter. What was it that intervened in this spiralling? It was the rise of Christianity through the Christ Event or the Mystery of Golgotha, the sacrificial act of a God on behalf of humanity that enabled human beings to rise once again from the depths of materialism.

Had Christ not died on the Cross and overcome death in this Epoch (the epoch of the sacrificial Ram or Lamb) humanity would not have been able to overcome the darkening or death of consciousness of the spiritual world.

5. The Task of the Fifth Cultural Epoch Anglo German – Acquiring Knowledge through the Consciousness Soul/Spirit Self – Repetition of Lemuria - The Blossom.

Now we come to our present epoch. The Anglo German epoch, which began in 1413, and stands under the sign of Pisces. This is the epoch that will provide humanity with the experiences, which will enable it to rise up once more from out of the depths of matter to make its way back toward the spirit. Now the Ego must acquire

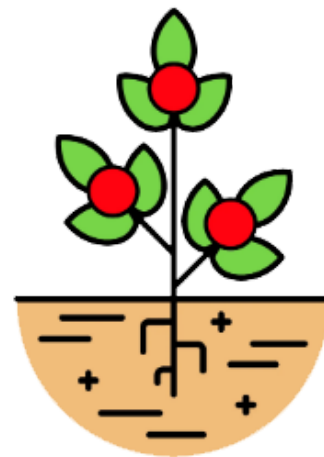


knowledge through the Consciousness or Spiritual Soul. We can see this as a kind of recapitulation of Egyptian times under the sign of the Bull - which is a recapitulation of the Lemurian age and the planetary stage of the Moon. In Lemuria man began to walk upright, this is reflected in Egypto Chaldean times by the Obelisk rising up towards the heavens and we can see this in our own more materialistic time in the skyscrapers that pierce the heavens around us and the desire to conquer the earth and explore the solar system – in particular the moon. We see that our super cleanliness is a materialistic reflection of the ritual ablutions of the Egyptians. Also we continue to embalm and bury our dead. We even see a kind of materialistic Temple sleep in the world of Virtual reality.

However the Consciousness soul or Spiritual soul cultivated by humanity must find its way to the spirit through the moral will forces set in motion by the spiritual by the being of Anthroposophia the renewed 'Isis'. This will enable the transformation of the soul or Astral body into Spirit Self. This fifth cultural Epoch will be the precursor of the future fifth condition of the earth, Jupiter, in which the moon will once again be united with the earth in the same way that in our epoch humanity is united with materialism (Bull).

6. The Task of the Sixth Cultural Epoch or Russian Epoch – Acquiring Knowledge through the Spirit Self – Repetition of Hyperborea – The Fruit.

This cultural epoch will stand under the sign of Waterman (Aquarius) and will have the task of nurturing knowledge through the beginnings of the Spirit Self or the perfected Astral body. By this time humanity will have elaborated spiritual organs, which it will use to acquire knowledge of the Astral World in the same way that physical organs provide us with knowledge of the physical world.



The Spirit Self pre-supposes the existence in human souls of the three characteristics of Social life,

1. Brotherliness
2. Freedom of thought
3. Spiritual Teachings

This will be a social time for man. Societies and communities will form not through race or nationality but out of freedom and brotherhood. Humanity will begin to see everywhere the spirit behind matter. This will be a renewal of the age of Zarathustra. The Maitreya Buddha will guide humanity towards the second coming of Christ in the Astral (Christ has returned in the Etheric world in our day) world as humanity was guided by Zarathustra to see Him in the Astral aura of the Sun. Another repetition becomes apparent. This is a repetition on a higher level of the Hyperborean age when the Sun broke away from the earth, which was also a repetition of the old Sun condition of the Earth. This Epoch will once again experience duality in that human beings will more and more form into two factions the good and the evil - the White Magic and the Black - and this will have a further repetition in the sixth Post Atlantean Age and the future planetary condition of Venus when the sun will once again unite with the earth and those who have chosen to follow the evil path will not be able to follow and will have to remain behind.

7. The Task of the Seventh Cultural Epoch – Acquiring knowledge through the Life Spirit – Repetition of the Polarian Age - The seed falls from the decaying fruit.

This epoch will stand under the sign of Capricorn and have the task of acquiring knowledge through the Life Spirit or perfected Etheric body. This will mean a repetition of the Indian Cultural Epoch – a renewal of the epoch of the 7 Holy Rishis of India as in the words of Rudolf Steiner "Thus in the seventh epoch the possibility will be given for all the marvellous wisdom proclaimed by the great Teachers of ancient India to be living once again in human souls. And it will now be their very own – the truth



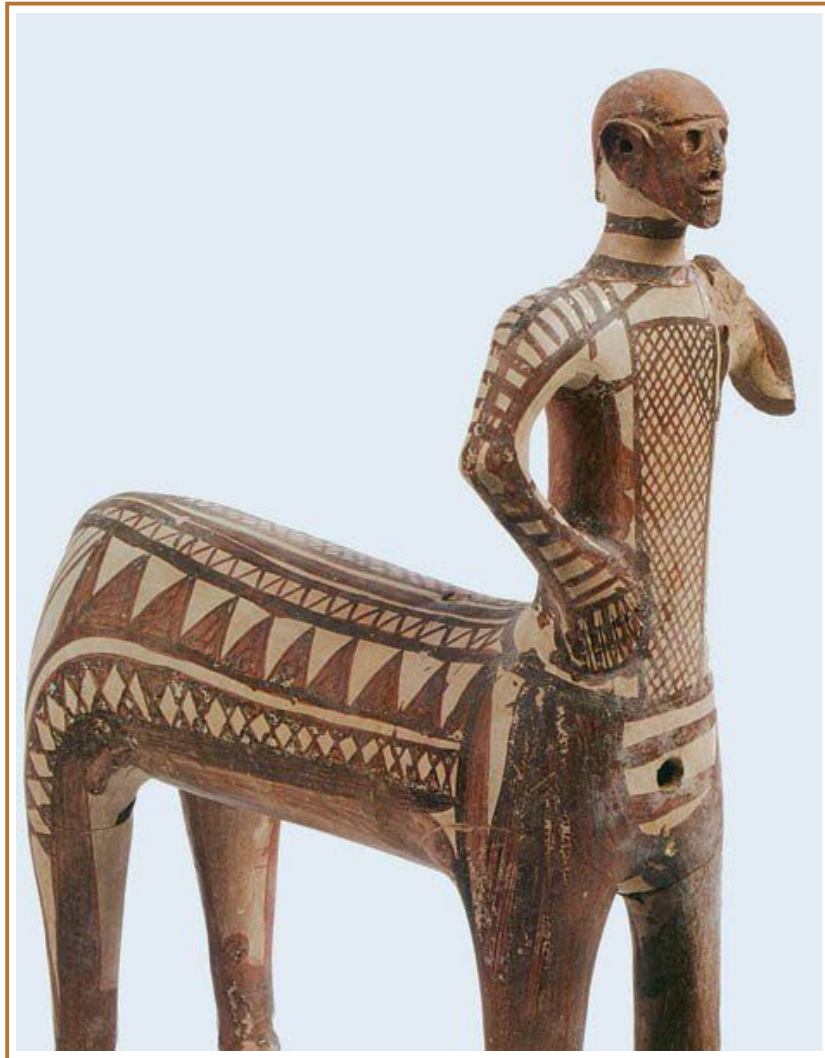
they live by[11]. This 'Brahma' era of oneness with the spirit is also a repetition of the first age the Polarian stage where there was a unity of Sun Moon and Earth which was in itself a repetition of the Saturn planetary phase of world evolution. At this time man will have developed organs to experience Lower Devachan or the Spiritual world as well as the Astral world and physical worlds. Man will once again walk with his primeval teachers and be in communication with them. Culture however will degenerate, and it will become a time of great upheaval and the duality of good and evil seen in the sixth epoch will find its culmination in the 'war of all against all'. This finds its repetition in the future seventh Post Atlantean age when this Earth's evolutionary cycle will end in a cataclysm like that which ended the Atlantean age. Finally it will have its repetition in the seventh distant incarnation of the earth Vulcan when we shall see what the bible characterises as Armageddon. There we have the plant, germ or seed, root, stem, leaf, blossom, fruit and seed again. Each time the plant is born more perfect.

We can see then how important it is to know the past so that we can understand the present and foretell (to a certain degree) the future. Such insight can prepare us and enthuse us for the tasks that are ahead of us. It also serves to remind us that if we do not plant the seeds now, we cannot reap the harvest.

(The source of the above has been lost.)



VI. Centaur



Terracotta figurine of a centaur (950-900 B.C), from the cemetery at Leukanti, Euboea, Greece. This is the earliest known representation of the mythical creature.

The **centaur** is an image of half man - half animal, as Man was in the [Lemurian epoch](#) before the [Separation of moon](#). It still continues in Man today, as the [Human astral body](#) is made up of a lower component (animalistic drives and passions, lower chakras), and a higher component.

The Centaur represents a stage in the development of human beings, that of the the horseman or mammal-man. These separations took place in various forms and gave rise to various races of horsemen, bullmen, etc.

In the denser air also the bird separated from the lower mammal. From Man separated the higher animals (see [Animal kingdom](#)), and which each separation Man developed new properties:

- With the separation of the horse: the intellect, hence the horse is a symbol of the intellect
- With the separation of the lion, Man developed his moral courage.



VII. **Angelic Hierarchies**

Steiner encourages us not to see the orders of angels as a hierarchical, military-style ranking but more as a metaphor for some very profound truths about the unfolding of evolution. I think we should also bear in mind that these triads and hierarchies are working and co-operating together, rather than maintaining some kind of caste-like rigidity of separation.

It is only humans, rather than angels, who have the potential to develop a higher form of freedom, because it is only humans who have descended this deeply into (physical) matter, where the divine and spiritual powers are no longer active. This is also why only human beings are capable of becoming atheists and denying the spirit — the angels cannot do this because they know the true reality, whereas through materialism and living in the realm of maya (illusion), we humans are free to decide what we choose to believe — and of course we will (and have) often make/made "wrong" choices. This us our journey towards morality (the Spiritual world) and wisdom.

Below is a table that presents an overview of the Angelic hierarchies and their function in the Divine plan.

Triad	Hierarchy	Name (AKA)	Tasks
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1st Triad	1	Seraphim (Spirits of Love)	To receive the ideas of the Holy Trinity
	2	Cherubim (Spirits of Harmony)	To ponder over those ideas
	3	Thrones (Spirits of Will, Ophanim*)	To transform the ideas into action
2nd Triad	4	Kyriotetes (Spirits of Wisdom, Dominion)	To carry out what the 1st Order has initiated
	5	Dynamis (Spirits of Motion, Mights, Virtues)	Continual movement and metamorphosis in our planet of air, water, and vegetation
	6	Exusiai (Spirits of Form, Elohim, Powers)	The creation of the solar system and Mankind

3rd Triad	7	Archai (Spirits of Personality, Principalities, Spirits of Time or Epoch Spirits)	To engender a future type of Human Being who can be entirely self-directing and independent
	8	Archangels (Spirits of Fire, National Spirits or Folk Spirits)	To serve as national spirits, folk souls or folk spirits
	9	Angels (Angeloi, messengers of the divine-spiritual world)	To help and guide Human Beings while on the Earth plane

Table 2

Overview: Hierarchies Closest to the Human Being

Angels (9th order)

Each of us – you, me, every one – has a guardian angel. Our very own dedicated guide in the spiritual world, it envelops us in unconditional love. Our angel gives us the safe space in which our higher selves can develop and eventually come into independent maturity. Impulses from our angel allow true ideas to stream into our consciousness. These guide us in our earthly tasks and relationships and give us strength to overcome the inevitable challenges we all meet along the way. Eventually, in the very distant future after a number of incarnations, we will take over this responsibility from the angels, rather like the way in which as we grow up we gradually find our independence from our parents. Until then, the angels' unconditional love remains steadfast, guiding us along our way and helping to strengthen us.

Archangels (8th order)

Archangels unite groups of people, who have a common purpose or mission, by flowing in rhythmic motion amongst group members and their angels. They weave together mutual intentions and striving to help us form a sense of group identity, be it a community, family or nation. While angels give strength to each individual human, archangels inspire and give courage to each member of the group to work together to fulfill their common tasks. Whether forming a school, a team, a theatre company or a political movement etc., the work of the archangels helps form the group into a dynamic and viable whole. This group may well become able to receive higher spiritual intentions in order to meet challenges particular to its historical setting and time.

Archai (7th order)

Archai, sometimes called Time Spirits, shine the light of intuition into the dynamic relationships or vessels that have been built with the aid of the archangels. The Archai help us attune our efforts so as to be most fruitful at a particular time and place. We can see the results of their work in the rise and fall of various peoples and impulses over the course of human history.

Steiner says that the Archai are even loftier beings than the archangels and they have a still higher task in the continuity of human existence. They regulate the earthly relations of whole human generations on earth. That which is called the *Zeitgeist* is the spiritual body of the Archai. And Steiner gives an oddly intriguing idea here – he says that a strange muddle would come into the evolution of the earth if it were all left to chance, and pivotal figures such as Luther or Charlemagne were placed within any epoch, no matter which. This connection with the whole evolution of humanity over the whole earth, has to be thought out first; the right soul has to appear in harmony with the meaning of the whole earth's development, and this process is regulated by the Archai.



VIII. In Response to a Question: What is the Spiritual I?

Imagine you, as a human being ... are divine in nature, your core is a spirit seed in a world beyond good and evil, time and space.

In order to go through a path of growth and development, the need for individuation makes you split off into a spirit drop (call it atma or spirit-man in the higher spirit world), that aims to gather experiences in the lower worlds in order to develop further by knowing oneself down to sacrifice. For this you equip yourself with the manas spirit-self, the causal body or book of life to record learnings from all incarnations. This true spiritual core of you we call Man's higher triad, still in the formless higher spirit world (or arupa devachan) beyond form, space and time.

Now to enable your spiritual I to get these experiences for growth and development through self-consciousness, you need to descend into the lower worlds, astral and physical, you therefore will need to clothe yourself into forms so your spiritual I can 'use' these bodies .. so you create yourself the forms for your lower bodily principles in the lower spirit world. This part of your structure we call the human soul, it is the part between the lower bodies and your true spiritual I. Your human soul is threefold and can be said to consist of a sentient, intellectual and consciousness soul. It is the spiritual part of the lower astral, etheric and physical bodies that your spiritual I will take hold off, use, and grow in and through.

In the current process of physical incarnation, which is a temporary phenomenon for you as a part of the tenth hierarchy called humanity, as part of this lowest part of the development during Earth planetary stage of evolution, you descend into the lower worlds and create for yourself an astral and etheric body and find a physical body. Now you are on Earth with your spiritual I fully woven into the lower spiritual structure of your soul and using the lower bodies. However you grow up and develop as a human being and use your physical senses and developing mundane waking consciousness in the physical world. You see yourself in the mirror of actions and interactions with other human beings, and you say 'I' to this entity in a physical body that thinks, feels, acts, interacts with others .. and this way looks at your mirror image.

At this stage you have forgotten that you, as a spiritual entity, are not here in your physical body, but are 'everywhere' .. you are actually in the spirit world, you are everywhere. And all these other human beings and yourself are connected, like branches of the same tree, drops of the same

ocean (or Monad), they are actually part of one and the same great group soul of humanity. This is why all religions have the golden rule: 'what you do to another you do to yourself'. Only, we don't have a clue how real that really is .. as we loose ourselves in the maya mirror of the physical world rendered by the great cosmic fractal.



IX. Living (Enlivened) Images

Man's experiences in [thinking, feeling, willing](#) are inscribed in the Akasha, in the higher planes starting from the fourth subplane of the [spirit world](#), see [Planes or worlds of consciousness](#).

With 'free thinking', not materialistic shadow thoughts about the 'dead' kingdoms of nature, but the activity of spiritual science that are quickened to live through feeling and willing, one creates so-called 'enlivened images' that Rudolf Steiner describes as [Seeds for future worlds](#). This process can be regarded as a [reverse ritual](#) when Man as a Microcosm is not a receiver but a giver, a contributor to the future Macrocosm of the future - see also [Meaning of Free Man Creator](#).

'Enlivened' means, permeated with life, and in this case this life refers to the etheric [formative forces](#) and especially those related to the chemical and life ethers.

Before the Mystery of Golgotha, Man did not have access — in his functioning as a human being — to the higher ethers, the chemical and life ethers.

In the lecture (below) of 1920-05-16-GA201 Rudolf Steiner explained how the Mystery of Golgotha (MoG) transforms this process into enlivened embodied pictures with inner reality for the life to come.

Lectures

[1905-10-24-GA093A](#)

Human life is a continual process of being enveloped in what surrounds us: Involution — Evolution. We take up image forms and according to these, shape our own body. What the Monad has brought about is again taken up by man as his Karma. Man will always be the result of his Karma. The Vedanta teaches that the different parts of the human being are dissolved and cast to the winds; what still remains of him, that is his Karma. This is the eternal which man has created out of himself, something which he himself had first to take up as image out of his environment. Man is immortal; he only needs to exert his will, he only needs to form his actions in such a way that they have a lasting existence. That part of us is immortal which we gain for ourselves from the outside world.

We have come into being through the world and are beginning, through fructification with the Monad, **to build up in ourselves the mirror of a new world.**

The Monad has quickened the mirrored images in us. Now these images can work outwards, and the effects of these images reflect themselves anew. A new inner life arises.

With our actions we are continually changing our environment. Through this, **new reflected images come about;** these now become karma. **This is a new life which springs up from within.**

The result of this is that in order to develop further from a definite point of time we must go out of ourselves and work selflessly in our surroundings. We must make possible this going out from ourselves in order selflessly to bring about harmonious relationships in our surroundings.

This necessitates a harmonising of the reflected images in ourselves. It is our task to make the world around us a harmonious one:

- If we are a destructive element in the world, what is reflected into us is devastation:

- if we bring about harmony in the world, harmonies are reflected into us.

1909-07-06-GA112 ↗

Through the suffusion of the earth with the rays of a new force (being the first impulse for the transformation of the earth into a Sun), **the possibility was afforded for mankind to be irradiated by the same force.** What I described to you yesterday received then its first impetus — namely, **the radiating of the Christ-force into the human etheric body.** Thanks to this astral force streaming into it, the etheric body could begin to absorb new vitality such as it will need in the distant future. If you compare a future condition of humanity with the point of time at which the Deed of Golgotha was accomplished, you may conclude that at the time of Christ's coming the condition of the earth was such that it could not of itself radiate light into the etheric bodies of men. A short time after this event the etheric bodies of those who had found access to the Christ-impulse became radiant; having understood Christ, they absorbed into themselves that radiant force, that new illuminative force which has been in the earth ever since. They received into their etheric bodies the Christ-light. The Christ-light streams into the etheric bodies of men.

And now **the Christ-light being always present**, to some extent, **in the etheric bodies of men ever since that time,**

what is the consequence of this? What takes place after death in that part of the etheric body which has absorbed into itself the Christ-light? What is it that has gradually made its way into the human etheric body in consequence of the Christ-impulse?

Since that time it has become possible for something new to show itself in the etheric bodies of men, as an effect of the Christ-light; something which exhales life and is immortal, and can never fall a prey to death. **But if it does not fall a prey to death** (while man still continues being a victim of the illusion of death), **it will be saved from death and will not participate therein.** Since that time, therefore, there has

been something in the etheric body of man which does not share in his death and is not subject to the earthly forces of dissolution. **And that something, which does not die with the rest and which man gradually wins for himself through the influence of the Christ-impulse,** now radiates back and streams into the world of space. **In proportion to its strength or weakness in man, it gathers a force which streams out into space.**

and here we continue into the scope of two other study Modules: Module 7 - Cosmic Impact, and Module 8 - Resurrection

In proportion to its strength or weakness in man, it gathers a force which streams out into space. This force will form a sphere surrounding the earth, a sphere in process of becoming a Sun. A kind of spiritual sphere is developing round the earth, composed of those etheric bodies endowed with light. As the Christ-light streams from the earth, there is in like manner a kind of reflection of the Christ-light in the circumference of the earth. The Christ-light which is here reflected and which appeared in consequence of Christ's life on earth; this, it is, which Christ called the 'Holy Ghost'. True as it is that the change of the earth into a sun began with the event of Golgotha, it is equally true that the earth thenceforward began to be creative and to form a spiritual ring round itself which, in time to come, will become a kind of planet surrounding it.

Thus, since the event of Golgotha, a momentous process has been taking place in the universe. At the moment when the Cross was raised on Golgotha and the blood ran from the wounds of Christ Jesus, a new cosmic centre was created. We were there as human beings, whether in a physical body or out of it, between birth and death. Thus do new worlds arise. But one thing we must understand, that while we behold the dying Christ, we stand in the presence of the birth of a new Sun.

Christ united Himself with death which has become, on earth, the characteristic expression of the Father-Spirit. Christ goes to the Father and unites Himself with the expression of the Father — with death; thereby the image of death (as it has become) is shown in its falseness; for death now becomes the seed of a new

Sun in the universe. Let us feel this event, this growing delusion of death; let us feel that the Death on the Cross is the seed from which a new Sun bursts forth, then we shall also truly feel how mankind on earth must have felt that Event to be the supremely important transition in human evolution.

1913-03-05-GA152

(not on rsarchive, extract freely translated)

Note: the first two millenia are covered on [The Christ Impulse from the 1st to the 20th century](#) ↗

In the period of 800 BC until our times, humanity consumes the last inherited divine forces. Then a null-point takes place with the MoG, and it works into humanity. The stimulating powers of the Christ Impulse worked differently in the period after MoG, coming from different planes or worlds of consciousness.

- Sketching this we can first consider the period of the first 800 years after Christ. In this period these powers worked from the higher spirit world. Human intelligence failed to understand (gnosis) the Christ Impulse as it worked in human facts and occurrences (re Maxentius and Konstantin). We still see a final stage and transition of this period with the work of Scotus Erigena around 850. In his system of thought, the Christ impulse is still working as a force radiating from the higher spirit world into the physical world.
- In the period between 800 to 1600 AD, this impulse works from the lower spirit world into the physical world. People look to approach their souls to the Christ Impulse with and in various forms and presentations. Thought shows itself to be inappropriate and all considerations unfruitful. Neither the crusades nor all attempts to prove God succeed in bringing about an inner lively connection of the soul. At the transition to the next period stands the virgin of Orleans. Her soul experience reveals the Christ Impulse from the spirit world, and it is in this name she intervenes in shaping human history.

- The spiritual influence working from the higher spirit world gets lost in Man ever more. These forces become ever weaker, and the impulse now works from about 1600 into our times only from the astral world. In this period theology becomes ever more learned and abstract. The cosmic divine being of Christ is replaced slowly by the 'simple man of Nazareth'. Still, our time would have fallen into materialism a great deal more, and penetrated from this antichristian impulse even more, if it were not for the influence of the Christ Impulse in special ways from the astral world. In the 15th and 16th centuries strange stories appeared everywhere, that spread across the western world. Across the most varied places in all countries of Europe, Man appeared: very poorly clothed, calloused feet, very long hair .. that told the story that they where there when the Mystery of Golgotha appeared, and they had seen the Christ walk the Earth. However, as he passed their house, they had not shown respect or reverence but had insulted and scorned him. That is why since they had to go around without any rest or further development, as repentance. This is referred to as the 'eternal [or wandering] jew'. These men told their stories as from memory. They were taken up by people everywhere, were received by bishops and prelates. In these men an insight into the akasha chronicle lives, and these men could not do otherwise, then through their whole way of living, appear so as to witness the Christ event. Their other consciousness was clouded, but through the Impulse from the astral world they could have this view from experience. Through this, these men were saved from the antichristianity and materialism that was grabbing hold of humanity.
- **Then from 2400 AD onwards, an age will follow where the forces towards an understanding of the Christ will only come from the Earth.**
- **In this age Christ will work from the physical plane into men. In our times the precursors herald that which will be substantial after 2400: the Christ will reveal himself on the physical plane in etheric form.**

In this way, we see how the working of the Christ Impulse, rolling off in periods from 800 to 800 years, is related to the impulses from the spiritual world.

1914-07-16-GA155

Let us suppose that the Christ had not come. What would have happened in the evolution of the Earth?

From the time in which the Mystery of Golgotha would otherwise have taken place, men would have spiritually created dense forms to which they had imparted death. And these dense forms would have become the very things that had to pass over to the Jupiter stage with the Earth. **Man would have imparted death to the Earth. A dead Earth would have given birth to a dead Jupiter.**

It could not have been otherwise, because if the Mystery of Golgotha had not come about, **man would not have been able to permeate the radiations he gives out with the essences of the Music of the Spheres and the Cosmic Life.**

These essences would not have been there; they would not have flowed into the human radiations; but Christ brought them back through the Mystery of Golgotha. And when there is a fulfillment of the words, **“Not I, but Christ in me”**, when we bring about a relationship to Christ within ourselves, that which rays out from us and would otherwise be dead, is made living. Because we bear death within us, the living Christ has to permeate us, in order that He may give life to the spiritual Earth-being that we leave behind us. Christ the living Logos, permeates and gives life to the objective guilt and sin which detaches itself from us and is not carried further in our Karma, and because He gives it life, a living Earth will evolve into a living Jupiter. This is the outcome of the Mystery of Golgotha.

1920-05-16-GA201↗

.. in this lecture is explained **how the MoG transforms this process into enlivened embodied pictures with inner reality for the life to come.**

[Part 1]

Philosophers today say that the effect of the soul and spirit upon the body cannot be perceived, because they imagine an arm as a sort of solid lever appliance; and of course they cannot see how the activity of the soul and spirit, which is conceived of as abstractly as possible, is to be transmitted to this solid lever-appliance. But one need only fix one's attention on the transition, and we find there that which has been organised for man out of the whole Universe. If we really study human *thought*, we find that the thought which asserts itself in our head has very much to do with this inner work that goes on within the heat-relationships. (This is not quite exactly spoken, but the inaccuracy can perhaps only be corrected in the course of time. We must try to get a complete picture, therefore I will begin with a more cursory description.) If we observe this inter-working of thoughts in the heat-space, in the isolated heat-space, it is evident that something like a co-operation of thought-activity and heat-activity takes place. In what does this consist? Here we come to something which demands very careful consideration.

Taking first the whole of the rest of Man, and then his head, we can of course, trace **a transmutation of matter** (metabolism) from the former to the latter; and the fact that ultimately the head has to do with thought — that we perceive as a direct experience.

Yet what really happens? We will lead up to this gradually by way of appropriate imagery.

- Let us suppose we have some fluid substance; we bring it to boiling point, then it evaporates, and changes into a more rarefied substance. This same process takes place far more intensely with human thought. **All that plays its part as transmutation of substances in the human head, brings it about that all substance falls away like a sediment, it is precipitated, and nothing remains of it but the mere *picture*.**
- I will now use another example. Suppose you have a vessel containing a solution. This you cool down, which is again a heat-process. A sediment collects below, and above remains finer liquid. This is also the case with the human head; only here no substance whatever is collected above, nothing but pictures, all matter is expelled. This is the activity of **the human head; it forms what are mere pictures, and expels the matter.**

This process, as a matter of fact, takes place in everything that may be called the transition to pure thinking. **All the material substance which has co-operated in the human inner life falls back into the organism, and pictures alone remain.** It is a fact that when we rise to pure thought, we live in pictures. Our soul lives in pictures; and these pictures are the remains of all that has gone before. Not the substance, but the pictures remain.

[Part 2]

What has just been presented can be followed into the thoughts themselves, for this process only takes place at the moment when thoughts change into mere pictures. At first thoughts live, as it were, *embodied*. They are permeated by substance; but as *pictures* they separate themselves out from this substance. If however, we go to work in a truly spiritually scientific way, we can quite easily distinguish pure thought, sense-free thought that has separated itself out from the material process, from all thoughts belonging to what I have called in these lectures the “instinctive wisdom of the ancients.”

This instinctive wisdom of the ancients, as we learn it today, bears in it, quite literally and exactly, the character of not being brought to such filtration of thought that all material substance fell away. Such falling away of all matter is a result of human development. Although not observed by external physiology, it is a fact that virtually — of course virtually and approximately — the thoughts of earthly humanity *before* the Mystery of Golgotha were always united with matter, and that at the time of the intervention of the Mystery of Golgotha in Earth-life, humanity had arrived at the point in evolution of being able to dissociate itself from matter in the inner process of thought; matter-free thought became possible.

This is not to be regarded as unimportant! It is indeed of the utmost importance that we should observe this development in earthly life — that man in his evolution has become free from the embodiment of thoughts; that they have changed to pure pictures.

Thus we may say that

- *up to the time of* the Mystery of Golgotha, embodied pictures lived in Man; but

- *after* the Mystery of Golgotha, matter-free pictures lived in Man.

[or again]

- *Before* the Mystery of Golgotha, the universe worked upon Man in such a way that he could not attain to pictures free of the body, free of matter.
- *Since* the Mystery of Golgotha, the universe has, as it were, withdrawn. Man has been transposed to an existence which only takes place in pictures.

What Man felt before the Mystery of Golgotha as his connection with the Universe, that he related also to the Universe. He related human life on Earth to Heaven.

- This we can observe quite exactly. The Hebrew of old was clearly and distinctly conscious that the twelve tribes of old Israel were projections on Earth of the constellations of the Zodiac. The twelve-foldness of the Universe comes to expression in the life of man; and we may say that in those days the life of man was pictured as a result of the twelve-foldness of the Heavens, of the Zodiac. Every man felt the starry Heaven streaming into him; and above all a group of men felt themselves as a group into which the starry Heaven rayed. In the evolution of Hebrew antiquity we must go back to the time when we are told of the twelve sons of Jacob as the projection on Earth of the twelve regions of Heaven.
- Just as there was this in-streaming of the heavenly forces upon Earth-man in gray antiquity, so also, since in the different parts of the Earth's surface evolution came about at different times, in Europe we find a similar thing at a later time. We must go back to the Middle Ages and study the legends of King Arthur and his Round Table, those significant Celtic legends. For Mid-Europe developed later to the stage reached by the old Hebrews thousands of years before. Mid-Europe was only so far on at the time to which the Legends of Arthur and his Round Table are assigned.
- There was however, a difference. Hebrew antiquity evolved to the point where the in-streaming from the Universe still yielded embodied pictures. Then came the point of time when the body was withdrawn from the pictures, when the

pictures had to be given a new substance. There was indeed a danger that, as regards his soul-life, man would pass completely into a picture-existence. This danger Man did not at once recognise. Even Descartes was still floundering, and instead of saying: 'I think, therefore I am not', he said the opposite of the truth: 'I think, therefore I am'. For when we live in pictures, we really *are not!* When we live in mere thoughts, it is the surest sign that we are not. Thoughts must be filled with substance. In order that man might not continue to live in mere pictures, in order that inner substance might once more be in the human being, that Being intervened who entered through the Mystery of Golgotha. Hebrew antiquity was the first to meet with this intervention of the central force, which was now to give back reality to the human soul that had become picture. This, however, was not at once understood.

- In the Middle Ages we have the last ramifications in the twelve around King Arthur's Table; but this was soon replaced by something else — the *Parsifal Legend*, which places One man over against the twelve, **One Man, who develops the twelve-foldness from out of his own inner centre**. Thus, over against that picture which was essentially the Grail picture, must be the Parsifal picture, in which what man now possesses within him, rays out from the centre. The endeavour of those in the Middle Ages who wished to understand the Parsifal picture, who wished to make the Parsifal striving active in the human soul, was to bring into the picture-existence that could crystallise out in man after all the materiality had filtered away — to bring into it true substance, inwardness of being. Whereas the Grail legend shows still the in-streaming from without, the Parsifal figure is now set over against it, raying out from the pictures that which can restore reality to them. Inasmuch as the Parsifal Legend appeared in this form, it represented the striving of humanity in the Middle Ages to find the way to the *Christ within*. It represents an instinctive striving to understand that which lives as the Christ in the evolution of humanity. If one studies inwardly what was experienced in the form of this figure of Parsifal, and compares it with what is to be found in the modern creeds, one receives a strong impulse towards that which must happen today. People are now satisfied with the mere husk of the word 'Christ' and believe that they thus possess Christ, whereas even the theologians themselves do not possess Him but hold to the

outer interpretation of the word. In the Middle Ages there was still so much direct consciousness left, that by comprehending the representative of humanity, Parsifal, men were able to wrest their way upwards to the form of Christ. If we reflect on this we receive the impression of man's place in the whole Universe. Throughout the world of Nature, conversion of forces prevails. In *man alone* matter is thrown out by pure thought. That matter which is actually cast out of the human being by pure thought is also *annihilated, it passes into nothingness.*

If we reflect upon this, we must think of all Earth-existence as follows: Here is the Earth, and on the Earth, Man; into Man passes matter. Everywhere else it is transmuted. *In Man it is annihilated.* The material Earth will pass away in proportion as matter is destroyed by man. When, some day, all the substance of the Earth will have passed through the human organism, being used there for thinking, the Earth will cease to be a cosmic body. And what man will have gained from this cosmic Earth will be pictures. These however, will have a new reality, they will have preserved an original reality. This reality is that which proceeds from the force which, as central force, makes itself felt through the Mystery of Golgotha. Thus, when we look to the end of the Earth, what do we see? The end of the Earth will come when all its substance is destroyed as described above. Man will then possess pictures of all that has taken place in earthly evolution. At the end of the earthly period the Earth will have sunk into the Universe, and there *would* remain merely pictures, without reality. **What gives them reality however, is the fact of the Mystery of Golgotha having been there in humanity; that gives these pictures inner reality for the life to come.** Through the Mystery of Golgotha, a new beginning is set for the future existence of the Earth.

From this we can see that what is contained in our stream of evolution is not to be regarded merely as a continuous stream, where one thing is always related to another as effect to cause, but we must so consider the Earth-evolution that we recognise in the first place a *pre-Christian evolution*, out of which came all that men were able to think at that time, for what they were able then to think was contained in the Father-God, was imparted to the Earth through Him. The nature and work of the Father-God however, was such that what He created as Earth-evolution was

given over to that part of Earth-evolution that tends to pass away. *A new beginning was made with the Mystery of Golgotha.* Of all that went before only pictures were to remain, as it were descriptive paintings of the world. These pictures were, however, to receive new reality through that which entered as Being into the evolution of the Earth through the Mystery of Golgotha. That is the cosmic significance of the Mystery of Golgotha; that is what I meant years ago, when I said: Christianity will not be understood until *it has penetrated even into the physics of our Earth*, until we understand how, even in physical things, the Christian substance works in the world-existence. We have not grasped Christianity until we can say to ourselves: Precisely in the *domain of heat* such a change is taking place in man that through it matter is being destroyed and a purely picture-existence comes forth out of the matter; but through the union of the human soul with the Christ-substance this picture-existence is made into a new reality.

1921-05-13-GA204 ↗

.. is an eye-opener lecture and also refers to the 'enlivened images' the 'quickenning to life of the current shadow-pictures of the intellect' and projects an dramatic destiny for those who will not be able to achieve this by then (last paragraph of this long quote)

Quote A

Just as the separation of the moon was a decisive event, so too will be its re-entry. It is true that as human beings we shall still be inhabiting the earth, although birth will no longer take place in the ordinary way. We shall be connected with the earth by other means than through birth. We shall, however, have evolved in a certain respect by that time. And we must learn to connect what is happening today — I mean the fact that the intellect is becoming more and more shadowy — with what will one day be a great event in earthly evolution — the re-entry of the moon into the substance of the earth.

If the intellect continues to become even more spectral than it is already, if men never resolve to receive into their being what can now flow to them from spiritual worlds, then they will inevitably

be absorbed into the shadowy grey-ness of their intellectual life.

What is this shadowy intellect? It cannot understand the real nature and being of man. The mineral world is the only realm which the shadowy human intellect is to a certain degree capable of understanding. Even the life of the plant remains enigmatical; still more so the life of the animal; while human life is altogether beyond the grasp of the mind. And so man goes on his way, evolving pictures of existence which in reality are nothing but a great world-question. His intellect cannot begin to grasp the real nature of plant or animal, and least of all that of the human being. This state of things will continue if man fails to listen to what is being given to him in the form of new Imaginations, in which cosmic existence is pictured to him.

The living wisdom that Spiritual Science is able to impart must be received into his shadowy, intellectual concepts and thoughts, **for only so can the shadow-pictures of the intellect be quickened to life.**

This quickening to life of the shadow-pictures of the intellect is not only a human but a cosmic event.

You will remember the passage in the book *Outline of Esoteric Science* dealing with the time when the human souls ascended to the planets and afterwards descended once more to earth-existence. I spoke of how the Mars-men, the Jupiter-men and the others descended again to earth. Now an event of great significance came to pass at the end of the seventies of last century. It is an event that can be described only in the light of facts which are revealed to us in the spiritual world. Whereas in the days of old Atlantis human beings came down to the earth from Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, and so on — that is to say, beings of soul were drawn into the realm of earth-existence — since the end of the seventies of last century, other Beings — *not of the human order* — have been descending to the earth for the purposes of their further development. From cosmic realms beyond the earth they come down to the earth and enter into a definite relationship with human beings. Since the eighties of the nineteenth century, super-earthly Beings have been seeking to enter the sphere of earth-existence. Just as the Vulcan-men were the last to come down to the earth so now Vulcan Beings are actually coming into the realm of earthly existence. Super-earthly Beings are already here, and the fact that we are able to have a connected body of

Spiritual Science at all today is due to the circumstance that Beings from beyond the earth are bringing the messages from the spiritual world down into earth-existence ...

.. I repeat, that since the last third of the nineteenth century Spiritual Beings from the cosmos have been coming into our own sphere of existence. Their home is the sphere lying between the moon and Mercury, but they are already pressing forward into the realm of earth-existence and seeking to gain a foothold there. And they will be able to find it if human beings are imbued with the thought of their existence. This can also be expressed as I expressed it just now, by saying that **our shadowy intellect must be quickened to life by the pictures of Spiritual Science**. We are speaking of concrete fact when we say: Spiritual Beings are seeking to come down into earth-existence and ought to be willingly received. Catastrophe after catastrophe must ensue, and earthly life will fall at length into social chaos, if opposition is maintained in human existence to the advent of these Beings. They desire nothing else than to be the advance-guards of what will happen to earth-existence when the moon is once again united with the earth.

Today people may consider it comparatively harmless to elaborate only those automatic, lifeless thoughts which arise in connection with the mineral world and the mineral nature of plant, animal and man. Materialists revel in such thoughts which are — well — thoughts and nothing more. But try to imagine what will happen if men go on unfolding no other kinds of thoughts until the time is reached **in the eighth millennium for the moon-existence to unite again with the earth**. These Beings of whom I have spoken will gradually come down to the earth. Vulcan Beings, ‘Supermen’ of Vulcan, ‘Supermen’ of Venus, of Mercury, of the Sun, will unite with this earth-existence. But if human beings persist in nothing but opposition to them, earth-existence will pass over into chaos in the course of the next few thousand years.

It will be quite possible for the men of earth, if they so wish, to develop a more and more automatic form of intellect — but that can also happen amid conditions of barbarism. Full and complete manhood, however, cannot come to expression in such a form of intellect, and men will have no relationship to the Beings who would fain come towards them in earth-existence.

And all those Beings of whom men have such an erroneous conception because the shadowy intellect can only grasp the mineral nature, the crudely material nature in the minerals, plants and animals, nay even in the human kingdom itself — **all these thoughts which have no reality will in a trice become substantial realities when the moon unites again with the earth.** And from the earth there will spring forth a terrible brood of beings, a brood of automata of an order of existence lying between the mineral and the plant kingdoms, and possessed of an overwhelming power of intellect. ...

.. And from the earth there will spring forth a terrible brood of beings, a brood of automata of an order of existence lying between the mineral and the plant kingdoms, and possessed of an overwhelming power of intellect.

This swarm will seize upon the earth, will spread over the earth like a network of ghastly, spider-like creatures, of an order lower than that of plant-existence, but possessed of overpowering wisdom. These spidery creatures will be all interlocked with one another, and in their outward movements they will imitate the thoughts that men have spun out of the shadowy intellect that has not allowed itself to be quickened by the new form of Imaginative Knowledge by Spiritual Science. All the thoughts that lack substance and reality will then be endowed with being.

The earth will be surrounded — as it is now with air and as it sometimes is with swarms of locusts — with a brood of terrible spider-like creatures, half-mineral, half-plant, interweaving with masterly intelligence, it is true, but with intensely evil intent. And **in so far as man has not allowed his shadowy intellectual concepts to be quickened to life,**

- his existence will be united not with the Beings who have been trying to descend since the last third of the nineteenth century,
- but with this ghastly brood of half-mineral, half-plantlike creatures. He will have to live together with these spider-like creatures and to continue his cosmic existence within the order of evolution into which this brood will then enter.

This is a destiny that is very emphatically part of human evolution upon the earth, and it is quite well known today by many of those who try to hold humanity back from the knowledge of Spiritual Science. For there are men who are actually conscious allies of this process of the entanglement of earth-existence. We must no longer allow ourselves to be shocked by descriptions of this kind. Such facts are the background of what is often said today by people who out of old traditions still have some consciousness of these things and who then see fit to surround them with a veil of mystery. But it is not right any longer for the process of the earthly evolution of humanity to be veiled in mystery. However great the resistance, these things must be said, for, as I constantly repeat, the acceptance or rejection of spiritual-scientific knowledge is a grave matter for all mankind.

Quote B

The intellect will become more and more shadowy. If Man does not resolve to absorb what is to descend from the spiritual world, he will pass completely over to the shadowy side of his intellect. The intellect is now only able to understand the mineral kingdom, it cannot penetrate to the human being. Plant life is a deep riddle to it, animal life is more so, human life is completely opaque. The formation of images devoid of reality will continue unless man resolves to develop imagination. If he does this **the shadowy pictures will be re-animated by Spiritual Science, and become not merely human events but cosmic as well.**

With pictures is meant, all that Man has taken in as mineral substance on earth gets used and destroyed, so all that has taken place in earthly evolution. Man experiences this through the senses, and these astral images are then 'annihilated' or pass into nothingness. The context of the Christ Impulse of the higher ether linked to the etherization of blood, with this context the 1911-03-23-GA128 can be the door-opener lecture in this matter, if we also consider this destruction of matter in the head, which is mentioned in the GA201 lecture.

1921-10-01-GA207

See [Process of perception#1921-10-01-GA207](#)

1921-10-29-GA208

For a longer extract, see [Seven life processes#1921-10-29-GA208](#) ↗

3/ The life of breathing gives image quality to the fleeting life of the senses that tends to preserve itself.

We are able to have images of the outside world because the breathing rhythm is in touch with the currents that pass through the nerves. Ideas and abstract thoughts are still entirely bound to the life of the nerves, but anything to do with images is connected with the life of breathing. **When we breathe we have creative life in us, a life we may call the image-creating life.**

This lives in the human form and therefore also takes part in the human form. We have seen that the human form arises out of the zodiac, and because the creative life that comes with our breathing lives in the human form, it also has part in the whole outer form that has been created out of the starry heavens. This form is therefore also part of the inner aspect of the human being.

And it is thanks to our breathing that we have not only the contents of our conscious mind but also images of all our internal organs, images based on the outer form. Our internal organs therefore arise at first in a roundabout way, as images created in the breathing process. They do not yet have substance at this point. **The breath creates an image of the internal human being.** With our breathing we are in the outside world, moving within the zodiac with the Earth, and we are continually inhaling the images of our internal organization.

These images are inhaled from life outside us. This, then is our creative life. The images we inhale are spread through the whole organism by the life of circulation. This and the life of breathing take human beings to the point where they are inwardly image of the world. Thus we may say: "This is the creative life", and then say: "These are images that spread, something that spreads out, images of our organs."

4 and 5/ The life of circulation is in touch with the life of metabolism, with the result that the images are given physical substance and physical organs develop on the fifth level of life. **Matter infiltrates the images; it suffuses or tinges them.**

Thus the upper human being creates images in the life of breathing and these images are made tangible reality by the matter that infiltrates and tinges them.

1924-02-10-GA234 ↗

describes memory in various stages as it is experienced not only in life, but also those same memories of life experiences, in the process between death and a new birth where they are metamorphosed in the etheric view, the astral, and then the spirit world

It is only now, after having undergone all this, that we enter the spiritual world and are really able to live there. **Our faculty of memory now undergoes its fourth metamorphosis.**

We feel that everywhere behind the ordinary memory of earthly life something has been living in us, though we were not aware of it. It has engraved itself into the world and now we, ourselves, become it.

We have received our earthly life in its spiritual significance; we now become this significance.

After travelling back through birth to the spiritual world we find ourselves confronting it in a very peculiar way. In a sense, we ourselves in our spiritual counterpart — in our true spiritual worth — now confront the world. We have passed through the above experiences, have experienced the pain caused to another, have experienced the spiritual value corresponding to an experience with a tree, let us say; we have experienced all this, but it was not self-experience. We might compare this with the embryonic stage of human life; for then — and even throughout the first years of life — all we experience does not yet reach the level of self-consciousness, which only awakens gradually.

Thus, when we enter the spiritual world, all we have experienced backwards gradually becomes ourself, our spiritual self-consciousness. **We are now what we have experienced; we are our own spiritual worth corresponding thereto.**

With this existence, that really represents the other side of our earthly existence, we enter the world that contains nothing of the ordinary kingdoms of external nature - mineral, plant and animal kingdoms - for these belong to the Earth. But in that world there immediately come before us, first, the souls of those who have died before us and to whom we stood in some kind of relationship, and then the individualities of higher spiritual beings. We live as spirit among human and non-human spirits, and this environment of spiritual individualities is now our world. The relationship of these spiritual individualities, human or non-human, to ourselves now constitutes our experience. As on Earth we have our experience with the beings of the external kingdoms of nature, so now, with spiritual beings of different ranks. And it is especially important that we have felt their sympathies and antipathies like spiritual rain (to use yesterday's metaphor) permeating these experiences during the retrospective part of the life between death and birth that I have described to you schematically.

We now stand face to face with these beings of whom we previously perceived only their sympathies and antipathies while we were living through the spiritual counterpart of our earthly life: we live among these beings now that we have reached the spiritual world. We gradually feel as if inwardly permeated with force, with impulses proceeding from the spiritual beings around us. All that we have previously experienced now becomes more and more real to us, in a spiritual way. We gradually feel as if standing in the light or shadow of these beings in whom we are beginning to live. Before, through living through the spiritual worth corresponding to some earthly experience, we felt this or that about it, found it valuable or harmful to the cosmos. We now feel: There is something I have done on earth, in thought or deed; it has its corresponding spiritual worth, and this is engraved into the spiritual cosmos. The beings whom I now encounter can either do something with it, or not; it either lies in the direction of their evolution or of the evolution for which they are striving, or it does not. We feel ourselves placed before the beings of the spiritual world and realise that we have acted in accordance with their intentions or against them, have either added to, or subtracted from, what they willed for the evolution of the world.

Above all, it is no mere ideal judgment of ourselves that we feel, but a real evaluation; and this evaluation is itself the reality of our existence when we enter the spiritual world after death.

When you have done something wrong as a Man in the physical world, you condemn it yourself if you have sufficient conscience and reason; or it is condemned by the law, or by the judge, or by other men who despise you for it. But you do not grow thin on this account — at least, not very thin, unless you are quite specially constituted. On entering the world of spiritual beings, however, we do not merely meet the ideal judgment that we are of little worth in respect of any fault or disgraceful deed we have committed; we feel the gaze of these beings resting upon us as if it would annihilate our very being. In respect of all we have done that is valuable, the gaze of these beings falls upon us as if we first attained thereby our full reality as psycho-spiritual beings. Our reality depends upon our value. Should we have hindered the evolution that was intended in the spiritual world, it is as if darkness were robbing us of our very existence. If we have done something in accordance with the evolution of the spiritual world, and its effects continue, it is as if light were calling us to fresh spiritual life. We experience all I have described and enter the realm of spiritual beings. This enhances our consciousness in the spiritual world and keeps us awake. Through all the demands made upon us there, we realise that we have won something in the universe in regard to our own reality.

Suppose we have done something that hinders the evolution of the world and can only arouse the antipathy of the spiritual beings whose realm we now enter. The after-effect takes its course as I have described and we feel our consciousness darken; stupefaction ensues, sometimes complete extinction of consciousness. We must now wake up again. On doing so, we feel in regard to our spiritual existence as if someone were cutting into our flesh in the physical world; only, this experience in the spiritual is much more real — though it is real enough in the physical world. In short, what we are in the spiritual world proves to be the result of what we ourselves have initiated. You see from this that man has sufficient inducement to return again to earthly life.

Why to return? Well, through what he has engraved into the spiritual world man has himself experienced all he has done for good or ill in earthly life; and it is only by returning to earth that he can actually compensate for what, after all, he has only learnt to know through earthly experience. In fact, when he reads his value for the world in the countenances of these spiritual beings — to put it metaphorically — he is sufficiently impelled to return, when able, to the physical world, in order to live his life in a different way from before. Many incapacities for this he will still retain, and only after many lives on earth will full compensation really be possible.

If we look into ourselves during earthly life, we find, at first, memories. It is of these that, to begin with, we build our soul-life when we shut out the external world; and it is upon these alone that the creative imagination of the artist draws. That is the first form of memory. Behind it are the mighty 'pictures' which become perceptible immediately after we have passed through the gate of death. These are taken from us: they expand to the wide spaces of the universe. When we survey our memory-pictures we can say that there lives behind them something that at once proceeds towards the cosmic spaces when our body is taken from us. Through our body we hold together what is really seeking to become 'ideal' in the universe. But while we go through life and retain memories of our experiences, we leave behind in the world something still further behind our memories. We leave it behind us in the course of time and must experience it again as we retrace our steps. This lies behind our memory as a third 'structure'. First, we have the tapestry of memory; behind it, the mighty cosmic pictures we have 'rolled up' within us; behind this, again, lives what we have written into the world. Not until we have lived through this are we really ourselves, standing naked in spirit before the spiritual universe which clothes us in its garments when we enter it.

We must, indeed, look at our memories if we want to get gradually beyond the transient life of Man. Our earthly memories are transient and become dispersed through the universe. But our Self lives behind them: the Self that is given us again from out of the spiritual world that we may find our way from time to eternity.



X. Personality and Individuality

Spiritual science uses the terms Personality and Individuality to distinguish between

- the eternal spiritual 'I' of the human being (beyond space and time), the *Individuality*,
- and the specific clothing in which the soul dresses itself in an individual incarnation, the *Personality*.

Hence, an Individuality includes a string of incarnations, lives of people known with different names and stories in different timeframes of history, that are each characterized by their (different) Personality or 'character colouring'.

In the process of Man's transformation and spiritualization (see above), the relationship between Personality and Individuality also changes (1913-05-18-GA152):

- In the past, the Personality was determined by blood relationships (heredity) and temperament, and into this impersonal elements streamed from the spiritual world.
- In the future, a Personality will be determined by what Man is able to receive as inspiration flowing from the spiritual world and work upon in himself. The tone and character of a Man's Personality will be developed through spiritual understanding, and the character acquired from participation in the spiritual world.

Lectures

1903-12-29-GA088

.. we can call the soul human personality, the spirit human Individuality ..

full extract

Now I would like to mention some ideas concerning the evolution of the rounds. If we wish to follow the evolution of the rounds, then we must be clear that the human being consists of three members: body, soul, and spirit. For an understanding of the rounds it is important to name these three members differently. We can call the body human kind; we can call the soul human personality; the spirit, human individuality. To make this clear you must understand that human beings with respect to kind or genus, differ very little from one another; we have here a universal equality. But human beings are very different from one another with respect to personality. Personality is then seen as what differentiates. However, what is individual is seen as the universal, as the universal human spirit. Kind is basically the bodily nature; personality is basically the soul aspects; individuality, basically the spirit. We wish first to follow the first two; that is, kind and personality. Personality was prepared in the lunar epoch. What has come over from the lunar epoch is the personality. What we carry within is kind or genus, the way we presently appear, the bodily form, which is basically an earthly imprint, an earthly shape. All of earth evolution since pralaya exists in order gradually to bring the human bodily form to the point where it can allow the personality to unite with this bodily form, as well as to allow the two, personality and bodily form, to become the seat of the spirit, of the individuality.

1912-05-08-GA143 ↗

We have lived through a cultural age which has nothing to say about the individuality who passes from life to life, but values only the single personality. We speak of Socrates, Plato, Caesar, Goethe, Spinoza, Fichte, Raphael, Michelangelo, and **think of them only in the one incarnation**. We do not speak of **the Individuality who goes from incarnation to incarnation, but we speak of the Personality**.

We speak of one Socrates, one Plato, one Goethe and so on, **we speak only of a single life in which the individuality has found expression. Western culture was destined to**

stress the importance of the single personality, to bring it to vigorous, characteristic maturity, and to disregard the individuality passing from life to life.

But the time has come when we must again learn gradually to recognise how the eternal Individuality passes through the several single Personalities. Now we find that mankind is striving to apprehend what it is that lives on from personality to personality. That will fire the imagination and illumine the souls of men with a new light of understanding. This can be illustrated by a particular example.

We turn our eyes to a figure such as the Prophet Elijah. First of all, we think of the Prophet himself. But the essential significance of this Prophet is the fact that in a certain way he prepared for the Mystery of Golgotha; He indicated that the Jahve impulse is something that can be understood and grasped only in the ego. He was not able to reveal the full significance of the human 'I' for as regards ego-consciousness he represents a half-way stage between the Moses-idea of Jehovah and the Christian Christ-idea. Thus, the prophet Elijah is revealed to us as a mighty herald, an advance messenger of the Christ-Impulse, of what came to pass through the Mystery of Golgotha. We see him as a great and mighty figure.

Now let us turn to another. The West is accustomed to think of him as a single personality. I refer to John the Baptist. The West sees him confined within his personality. But we ourselves learn to know him as the herald of Christ Himself; we follow his life as the forerunner of Christ, as the man who first uttered the words: 'Change the disposition of your souls for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.' He indicated the impulse that was to come through Golgotha; that divinity can be found within the human ego, that the Christ-Ego is to enter more and more deeply into the human ego, and that this impulse is near at hand. Now, through spiritual science, we learn the truth that is also indicated in the Bible, namely that the same Individuality who had lived in the prophet Elijah, lived in John the Baptist. He who as Elijah heralded the Christ was reincarnated as John the Baptist, again heralding the Christ in the way appropriate for his time. For us these two figures are now united. Eastern culture proceeds in a different way, concentrating on individualities and neglecting the single personality.

And when in this way we point to what happens behind the world of the senses, we can also point to what takes place here in the sense-world as an imprint or copy of the event that has just been described, — that a promotion, so to say, of this Archangel, takes place behind the world of the senses. **Hitherto Man has been able to possess personality. In the future he will also possess personality, but in a different way.** Man has always participated to some extent in the super-sensible worlds — at any rate he always could do so with his life of soul; but the personal note, the personal colouring which he then showed in his life in the sense world did not come down from above, it came up from below, it came from Lucifer. It was Lucifer who gave man personality. One could therefore say: Man cannot enter the super-sensible world with his personality, he cannot bring it into the spiritual world, he must blot out his personality — otherwise he will pollute the spiritual world.

[In the future]

In future it will be required of Man to allow his personality to be inspired from above, so that it can receive what will then flow out of the spiritual world.

A personality will receive its stamp from what it has been able to absorb of spiritual knowledge; personality will become something quite different.

In a sense man was formerly a personality through what separated him from the spiritual, through what was impressed into him from the body. **In future he must be a personality through what he is able to receive from the spiritual world and work upon in himself.**

[In the past]

In the past, blood and temperament determined personalities, and into these personalities impersonal elements streamed from the super-sensible world. Less and less will Man be a personality on account of his blood and temperament. In future he will be able to become a **personality through the character that he**

acquires from his participation in the super-sensible world. The Michael impulse which brings into the human soul an understanding for the spiritual life, will achieve this.

Men with a pronounced character and personality will in the future have this character and personality **through what they bring to expression from their understanding of the super-sensible worlds.** The Alexanders, the Caesars, the Napoleons belong to the past. Certainly the super-sensible element flowed into them too, but their highly personal colouring they received from what came to them from below. Men who are personalities from the way in which they carry the spiritual world into the sensible, men who carry personality into mankind *from the soul*, will take the place of the Alexanders, the Caesars, the Napoleons. **The strength of human deeds will in future come from the strength of the spiritual influence working into these human deeds.**

All this belongs to what is important in the transition from one epoch into another. The transition, however, from the Gabriel epoch into the Michael epoch in our time has all the characteristics of a transition of the utmost significance.

It is possible, even with ordinary sound human reason, to come to an understanding of what has been said today, if one is only unprejudiced enough to observe our times and see how two possibilities come right up against one another in the last third of the 19th century.

The first possibility is to form a world-conception [worldview↘] based upon natural [mineral] science↘. Today that is out of date; it has become antiquated, it no longer lies in the character of the age. People still do so because they simply carry forward what comes from the past.

It lies in the character of the age, however, to construct a world-conception from the inspirations coming from the spiritual world [spiritual science↘] and an understanding of them. [worldview spiritual science]↘ We must receive this into our souls as a feeling, as an experience; then we shall learn to know what the anthroposophical world-conception means for individual souls, we shall learn to perceive what evolution is for mankind. **It is given to us to be partakers in things of great significance.**

...

Today I wished to place before your souls the important character of this transition: the fact that those souls who can rouse themselves to activity will now be able to find an understanding for inspired truth. For **that is the will of those who stand behind mankind, the guiding World-Powers of Man's evolution.**

And the expression of this in the sense world is, that

- whereas during past ages temperament and heredity gave personality its individual colouring,
- in the future spiritual understanding will be the determining element. Spiritual understanding will determine the tone and character of a Man's personality.



XI. Brunetto Latini

I felt this story to be of interest to include in the Appendix after Latini is mentioned in one of the lectures above. ~Anthony

Source: https://rsarchive.org/Lectures/BruLat_index.html

30 January 1915, Dornach

Translated by George Adams

The manifold studies which we have recently pursued have shown that all true Art eventually issues from the secrets of Initiation. We have frequently spoken of this fact, and we have indicated many examples. Great epochs of Art, when artistic deeds raying far and wide over humanity have taken place, derive their sources again and again from Initiation. This shows how Art brings spiritual life into the physical. Initiation opens out to man the possibility to advance from the physical plane into the spiritual

worlds. That which can then be experienced, more or less consciously in spiritual worlds, true Art carries down into the physical forms wherein it finds expression.

But the inner connection of the facts to which we are here referring, cannot be fully penetrated unless we also bear in mind that the last few centuries of evolution have in reality eclipsed — made imperceptible to the vast majority of men — things that were not by any means a secret to the same extent, five, six or seven centuries ago, as they are today for those who call themselves civilised mankind.

To point to one significant example, we may choose a work of art which does indeed ray out over the ages — the *Divine Comedy* of Dante.

No one who lets the *Divine Comedy* work upon his soul will fail to perceive the spiritual note that pervades what Dante has here expressed. Nowadays, if it be a question of studying how Dante arrived at the magnificent pictures of his poem, people will readily be inclined to use the word *fancy* or *imagination*. Dante, they say, was filled with artistic imagination. They are content to leave it at that. Needless to say, I shall not deny that artistic imagination was at work in Dante. But even in the light of outer history it would be wrong to suppose that he created the whole of his magnificent poem, as it were out of the void, out of mere fancy.

Dante had a friend and teacher *Brunetto Latini*, who, as I think you will recognise from what we shall presently say, may be described as an Initiate in the true sense of the word. It is this connection between Dante and a man who was initiated according to the conditions of his time, which we, in the light of our ideas, must fundamentally point out.

One thing at any rate was known to that time. They knew that man, to reach the secrets of existence, must take the path that leads through his own re-birth. This above all was fully and absolutely living in that time: the recognition that the path to knowledge of the world must necessarily lead through self-knowledge. Self-knowledge, however, must not be thought of in the superficial sense in which people often speak of it today. Who does not think himself able to know about himself? By way of introduction, let me bring home to you with an example, how difficult self-knowledge is even in the most elementary matters. How little a man is inclined to set out for what can truly be called self-knowledge!

I have here a book by a famous philosopher of today — Dr. Ernst Mach, who has written a number of works highly characteristic of the present time. At the very beginning of his book on the *Analysis of Sensations*,

dealing with the connections of the physical and the psychical, the following remark occurs: 'As a young man,' he writes, 'I was once going along the street when I saw a face which was highly distasteful to me. How astonished I was when I observed that it was my own face which I had seen by the chance combination of two mirrors in a shop-window!'

Thus, as he went along the street, his karma led him past a shop where two mirrors were so inclined that he could see himself. He saw the face, highly distasteful to him, and then discovered that it was his own. We see that even with respect to this most outer aspect, it is not quite easy for us to acquire the most elementary self-knowledge. But Mach makes another remark as well. He becomes a University professor; so he has some idea of the appearance of a scholar or a pedant.

'Not long ago,' he writes, 'tired after a long railway journey, I got into an omnibus. Simultaneously another man entered from the opposite side. What a wretched-looking pedant, I said to myself, and presently discovered that I had only seen myself, for a looking-glass was hanging opposite the entrance.' 'Thus,' he continues by way of explanation, 'the class-type was far more familiar to me than my own special type.' He had formed an idea in his mind of the typical pedant. He knew that the man, getting in opposite, looked rather like an out-of-work schoolmaster. Not until afterwards did he discover that it was himself. A pretty example of the often very deficient self-knowledge of men, even as regards their outer form. As to the knowledge of the soul, it is a great deal more difficult. Nevertheless, personal and individual self-knowledge is none other than the first elementary beginning of the path which leads through man into the universal secrets of existence.

When we regard the world externally, here in the physical world we have before us only that which belongs to the outermost nature of man — to the system of his physical body. Look out over the widespread environment which we can see on the physical horizon of this world; there we have everything that is related to our own outer body — the physical human body. We know that this is only a portion of our total being. Behind it is the etheric body; but man in the first place is unaware of all that in his environment which resembles his etheric body. Still less does he surmise that which resembles his astral body and his Ego.

Man, to begin with, on the Earth, is for himself the only example — the only document he has brought over from the spiritual world. Therefore he must pass through this, the document of his own being. He must go through himself. This was always known to those who experienced anything of Initiation. Thus it was known to Brunetto Latini, teacher and

friend of Dante. Moreover, it is characteristic how Brunetto Latini's Initiation, as we may call it, was eventually brought about. It happened by a particular event. That is what frequently occurs. Fundamentally speaking, every one who sets his foot on the path of spiritual science is waiting for the portal of the spiritual world to be opened to him sooner or later, as indeed it will be. It may be — indeed it often is so — that the entry to the spiritual world takes place by degrees. Then we grow slowly into the spiritual world. Nevertheless, very, very frequently it happens that the world is opened to us as by a kind of shock which breaks in upon our life — by a sudden and unexpected event.

Thus, as Brunetto Latini himself relates, he had been sent as ambassador to the ruler of Castile. On his way back he learned that his party, the Guelphs, had been expelled from Florence. Florence had utterly changed during his absence. This message brought him into confusion. Such confusion of our state of soul which is suited to the outer physical world, often goes hand-in-hand with what becomes the starting-point for an entry into the spiritual world.

Brunetto Latini goes on to relate how as a result of his confusion, instead of riding home, he rode into a neighbouring forest, quite unaware of what he was doing (or so at any rate he afterwards believed when he looked back on it). Then, when he came to himself, he had a strange and unwanted impression. He saw no longer the ordinary world of the physical plane around him, but something that looked like an immense mountain. He did not come to himself again in that consciousness which normally confronts the physical world. He came to consciousness over against quite another world than that which was physically there around him. There was an immense mountain; but these things were such that they came and went — came into being and passed away again. There at the side of the mountain stood a woman, according to whose commands that which arose, arose, and that which passed away, passed away again.

Brunetto Latini now beheld the laws and principles of Nature's working in the forms of Imagination. All Nature's laws — the living and creative essence of Nature herself — came before him in an Imagination, in the figure of a woman who gave her orders for all these things to arise and pass away again.

We must imagine ourselves living in the time of the thirteenth, fourteenth century, when the natural scientific way of thought was slowly entering. In later times, men spoke abstractly of the Laws of Nature; they would on no account imagine that there was any reality of being behind the totality of Nature's laws. Brunetto Latini, however, saw it in the form of

Imagination, as a woman, out of whose spirit proceeded all that was subsequently felt as abstract Laws of Nature, like a Word that held sway throughout this Nature, which stood before him in living Imagination.

This woman, he relates, then bade him deepen the forces of his soul; so would he enter more and more deeply into himself. Here it is interesting. Raying out over him her forces, as it were, she gives him the possibility to enter more and more deeply into himself. He dives down into his own being, and the sequence he now indicates is indeed, under certain conditions, the true sequence of Initiation.

The first thing, he tells us, which he now learned to know were the forces of the soul. Diving down into himself, man does indeed learn to know what otherwise remains unconscious in him — the forces of his soul. This recognition of his own soul-forces is a thing from which man will often flee, when he draws near to it. For when we perceive the forces of the soul, it often seems to us that we say to ourselves: 'What an unsympathetic soul that is!' We do not like this feeling, any more than the worthy professor did when he saw his own form, which was distasteful to him. We do not want to see. For with the chorus of the soul's forces we often see many a thing we have within us, which we by no means attribute to ourselves in ordinary life. We see it as something that is at work in the totality of our own being — enhancing our being, or making it smaller; making us of greater or lesser value for the Universe.

Thus, to begin with, we rise into the soul-forces. At the next stage, we experience the four temperaments. There it becomes clear to us how we are woven together, of the choleric, melancholic, sanguine, and phlegmatic, and how this weaving together lies deeper down than the soul-forces.

Then, when we have gone through the temperaments, we come to what may be called the five senses — in the occult sense. For in the way man ordinarily speaks of the five senses, he only knows them from outside. You cannot learn to know the senses inwardly till you have descended through the temperaments into the deeper regions of your own self. Then you behold the eyes, the ears, the other senses from within. You experience your own eyes, for instance, or your ears — filling them from within. You must imagine it thus. Just as you came into this hall through this door, and perceived the objects and persons that were already here, so when you undergo this descent into yourself you come into the region of your eyes or your ears. There you perceive how the forces are working from within

outward, to bring about your seeing and your hearing. You perceive an altogether complicated world, of which a man who only knows the outer physical plane has no idea at all.

Some, no doubt, will say: 'Maybe, but this world of the eyes and the ears will not impress me greatly. The world of the physical plane which I have around me here is great, and the world of the eyes and ears is very small. I should be gazing into a minute world.'

That, however, is maya. What you envisage when you are within your ears or within your eyes is far greater, fuller in content, than the outer physical world. You have a far more abundant world around you there.

Then and then only, when you have gone through this region, you come into the realm of the four elements. We have already spoken of all the properties of the several elements; but it is only at this stage that you feel really within them — within the earthy, the watery, the airy, and the element of warmth.

Man ordinarily knows his senses from without. Here now he learns to know them from within. Consciously entering into the eye from within, he then breaks through the eye, and breaking through the eye comes into the four elements. But he can likewise break through the ear, or the sense of taste.

By these four elements he is perpetually surrounded, only he does not know what they are inwardly. He cannot see it with outer organs of sense. He must first get out of the sense-organs — albeit, get out of them *from within*. He must leave them again, as though by a gateway. He must get out, through his eye or his ear. So he slips through — through the eye, through the ear — and comes into the region of the elements. And in the region of the elements he learns to know all the spiritual beings who are living there — the manifold Nature-spirits, and Beings who belong to the Hierarchies nearest to man.

Then, going on and on, he comes into the region of the seven Planets. He is already farther outside, and learns to know what is creatively connected with man, in the great Universe. And then at last he has to cross *Oceanos* — the great Ocean, as it has always been called.

The Soul-forces
the four Temperaments
the five Senses

the four Elements
the seven Planets
the Ocean.

What does this passing through the ocean signify? Man can approach the planets while with the last portion of his soul's being he still remains within the physical. But when he thus goes inward through the gates of the senses, eventually he must take with him the very last relics of his soul, so that he may consciously enter the condition in which he is normally only in sleep. Ordinarily, when he is with the planets, he still remains in the body with a portion, as it were, with a fragment of his soul. But when he draws even this last out of the body, it seems to him as though he were floating through the universal ocean of spiritual being.

All this, Brunetto Latini undergoes. He tells how he undertook one after another of these steps, at the behest of the woman who appeared to him in his Imaginative cognition. Then she instructed him that he must go still farther. This, however, was at a particular moment, which again is highly characteristic.

Think of the situation. Perplexed, at a loss on account of what has happened in his paternal city, he rides into a forest. He comes to himself again, but this awakening leads him not into the physical world. It leads him through all the regions which we have here described. Then, however, the moment arises when, not by accident, not by mere chance, but by the definite summons of this woman he sees himself in the forest once more. Having undergone all these things, having passed through the soul-forces and the temperaments and through the senses outward into the elemental world, where he already perceived abundant spiritual life; having perceived the seven planets, and through them the higher Hierarchies, circle on circle; having felt himself at length not on the solid ground but swimming as it were, swimming through the great ocean; now he awakens again in the physical world.

That is the very significant thing we recognise in all these Initiations. The disciple passes through a complete cycle and returns again into the physical world.

Having lived through all this, Brunetto Latini feels himself once more in his forest. Now he is really surrounded by all that is physically about him. And anon the woman is there again at his side, albeit he now has the

physical forest around him. She tells him to ride on towards the right, and she gives him instruction, how he shall come to *Philosophy* and to the *four Virtues* of man, and to the knowledge of *the God of Love*.

Mark what a significant truth lies behind these things! A man of today will be quick enough with his reply: Philosophy — with that I am familiar! I have studied the whole history of philosophy. I know what philosophy is, and what it teaches. As to the four Virtues — Plato already named them: Wisdom, Courage, Balance or Moderation, and Justice. And the God of Love, who does not know of Him! You need only read the four Gospels. The man of today is familiar with all these things. But it is precisely the characteristic of spiritual knowledge: we begin to see that we do not really know all these things. We must first go through the understanding of the spiritual world and then return to what the physical provides. Then only do we understand the physical world.

If Brunetto Latini were to arise again today and a very learned man of our time were to approach him — a learned professor of philosophy, a famous man, let us assume — and were to say: 'I am familiar with the whole range of philosophy,' Brunetto Latini would answer: 'Yes, yes, no doubt you are, but in reality you know nothing of it. You must first learn to know the aspect of the super-sensible worlds, you must know what things are like in the super-sensible. Then you can come back again to philosophy, and it will be something quite new to you. Then only will you begin to divine what you now imagine that you know quite well.'

The same thing may be put in another way. After all, who would not think it absurd! ... A famous thinker of our time writes a philosophic book. Surely then he must understand it. How should he not understand what he himself has written? ... And yet, it is literally true: he may have written the book and may yet understand nothing of what he has written. It is not at all difficult nowadays to write a book. Books almost write themselves. One pieces together the things one has learned to repeat. One need not penetrate into the deeper meaning to do so.

That is the greatness that meets us in Brunetto Latini. What others learn to know by external study — he only will claim to know it after having penetrated through the spiritual world. Then he meets it again. He meets again what others imagine that they know of the physical world — the knowledge of Philosophy, of the four Virtues, and of the God of Love.

I should like my meaning at this point to be quite fully understood. No doubt a certain kind of knowledge is also attainable without spiritual cognition. But these things appear in a new light when one has first made

oneself familiar with that which lies behind the physical. So do we see it in this example of Brunetto Latini, whom I have only cited to show how outer artistic creation is concerned with Initiation. We see it in this example, in the relation of Brunetto Latini to Dante, revealing how Dante's great work of art is connected with Initiation.

Dante could never have reached his peculiar relation to the spiritual world if he had not had Brunetto Latini for his friend and teacher, to educate him into the spiritual world.

Every age has its own way of seeking the spiritual world. Already in the centuries preceding Dante's age, we find again and again with the most varied Initiates the woman of whom Brunetto Latini speaks — the guidance of man into the spiritual world by this woman. This line of evolution reaches back to the seventh and eighth centuries. Some of them actually refer to her as *Natura* — the living, creative Being of Nature. Initiates of old describe her living and creative Nature — as the counsellor of *nous*, of the Intelligence that works creatively throughout the world, Intelligence or Reason that permeates the world. Moreover, they call her a kinswoman of *Urania*. Out in the Cosmos, *nous* is counselled by *Urania*; here in this earthly realm, by *Natura*.

When we see clearly through this, we are led into still more ancient times, when the Initiates tried in another way to come near to certain secrets of existence. We find the same woman again in Proserpine — Persephone who weaves the garment for her mother Demeter. Thus do the Imaginations change in the course of centuries, showing, however, that the secrets of Initiation are always working in the progressive stream of human evolution.

To come thoroughly near to these things, it is also necessary for us to permeate ourselves with the living feeling, that in all that happens in the world, not only those forces and beings are at work which outer senses and intellect can perceive, but that the spiritual is working everywhere. We must take this into our reckoning. What man today describes — and for some time past has described as spiritual or intellectual development, is the development of forces that are bound to the physical body. This condition has developed gradually. We know that there was in ancient times the normal condition of clairvoyance. This gradually ebbed away and died down, and what we call spiritual today is altogether bound to the physical man. It is true that with the Mystery of Golgotha something great and mighty entered the evolution of humanity — so great that it will only be able to be understood in its fullness in the course of time. What man had hitherto was a kind of tradition. With the last relics of atavistic

clairvoyant power, the writers of the Gospels wrote down what had happened. That, as I say, was a last exertion of the old powers. Now we are once more beginning, with a newly awakened, newly discovered power of clairvoyance, to understand the first truths of the Mystery of Golgotha. We must realise that coming ages will penetrate more and more deeply into these secrets of the Mystery of Golgotha. We are only at the beginning, but we are indeed beginning.

The impulse, however, of the Mystery of Golgotha has been working ever since the moment when the life of Christ passed through the Earth. Had the Christ-Impulse only been able to work through that which men were capable of understanding, they would only have had very little of Christ in the past centuries.

I have often given two examples — and I might give many more — to show how the Christ works in the human soul, in that which passes through mankind's historic evolution, but of which men know nothing. Truly, what the Emperor Constantine knew of the Christ-Impulse when he himself, being converted, made Christianity the State religion, was very little. But the whole arrangement which came about by his victory — the victory of Constantine, son of Constantius Chlorus, over Maxentius — was such that we see the Mystery of Golgotha at work on every hand. The Sibylline Books were consulted by Maxentius. I mentioned it in the Leipzig Lecture-Cycle a year ago. They told him how he should act, over against the advancing army of Constantine. Moreover, he had a dream. In obedience to his dream and to the Sibylline Books, he, with an army many times stronger, went forth from the city to meet Constantine — a grave error, according to all the rules of war.

Constantine also dreamed. He dreamed that he would be victorious if he let the symbol of the Cross of Christ be carried before his army, and he did so.

Not through all human wisdom of which one could partake at that time, but by dreams, all these things were decided. Something was working through these dreams which could not be understood or received into consciousness. None the less, it was the living impulse of Christ. Truly, these men could not understand what was working in them — livingly, actively carrying forward the evolution of the world, determining for that time the face of the European Continent.

Again we find an epoch when we observe men — not only with reason and intellect but with their faculty of feeling — wrangling with one another about all manner of dogmatic questions. These dogmas seem very strange

to the 'enlightened' people of today. The question, for instance, whether it is right to receive the Holy Communion in one or in two forms, and the like ... Yet we know what an important part these conflicts played, for they subsequently worked themselves out in the Hussite movement, in Wycliffe and in others. There were all these conflicts, showing how little the intellect of man could reach to what the Christ-Impulse was in its reality. Where, then, did the Christ-Impulse really appear, in an important historic moment? This, too, I have often indicated. In a peculiar kind of vision, the Christ-Impulse manifested itself in a shepherd maid — the Maid of Orleans. We must know what this signifies. It represents a kind of helping hand, held out by the super-sensible, the spiritual forces that worked into the feeling of man at a time when they could not yet work into human concepts. In Joan of Arc it is particularly interesting to see how this happened. Her inner being was opened, as it were. But it was not that part of her inner life which was bound to the physical body. It was the perception of her ethereal and astral being that was spiritually opened, so much so that we find in her case a true analogy to the events of Initiation.

Recently, you will remember, at an appropriate season we spoke of the story of *Olaf Asteson*, who slept through the days after Christmas and did not reawaken until the day of the Three Kings, the 6th of January. In this connection we remarked, that in the season when the outer physical rays of the Sun have the least power, the spiritual power enveloping the Earth is greatest. Therefore the Christmas Festival is rightly placed in the season when the darkness is physically greatest. Then it is that illumination comes over the soul that is capable of illumination. Therefore, the legend tells, it was just in this season that Olaf Asteson attuned his inner life of soul, so that it was taken hold of by those forces which as spiritual light pass from the Sun into the aura of the Earth, at the time when the outer forces of the Sun are weakest. Until the 6th of January he really underwent an entry into the spiritual world.

The soul of the Maid of Orleans had to be kindled for a great historic mission. There had to be present in her soul the impulses that surge and weave their way throughout the world with the Christ-Impulse. They had to be there in her soul. How should they enter her? They could indeed have entered her, if at some time in her life she had undergone an experience similar to that of Olaf Asteson; if she had slept for the thirteen days after Christmas and had awakened on the 6th of January. And so indeed it was. Though she did not do so in the way of Olaf Asteson, still in a certain sense she underwent in sleep this time which is so favourable to Initiation. She underwent it in the last thirteen days of her embryonal life. She was borne by her mother, so as to pass through the Christmas season in the body of

her mother in the last thirteen days of her embryo life. For she was born on the 6th January. That is the birthday of Joan of Arc. Thus she passed through the very time in which the spiritual forces weave and work most strongly in the Earth's aura.

Therefore we need not wonder, if even outer documents relate that on that 6 January 1412, the villagers ran hither and thither, feeling that something momentous had happened, — though what it was that happened on that 6th of January they did not know until a later time, when the Maid of Orleans fulfilled her mission. For one who penetrates into the spiritual facts, it is of great significance to find it recorded in our calendar of births that Joan of Arc was born on the 6th January.

Thus, even in such facts as shine out far and wide in history, we see how necessary it is to pass through an understanding of the spiritual and thence to return to earthly affairs, for it is only then that we can fully understand the latter.

I have put this before you once more in order to show how old and dry and arid has become what is commonly known as the spiritual and intellectual culture of our time. He who can understand anything of the deeper impulses flowing through the evolution of the world and humanity, will realise that we must now be approaching a renewal, wherein we ourselves must play an active part through our understanding of and longing for the spiritual world. The more intensely we realise that a renewal is necessary, the better shall we find the possibility to co-operate.

With pale and petty changes and reforms of the old, we cannot serve this future. Radically we must renew the spiritual life of humanity. Great as is the difference between 'spiritual science' in our sense of the word, and that which is taught about the spiritual life in wide circles in the outer world — equally great will be the difference between the civilisation of the future and that of today. And if the people of today find it so easy to judge the pursuits of spiritual science fantastic, foolish and absurd, it only means that they describe as foolishness and as absurdity all that will dominate the spiritual culture of the future.

Yet, in precisely such a time, a rebirth of the life of the human soul must take place. All branches of human life must find their way into the impulses of this renewal, this rebirth. And among other things, all the artistic life must come near again to Initiation. These are the real reasons why we with our Goetheanum had to make the attempt to create a

beginning — I have often emphasised that it is only a beginning — which, with all its imperfections, is nevertheless related in all detail to what the science of Initiation has to say for our time.

The results of spiritual science must come to life in our souls. As a living and vital result they must find expression in the outer form. By this alone can that which is arising in our Goetheanum have its corresponding value. Then it will indeed have its value — not as anything complete, but as a new beginning. Would that there were an intensive consciousness in our circle of the intimate relation that exists between the spiritual science which we have been seeking to acquire for all these years, and that which our Building contains in every line, in every feature. If we ourselves are once filled with this recognition, then we shall be able to say to the world through our Goetheanum what must needs be said. Then we shall look with satisfaction into that future which will be destined to create, out of the primitive beginnings of this Building, something increasingly complete and perfect, it is true, yet in the same style and character.



XII. **The Ninefold Constitution of Man**

Source:

<https://rsarchive.org/Lectures/GA099/English/RSP1966/19070525p01.html>

25 May 1907, Munich

In the last lecture yesterday we spoke of the kind of relationship which Rosicrucianism adopts to the human being and to culture in general. Although the actual data of knowledge concerning the higher worlds can be discovered only by the seer, by more highly developed spiritual faculties, nevertheless the Rosicrucian method is such that the wisdom it imparts can be understood by the logical intellect. The knowledge itself is discovered by the seer with higher faculties, but normal human reason is capable of comprehending it. Let it not be imagined, however, that what it is possible to say in a single lecture can hold its ground against all criticism; this could only be so if the statements were put to the test by all the means accessible to the human mind. In the last lecture we spoke of yet another characteristic of Rosicrucianism, namely, that this method aims at carrying Spiritual Science into practical life. That is why things are put forward in such a way that they can be made an integral part of life. Here

too you must have patience; at the beginning it will seem as though many things are inapplicable in practical life. But when you are able to survey the whole, you will realise that what I have said is true. The Rosicrucian method of investigation is able to impart wisdom that can take effect in life.

First of all we will consider the several members of man's constitution. Only by advancing step by step and omitting nothing shall we be able to get a view of the organic whole. We shall also study the destiny of the human soul after death and the human being in his waking consciousness, in sleep and in death. We shall have to consider what is accomplished by man between death and a new birth. It is a widespread view that man is inactive after death but this is not the case. He has far rather to be intensely active, to create, to perform work that is of significance in the cosmos. We shall also have to speak of reincarnation and karma, of destiny in the evolution of man, of how humanity developed in days of yore and of evolution in the future. It will be my task today to give a brief description of the constitution and nature of the human being.

We must realise that the nature and being of man appear far more complex to spiritual perception than to ordinary sense-perception which is permeated by intellect and can only observe a very small portion of human nature as a whole. From the point of view of occultism, the physical body as we see it in front of us is actually permeated by the etheric body and the astral body. These three bodies are united and only when the etheric and the astral bodies are removed have we the real physical body of man before us. The physical body is that member which the human being has in common with the whole of physical Nature around him, in common with minerals, plants and animals.

The only correct view of the physical human body is to say that it corresponds with the extent of man's kinship with the mineral kingdom around him. But you must realise that this member of man's being is the one that can least of all be conceived of as separate from the cosmos. The forces working in the physical body pour in from the cosmos. Think of a rainbow. If a rainbow is to appear, there must be a particular combination of sunlight and rain clouds. The rainbow cannot be absent if this combination between sunlight and rain clouds actually exists. The rainbow is therefore a consequence; a phenomenon brought into being from without. The physical body too, is, in a way, a pure phenomenon. You must look in the whole surrounding universe for the forces which hold the physical body together. Where, then, are we to find, in their true form, these forces which cause the physical body to have the appearance it has?

Here we are led into higher worlds, for in the physical world we see the physical body as a phenomenon only. The forces which give rise to this phenomenon lie in a very lofty spiritual world. We must therefore give some study to worlds which exist as truly as the physical world exists.

When the occultist speaks of higher worlds, he means worlds that are around us all the time, only the senses for perceiving them must be opened just as the eyes must be opened for the perception of colours. When certain senses of the soul, senses which lie higher than the physical senses, are opened, the world around us is pervaded by a new revelation known as the astral world. Rosicrucian Theosophy calls this world the Imaginative World – but "Imaginative" here denotes something much more real than the ordinary implication of the word. There is a constant flowing and ebbing of pictures; the colours that are otherwise chained to objects are involved in myriad transformations within the astral world. In the movement that has linked itself with Rosicrucianism this world is also called the "Elemental World." These three expressions therefore: Imaginative world, Astral world, Elemental world, are interchangeable.

A still loftier world, revealed to yet higher senses, is that of the "Harmonies of the Spheres." This higher world penetrates into the world of pictures and colours. It is called "Devachan", "Rupa Devachan", or also the "Mental world"; in Rosicrucian terminology it is known as the world of the "Harmonies of the Spheres" or the world of Inspiration, because sound or tone is the medium of the Inspiration when the corresponding senses have been opened. In the movement that has linked itself with Rosicrucianism, this world has been called the "Heaven world." Lower or Rupa-Devachanic world, Devachan, the world of Inspiration, the Heaven world – these again are one and the same.

Still another world, revealed by even higher senses, is known in Rosicrucianism as the world of true Intuition, but "Intuition" here has a much higher reality than is contained in the word as used in everyday life. True Intuition is a "merging into" other beings, so that they are known from within themselves. In the movement that has linked itself with Rosicrucianism, this world of Intuition has been called the "world of Reason" (*Vernunftwelt*); it is so far above the ordinary world that it casts a shadow-image only into the world of men. Intellectual concepts are faint and feeble shadow-images of the realities in this higher world. In addition to the physical world, therefore, there are three other worlds. Behind the forces which hold the physical world together there are forces which are to be found in the highest world, the world of Intuition. In comparison with the "nature-forces" in this highest world, everything that the physicist

discovers in the physical world is like so many faint shadow-images. For every concept you have, say of a crystal, or of the human eye, you would find, in this highest world, living Beings. A concept in the physical world is the shadow-image of Beings in this highest world. Thus the physical world is built up by forces which manifest, in their true form in Arupa-Devachan — to use the theosophical mode of expression.

We can form a still clearer conception if we think about the mineral kingdom from this point of view.

The human being has ego-consciousness, "I"-consciousness. We say that a mineral is without consciousness, but this is true only in the physical plane. In the higher worlds the mineral is not without consciousness. You will not, however, find the ego of the mineral world in the Elemental world; the ego-consciousness of the mineral lies in the highest of the worlds of which we have spoken. Just as your finger has no consciousness of its own, for its consciousness lies in your "I", in your ego, so the mineral is connected with its ego by streams that lead into the very highest realm of world-existence. A fingernail is part of the human organism as a whole; its consciousness is in the "I". A nail is related to the organism as the mineral is related to the highest spiritual world. There is one "I" belonging to the whole living organism and the nails, like the mineral, are an outermost manifestation of what has hardened within this life. The human physical body has this in common with the minerals: that the physical body, in so far as it is purely physical — has a consciousness belonging to it in the spiritual world above. Inasmuch as the human being is endowed with purely physical consciousness (although he does not know it), inasmuch as he has a physical body with its consciousness in a higher world, his constitution is such that the physical body is worked upon from above. What fashions the physical body is not under your control. Just as it is the "I," the ego, which moves your hand, so is your physical body worked upon from a higher world, and the ego-consciousness belonging to the physical body gives rise to the physical processes of the body. The Initiate who attains to Intuition — he alone has such power over his physical body that no current passes through his nerves without his knowledge; not until man reaches this stage can he be a citizen of those spiritual worlds which govern and direct his physical body.

Man has his second member, the etheric or life-body, in common with the plants and the animals. It is visible to the seer and has approximately the same form as the physical body. It is a body of forces. If you could think away the physical body, the etheric body would be left as a body of forces, a body permeated with streams of forces which have built up the

physical body. The human heart could never have assumed the form it actually bears if there were not in the etheric body an etheric heart; this etheric heart contains certain forces and currents and these are the builders, the architects, the moulders of the physical, heart. Suppose you have a vessel containing water and you cool the water until hardening, ice-formations appear in it. The ice is water, only the water has hardened and the forms of the ice-blocks were within the water as lines of force. Thus is the physical heart formed out of the etheric heart; it is simply a hardened etheric heart and the streams of force in the etheric heart have given the physical heart its form. If you could think away the physical body, you would see that the etheric body, especially in the upper parts, is almost similar to the physical body. This similarity, however, continues only as far as the middle of the body for there is great differentiation within the etheric body; you will realise that this is so when I tell you that the etheric body in the male is female and in the female, male. Without this knowledge much will remain incomprehensible in practical life. The etheric body appears like a form of light extending everywhere, but only slightly, beyond the form of the physical body. The human being has the etheric body in common with the plants. It is the same with the etheric as with the physical body: the forces which hold the etheric body together are found in the world of Inspiration, the world of Rupa-Devachan, the Heaven-world. All the forces, which hold the etheric body together, lie one stage lower than those which hold the physical body together. The ego-consciousness of the plants is therefore to be found in this world of Inspiration, of Lower Devachan, of the Harmonies of the Spheres. In this same world too, lies the ego-consciousness that pervades the human etheric body and lives within you without your being aware of it.

We come now to the third member of man's being, to the astral body — the "Soul Body" in Rosicrucian terminology. Man has the astral body in common only with the animals. The astral body is the bearer of feeling, of happiness and suffering, joy and pain, emotions and passions; wishes and desires, too, are anchored in the astral body. The astral body must be characterised by saying that there is within it that which is also present in the animal world. The animal world, too, has consciousness. The astral being of man and of the animal is held together by forces which have their seat in the Imaginative world or the "Elemental" world in Rosicrucian parlance. The forces which hold the astral body together and give it the form it has, are to be perceived in their true form, in the astral world. The ego-consciousness of the animal is also within this astral world. Just as in the case of a human being we speak of an individual soul, in the case of an animal we speak of a group-soul which is to be found on the astral plane. We must not think here of the single animal living on the physical plane

but a whole species of animals — all lions, all tigers — have an ego in common, a group-soul to be found on the astral plane. So that the animal is really only comprehensible when it can be followed upwards to the astral plane. "Strands," as it were, go forth from the lions, for example, and in the astral world unite into the group-soul that is common to the individual lions living on the earth. Just as the human being has an individual ego, so in every astral body there lives something of a group-ego; this animal-ego lives in the human astral body and the human being does not become independent of this animal-ego until he develops astral sight and becomes a companion of astral beings, when the group-souls of the animals confront him on the astral plane as individual animals confront him here. In the astral world there are beings who can only come down in fragments, as it were, to the physical plane as so-and-so many animals. When the life of these animals comes to an end they unite in the astral world with the rest of this astral being. A whole species of animals is a being on the astral plane, a being with whom converse can be held as with an individual here on earth. Although there is not exact similarity the group-souls are not incorrectly characterised in the second seal of the Apocalypse where they are divided into four classes: Lion, Eagle, Bull, Man (i.e., man who has not yet descended to the physical plane). These four Apocalyptic animals are the four classes of the group-souls which live in the astral world by the side of the human being with his individual soul.

And now we will think of that which man no longer has in common with the world around him; we will think of the "I", the ego. By virtue of this fourth member of his being, man is the crown of physical creation; he has consciousness on the physical plane. Just as the mineral consciousness is in the world of Arupa-Devachan, the plant consciousness in Rupa-Devachan, the animal consciousness on the astral plane, so the ego-consciousness of the human being is in the physical world. In his "I," man has something into which no other being or centre of consciousness intrudes.

Thus we have the fourfold human being: physical man, etheric man, astral man, ego or "I."

This does not, however, comprise the whole of man's nature. Man had these four members in his very first incarnation on the earth and as he passes through successive incarnations, higher development takes place. He works, from the ego, upon the three other members. In the remote past, during his first incarnation on the earth, man was entirely under the sway of every emotion and desire; true, he also had an ego, but he behaved like an animal. If we compare this wild man with one who is a high idealist;

the difference lies in the fact that the former has not yet worked from his ego upon his astral body. The next step in evolution is that man works upon his astral body. The result of such work is that certain fundamental properties of the astral body are brought under his own control. The average European allows himself to follow certain impulses and forbids himself to yield to others. As much of the astral body as a man has brought under the sway of the ego-that we call Spirit-Self (Manas). Manas is a product of the transformation of the astral body by the ego. In its substantiality, Spirit-Self is identical with the astral body; there is merely a different ordering of what was originally in the astral body but has been transformed into Spirit-Self.

A man whose development progresses acquires the faculty not only of working upon his astral body but also of working from the ego upon his etheric body. Let us be clear about the difference between working upon the astral body and working upon the etheric body. Think of what we knew at the age, say, of eight, and of what we have learnt since then. Obviously we have learnt a great deal. Everyone has assimilated a vast number of concepts and ideas which cause him no longer to follow his emotions and passions blindly. But if one remembers having had a violent temper as a child and then thinks of how far this violent temper has been conquered, it will be found that it is still apt to break out. Again, it is seldom that a man who once had a bad memory succeeds in fundamentally improving it or in enhancing the strength or getting rid of the weakness of his conscience. I have often compared the changes that a man brings about in his temperament and the like, with the slow progress of the hour hand of a clock. The essential characteristic of the pupil's Initiation is this: Learning is regarded as a mere preparation; much more is done for Initiation when the temperament itself is transformed. If a feeble memory has been changed into a strong one, if violence has been changed into gentleness, a melancholic temperament into serenity, more has been accomplished than the acquisition of great learning. Here lies the source of inner, occult powers, for this indicates that the ego is working upon the etheric body, not only upon the astral body.

In so far as they express themselves, these qualities are to be found in the astral body but if they are to be transformed, this must happen in the etheric body. What the ego has transformed in the etheric body is present in a man as Life-Spirit, in contrast to Life-Body. In theosophical literature, Life-Spirit is called "Budhi." The substantiality of Budhi is nothing else than that part of the etheric body which has been transformed by the ego.

When the ego becomes so strong that it is able not only to transform the etheric body, but also the physical body — the densest of the principles in man and the forces of which extend into the very highest world — we say that a man is developing the very highest member of his being: Spirit-Man, or Atma. The forces for the transformation of the physical body lie in the highest world of all. The transformation of the physical body begins with the transformation of the breathing process, for Atma is *Atmen* — breath. This transformation causes changes in the constitution of the blood which works upon the physical body; man is here functioning in the very highest worlds.

Transformation can proceed in two ways and to be precise we must speak of an unconscious and a conscious transformation. In reality, every European, from out of his ego, has unconsciously transformed the lower members of his being. In the present phase of evolution he works consciously only in respect of the development of Spirit-Self (Manas) and he must be an initiate if he is to learn to work consciously at the transformation of his etheric body.

Thus even the most primitive human being in the very earliest stage of evolution has the three original members and within them the ego. Then begins the process of transformation. For long ages it proceeded unconsciously; humanity is now beginning consciously to transform the astral body. The Initiates are now consciously transforming the etheric body and in the future all human beings will consciously transform the etheric body and the physical body.

The three primeval members of man's nature are: physical body, etheric body, astral body — and then the "I," the ego. The ego first transforms these three members. The process which has caused Manas, Budhi and Atma (Spirit-Self, Life-Spirit, Spirit-Man) to arise as unconscious, germinal realities of being, lies in the past so far as present-day humanity is concerned.

Rosicrucian Theosophy makes the following differentiation: Sentient Soul, Intellectual or Mind Soul, Consciousness Soul (Spiritual Soul). The conscious process of transformation lights up for the first time in the Consciousness or Spiritual Soul. Here the ego begins consciously to work at the transformation. Spirit-Self is developed in the Consciousness Soul, Life-Spirit in the Mind Soul, Spirit-Man in the Sentient Soul. Thus we have, in all, nine members of man's nature.

Outwardly regarded, two of these members — Sentient Soul and Soul-Body interpenetrate, like a sword in its sheath; the Sentient Soul is within the Soul-Body, so that they appear as one. So is it too with Spirit-Self and Consciousness Soul. These nine members are thus reduced to seven:

1. Physical body.
2. Etheric (or Life-) body.
3. Astral body within which is the Sentient Soul.
4. Ego.

Higher members:

5. Spirit-Self (Manas) together with the Consciousness — or Spiritual Soul.
6. Life-Spirit (Budhi).
7. Spirit-Man (Atma).

Such is the inner constitution of man's nature which has, in reality, nine members, two and two of which coincide. Therefore the Rosicrucian method speaks of three times three members = nine, which is reduced to seven. We must, however, recognise the nine within the seven; otherwise we shall reach only a theoretical conception.

The transition from theory to reality can only be made by a study of man's essential nature.

9. Spirit-Man
8. Life-Spirit
7. Spirit-Self
6. Consciousness Soul
5. Mind Soul
4. Sentient Soul
3. Astral body

2. Etheric body

1. Physical body

The "I" lights up in the souls and then begins the work on the bodies.

The indications given today will be a guide to us to-morrow when we shall study the human being in sleep, in waking consciousness and in death.



XIII. Advanced Topics

Man's transformation and spiritualization

Archangel Gabriel gradual preparatory work in the period 1525-1879 developed an organ in Man to receive the message of archangel Michael. He brought it about that the organ that's in the sinus above the root of Man's nose gradually developed. The structure and windings of the brain in this place are different today than in Man of the 13th century; a 16th century Man would not have understood current spiritual science.

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Archangel Michael sends the rays of light from above and outside, into the brain that has been prepared for this by archangel Gabriel. Through this new organ, spiritual science offered by the White Lodge, can flow into Man and work on Man's etheric body. This requires Man to consciously use this newly acquired organ. The ones who don't use this organ allow it to dry out and degenerate, in the future this will cause terrible epidemics and strange nervous diseases. They will fall prey to Mammon (Ahriman)

GA267 arch. no 361-363

1906-12-18-GA266/1

1906-04-18-GA266/1

The schema above positions the physiological process underlying the study of spiritual science and initiation exercises, through the use of the newly developed organ in the brain called the pituitary gland and the process working on the etheric and astral bodies. (Note: Natural science tells us that these are "extinct" — and therefore useless — organs)

In the current stage of development on the planetary stage Earth, Man has received his 'I'-consciousness that sets him apart and above the other lower kingdoms of creation on earth. Man is made up of four developed, and three latent bodily principles↵.

Man's 'I' or threefold soul↵ is 'pivotal' in that it is the vehicle or instrument for transformation of the lower bodily principles: Man's astral body, etheric body and physical body .. into their spiritualized counterpart versions: the spirit-self, life-spirit and spirit-man.

This spiritualization is the developmental direction that will happen 'anyway' through evolution↵ in the next cultural ages, epochs, and planetary stages. Schema FMCOO.130 represents this in a high level overview, see schema FMCOO.047 on [Development of the I↵](#) for the next cultural ages in our current epoch.

However as always, not all entities reach the development goal of each developmental stage, resulting in the evolutionary 'funnel' whereby certain cohorts are left behind and 'pushed down' whereas the others move on and 'develop upwards'. In this way the current mineral, plant and animal kingdoms are the resulting 'lower kingdoms' of the entities that were not able to make the development targets at each stage - in comparison with Man. Another aspect of this evolutionary funnel is the creation of 'off-springs' such as elementals.

When Man, who has now received conscious awareness, and free will, actively starts this work of self-improvement and development, it is referred to as 'the great Work'. Specific development techniques exist, and to follow this process is called 'initiation'.

The spiritual guidance of Mankind by the teachers of humanity through the ages (see the [White Lodge↵](#)) serves to help and support Man with teachings that present the precepts for living the best life possible and fulfill the criteria for the correct development. An example is the 'golden rule' that can be found in all religions, see the [Golden rule↵](#).

Read More:
https://anthroposophy.eu/Man%27s_transformation_and_spiritualization



Ascension & Pentecost: The Mystery of Golgotha

Christ's rescue of the human physical and etheric bodies & the evolution of the astral body and ego through the Holy Spirit.

May 15, 2023

Following the account of [Acts 1:3](#) that the risen Christ Jesus appeared for 40 days prior to his Ascension, Ascension Day is traditionally celebrated on the 40th day of Easter. It commemorates the ascension of the Christ as witnessed by His Disciples. Pentecost, also known as Whitsunday or Whitsun ("White Sunday"), has its roots in the Greek word *pentecost* which means "50th day." It is celebrated on the seventh Sunday (50 days) after Easter, ten days after the Ascension. Pentecost commemorates the arrival of the Holy Spirit to the Disciples which appeared as tongues of fire upon their heads.

In his lecture entitled [The Mystery of Pentecost and the Ascension](#), Rudolf Steiner discusses these two pivotal events.

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- The Ascension, on the one hand, represents the Disciples' realization that the Christ rescued the human physical body from destruction. They saw how the Christ descended to earth and continued to reside in earth's etheric realm thereby preventing man's etheric body from separating from the physical to rise up to the Sun and heavens to meet Christ there.
 - Pentecost, on the other hand, represents the coming of the Holy Spirit to the Disciples. Such personal receipt of the Holy Spirit through our free will is a necessary requirement

for the evolution of each individual's soul and spirit and the ultimate fulfillment of human destiny.

First, Steiner recalls the familiar picture of the Ascension and points to the apparent contradiction of His rising in the clouds yet anchoring man to the earth by joining earth's own etheric realm



This picture is usually accepted so that the Christ is seen traveling heavenwards, having forsaken the earth, and the Disciples are left, as it were, to themselves; earthly humanity for whom the Christ passed through the Mystery of Golgotha is therefore left to itself

after His journey heavenwards. It might easily be thought that in a certain sense this contradicts the reality of the Mystery of Golgotha. We know indeed that through this Mystery the Christ decided actually to unite His Being with the being of the earth, and from that point of time onwards to remain in permanent connection with earthly evolution.

Second, Steiner has us visualize a traditional Pentecost picture and the illumination of the Disciples.



[W]hen the Disciples were gathered together, fiery tongues came down upon the head of each of them so that they felt moved, as the popular expression has it, to speak in different tongues. What this really means, however, is that from now on it was possible for each human heart — whatever the faith to which it might have previously adhered — to realise the Mystery of Golgotha.

With these images in mind, he proceeds to provide context for the two events.

Without the Mystery of Golgotha, humanity was at risk of dying out and failing its earthly destiny.

Since the middle of the Atlantean epoch, the earth and humanity have been in a process of declining evolution.

When the age drew near in which the Mystery of Golgotha took place, the evolution of the human physical body had reached such a state of decline that the men incorporated at that time or who were about to be incorporated shortly afterward, and until about the fourth century, were confronted with the danger of having the earth become barren and empty and of finding it impossible in the future to descend from spiritual worlds or to form bodies for themselves out of physical earthly substances. This danger existed, and men would have actually been obliged to fail in their earthly destiny.

The co-operation of Lucifer and Ahriman had brought things to such a pass at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha that man would have died out on the earth, but by what was accomplished through this great Mystery he was saved from the forces of destruction. The invigorating forces of which the physical body had need were imparted to it once more, so that man was enabled to continue his further evolution on earth, to come down from the realms of the soul and spirit and again enter into and dwell in physical bodies. This was the result, the entirely real result, of the Mystery of Golgotha.

In the vision of the Ascension, the Disciples witnessed the Christ saving humanity from destruction.

The Disciples saw the danger of man's etheric body continuing to strive upward toward the heavens and how the Christ now held men firmly to the earth.

[T]he sun was the dwelling place of the Christ up to the time of the Mystery of Golgotha. The ether body of man in that it strives towards the sun strives therefore towards the Christ. Now, call up before you the picture of the Ascension: Before the eyes of the Disciples the Christ rises heavenwards. This means that before the eyes of the Disciples' souls was conjured forth the vision of how

the etheric nature of mankind in its upward striving unites itself with the power, with the Impulse of Christ. Therefore, the Disciples saw how at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha man was faced with the danger of seeing his ether body attracted cloudwards — towards the sun, but also how the Christ held that which then strove heavenwards, together. This picture has to be understood aright. *It is really a warning.* The Christ was already united with the earth, but He belongs to those forces in man which actually strive towards the sun, which desire for ever to leave the earth. It is the Christ Who holds men firmly to the earth.

The Christ introduced a cosmic event into earth evolution for the sake of humanity.

The Christ came down from spiritual heights, and in the man Jesus of Nazareth united Himself with humanity; He passed through the Mystery of Golgotha, and has associated His evolution with the evolution of the earth. It was a deed which was done for the whole of humanity. Try to grasp this fact correctly: — The Mystery of Golgotha was accomplished for humanity. Clairvoyant vision must ever behold how the etheric forces of humanity that constantly seek to separate from the earth are united with the Christ; and how the Christ is able to hold them back for earthly evolution. This is of great importance to humanity.

While the Ascension was for the whole of humanity, Pentecost is for the individual.

In the Ascension, the Christ saved the physical and etheric part of man.

[T]he Disciples having become clairvoyant see the sunward tendency of the ether bodies of men. The Christ unites Himself with this tendency and restrains it. What this mighty picture represents is this — the saving of the physical and etheric part of man by the Christ. Pentecost signifies the soul lifting itself up to spiritual powers of understanding, an individual initiative.

No materialistic powers of understanding, no materialistic science can comprehend this Mystery. The soul must lift itself up to spiritual powers of understanding, to spiritual powers of vision and of feeling, before it can understand how the Christ Impulse united itself on Golgotha with the impulses of the earth. That this might come to pass, the Christ accomplished His Deed on Golgotha; and He completed it so that just ten days after the Ascension He sent to men the power whereby they were enabled to permeate their inner soul and spirit-nature, that is, their ego and astral body, with the Christ-Impulse.

The picture of Pentecost signifies this: The permeation of the soul and spirit of man with power by which he can understand the Mystery of Golgotha. The sending of the Holy Spirit.

Our individual spiritual striving is required to continue evolving.

While Christ died and ascended for the physical and etheric bodies of humanity in general, we each individually must receive the Holy Spirit to continue to evolve our soul and spirit.

The Christ accomplished His Deed for the whole of humanity. To individuals who are able to understand this Deed — to the individual human being, He has sent the Spirit, so that the individual soul and spirit can find access to that which was done for all humanity. By means of the Spirit man must inwardly — soulfully and spiritually — unite himself with the Mystery of Golgotha. Two pictures thus succeed each other in the story of human evolution. That of the Ascension tells us: The deed of Golgotha was consummated for the physical and etheric bodies of men generally. The individual must make it fruitful for himself by receiving into him the Holy Spirit. The Christ Impulse thus becomes individual for each one.

The whole of human evolution takes place within cycles of sleep and wakefulness.

For those souls who are properly prepared, the Christ-force works upon them during the state of sleep. Otherwise, the Christ-connection gained through the Ascension is lost.

Through [the Mystery of Golgotha] it became possible for man to receive an impulse when in the state of sleep which otherwise he could not have received. The whole of human evolution takes place within the conditions of sleeping and waking. In sleep the physical body and etheric body remain behind; from the moment of falling asleep until awaking the astral body and ego are independent of them. During this state of independence in sleep the active penetration by the Christ-force occurs in those men who, because of the soul-content they have acquired, are fittingly prepared for the state of sleep. [...]

It is in the state of sleep that penetration by the Christ-force mainly occurs. The Mystery of Golgotha would have taken place for the waking condition of man even if he had not accepted the knowledge of this Mystery; but it would not have taken place for his sleeping condition. The consequence of this would have been as follows: Men would certainly have continued to incarnate on earth, but sleep would have been such that their soul and spirit nature would necessarily have lost all connection with the Christ unless they had acquired knowledge of the Mystery of Golgotha.

During the dreaminess of spring, Spirit can work in us like sunshine on flowers.

Steiner closes with a beautiful analogy of the Sun influencing spring flowers to the Ascension and Pentecost.

When the festival of Whitsuntide, which before all others is a festival of flowers, is felt aright, people go forth wherever flowers are springing, where they are opening under the influence of the sun — under the influence of the etheric-astral sun forces — and in the flower-decked earth men are aware that they have a reflection of that which they see condensed in the picture of the Ascension of Christ and in the tongues of fire that appeared above the heads of the Disciples. The opening heart of man may here be seen symbolised in the flowers which open to the sun, and that which comes down from the sun and gives to the flowers the necessary fruit-bearing power, we may see symbolised in the tongues of fire which poured forth their power on the Disciples.

Another later translation can be found in [The Festivals and Their Meaning: Ascension and Pentecost, Lecture I](#).

Source: <https://rsarchive.org/>



Cosmic Fractal



frac·tal, noun

: any of various extremely irregular curves or shapes for which any suitably chosen part is similar in shape to a given larger or smaller part when magnified or reduced to the same size

The Cosmic fractal is a term or label to denote and describe the evolutionary dynamic of continuous development of spiritual hierarchies in a coordinated interplay in which nothing is static, all spiritual entities

are evolving and developing, and the whole takes place along a certain plan and with certain laws or patterns which characterize the whole, and through which we can gain an appreciation, understanding, insight into creation and the true nature of the cosmos.

With our contemporary [Waking consciousness](#), Man perceives with his senses an emanation of a physical reality, which is but an illusionary view of the macroscopic manifestation of a 'cosmic fractal' underneath which is generating this reality. This is sometimes also referred to by the term 'maya'.

It is not that the 'cosmic fractal' is 'rendering' this illusionary view, rather - as illustrated by Schema FMC00.305 - it is Man's sensory perception and limited 'mineral' consciousness that causes him only to see part of the whole, and not the 'full story' of the spiritual realities, the way these can be perceived by the various [stages of clairvoyance](#). Our waking consciousness is like a 'bandpass' filter limiting our view of the whole.

The buildup or make up of it all consists of spiritual hierarchies in various stages of development, with different structures across the various [Planes or worlds of consciousness](#).

From our human perspective we perceive only part (of this macroscopic nature) of all we experience in reality. We label the qualitative aspects that we can distinguish as the [Spectrum of elements and ether](#)s. These concepts are like a stronghold foundation of building blocks by which we delineate a certain effect of the interplay of various spiritual beings, in other words: we describe 'the effects of their working together' in what we sense are the fundamental building blocks of nature. In a spiritual scientific worldview this logically fits into the evolutionary framework, see eg FMC00.149 on [Four elements](#).

[Alchemy](#) is an example of a language to describe the interplay between these building blocks, elements and ethers. Modern spiritual science, as in theosophy and anthroposophy, is another language - more fitted to the soul qualities of the current age - to describe the world (the kingdoms of nature, including the nature of Man's bodily structure and functioning) in terms of these building blocks, as depicted in Schema FMC00.305.

Rhythm in Man and nature is a display of the structures underlying (see the discussion on the number [25920](#), [Spiritual hierarchies and their eigenperiods](#), and [Lemniscatory timespace](#)), and shows how Man is an

integral part of the cosmos, embedded in this complex whole of **Cosmic breathing**.

The deeper one studies the qualities and dynamics of the substance of reality in the language of spiritual science, the closer it brings Man to the spiritual hierarchies. This is how Man can get to know them, not individually, but as the concerted interplay - like the manifold instruments that are individually lost but still make up the global sound effect on the soul in a performance of a complex classical symphony.





Notes

A Note on the Term "Theosophy"

At first glance the use of the term "theosophy" as it might appear in the above may be somewhat misleading for the English reader. It may suggest to him associations with Anglo-Indian Theosophy and the Theosophical Society founded by H. P. Blavatsky.

Rudolf Steiner, however, uses the term independently and with different and much wider connotation. In earlier centuries, particularly in Central Europe, "Theosophy" was a recognised section of Philosophy and even of Theology. Jacob Boehme was known as the great "theosopher". In English the term goes back to the seventeenth century.

Ultimately it leads us back to St. Paul who says (I Cor. ii, 6-7): "Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world ... But we speak the wisdom of God (Greek 'Theosophia') in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory."

All "theosophy" implies a knowledge of the spiritual world, and such knowledge has been attained in different ways at different epochs of man's history.

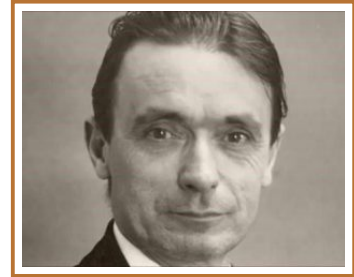




Rudolf Steiner



Rudolf Steiner (Feb. 27, 1861–Mar. 30, 1925) was born in the small village of Kraljevec, Austria (now in Croatia) in 1861 and died in Dornach, Switzerland in 1925. In university, he concentrated on mathematics, physics, and chemistry. Having written his thesis on philosophy, Steiner earned his doctorate and was later drawn into literary and scholarly circles and participated in the rich social and political life of Vienna.



During the 1890s, Steiner worked for seven years in Weimar at the Goethe archive, where he edited Goethe's scientific works and collaborated in a complete edition of Schopenhauer's work. Weimar was a center of European culture at the time, which allowed Steiner to meet many prominent artists and cultural figures. In 1894 Steiner published his first important work, *Intuitive Thinking as a Spiritual Path: A Philosophy of Freedom*, now published as one of the Classics in Anthroposophy.

When Steiner left Weimar, he went to Berlin where he edited an avant-garde literary magazine. Again he involved himself in the rich, rapidly changing culture of a city that had become the focus of many radical groups and movements. Steiner gave courses on history and natural science and offered practical training in public speaking. He refused to adhere to the particular ideology of any political group, which did not endear him to the many activists then in Berlin.

In 1899, Steiner's life quickly began to change. His autobiography provides a personal glimpse of his inner struggles, which matured into an important turning point. In the August 28, 1899 issue of his magazine, Steiner published the article "Goethe's Secret Revelation" on the esoteric nature of Goethe's fairy tale, *The Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily*. Consequently, Steiner was invited to speak to a gathering of Theosophists. This was his first opportunity to act on a decision to speak openly and directly of his spiritual perception, which had quietly matured since childhood through inner development and discipline. Steiner began to speak regularly to theosophical groups, which upset and confused many of his friends. The respectable, if

often radical scholar, historian, scientist, writer, and philosopher began to emerge as an "occultist." Steiner's decision to speak directly from his own spiritual research did not reflect any desire to become a spiritual teacher, feed curiosity, or to revive some ancient wisdom. It arose from his perception of what is needed for our time.

Rudolf Steiner considered it his task to survey the spiritual realities at work within the realms of nature and throughout the universe. He explored the inner nature of the human soul and spirit and their potential for further development; he developed new methods of meditation; he investigated the experiences of human souls before birth and after death; he looked back into the spiritual history and evolution of humanity and Earth; he made detailed studies of reincarnation and karma. After several years, Rudolf Steiner became increasingly active in the arts. It is significant that he saw the arts as crucial for translating spiritual science into social and cultural innovation. Today we have seen what happens when natural science bypasses the human heart and translates knowledge into technology without grace, beauty, or compassion. In 1913, the construction of the Goetheanum in Dornach, Switzerland began. This extraordinary wooden building took shape gradually during the First World War. An international group of volunteers collaborated with local builders and artisans to shape the unique carved forms and structures designed by Steiner. Steiner viewed architecture as a servant of human life, and he designed the Goetheanum to support the work of anthroposophy drama and eurythmy in particular. The Goetheanum was burned to the ground on New Year's Eve, 1922 by an arsonist. Rudolf Steiner designed a second building, which was completed after his death. It is now the center for the Anthroposophical Society and its School of Spiritual Science.

After the end of World War I, Europe was in ruins and people were ready for new social forms. Attempts to realize Steiner's ideal of a "threefold social order" as a political and social alternative was unsuccessful. Nevertheless, its conceptual basis is even more relevant today. Steiner's social thinking can be understood only within the context of his view of history. In contrast to Marx, Steiner saw that history is shaped essentially by changes in human consciousness changes in which higher spiritual beings actively participate.

We can build a healthy social order only on the basis of insight into the material, soul, and spiritual needs of human beings. Those needs are characterized by a powerful tension between the search for community and the experience of the human I, or true individuality. Community, in the sense of material interdependence, is the essence of our world economy.

Like independent thinking and free speech, the human I, or essential self, is the foundation of every creative endeavor and innovation, and crucial to the realization of human spirit in the arts and sciences.

Without spiritual freedom, culture withers and dies. Individuality and community are lifted beyond conflict only when they are recognized as a creative polarity rooted in basic human nature, not as contradictions. Each aspect must find the appropriate social expression. We need forms that ensure freedom for all expressions of spiritual life and promote community in economic life. The health of this polarity, however, depends on a full recognition of the third human need and function of the social relationships that relate to our sense of human rights. Here again, Steiner emphasized the need to develop a distinct realm of social organization to support this sphere one inspired by the concern for equality that awakens as we recognize the spiritual essence of every human being. This is the meaning and source of our right to freedom of spirit and to material sustenance.

These insights are the basis of Steiner's responses to the needs of today, and have inspired renewal in many areas of modern life. Doctors, therapists, farmers, business people, academics, scientists, theologians, pastors, and teachers all approached him for ways to bring new life to their endeavors. The Waldorf school movement originated with a school for the children of factory employees at the Waldorf-Astoria cigarette factory. Today, Waldorf schools are all over the world. There are homes, schools, and village communities for children and adults with special needs. Biodynamic agriculture began with a course of lectures requested by a group of farmers concerned about the destructive trend of "scientific" farming. Steiner's work with doctors led to a medical movement that includes clinics, hospitals, and various forms of therapeutic work. As an art of movement, eurythmy also serves educational and therapeutic work.

Rudolf Steiner spoke very little of his life in personal terms. In his autobiography, however, he stated that, from his early childhood, he was fully conscious of the invisible reality within our everyday world. He struggled inwardly for the first forty years of his life not to achieve spiritual experience but to unite his spiritual experiences with ordinary reality through the methods of natural science. Steiner saw this scientific era, even in its most materialistic aspects, as an essential phase in the spiritual education of humanity. Only by forgetting the spiritual world for a time and attending to the material world can new and essential faculties be kindled, especially the experience of true individual inner freedom.

During his thirties, Steiner awakened to an inner recognition of what he termed "the turning point in time" in human spiritual history. That event was brought about by the incarnation of the Christ. Steiner recognized that the meaning of that turning point in time transcends all differences of religion, race, or nation and has consequences for all of humanity. Rudolf Steiner was also led to recognize the new presence and activity of the Christ. It began in the twentieth century, not in the physical world, but in the etheric realm of the invisible realm of life forces of the Earth and humanity. Steiner wanted to nurture a path of knowledge to meet today's deep and urgent needs. Those ideals, though imperfectly realized, may guide people to find a continuing inspiration in anthroposophy for their lives and work. Rudolf Steiner left us the fruits of careful spiritual observation and perception (or, as he preferred to call it, spiritual research), a vision that is free and thoroughly conscious of the integrity of thinking and understanding inherent in natural science.

Steiner's last years were spent in sowing as many seeds as possible for future work; they were also darkened by his belief in a coming world conflagration, when the archangel Michael, overseer of the current stage of human consciousness, would face off against the power of Ahriman, a spiritual being who seeks to prevent humanity's development. Steiner spoke ominously of the incarnation of Ahriman, an Antichrist-like figure, whose display of miraculous powers would precede a catastrophic "war of all against all." Steiner believed this unavoidable destiny would take some time to unfold – Ahriman is scheduled to arrive in the 3000s – yet many of his followers suspect that in recent years the process has been speeded up. Steiner himself had grave doubts about the growing pace of technological development, warning his followers that materialist science gains its great power through unwittingly releasing Ahrimanic entities. In his last communications, Steiner called on his followers to develop their consciousness in order to rise above nature to the same extent that technology sank below it. He also gave series of lectures about karma and its work in human history.

Steiner died on 30 March 1925 in Dornach, Switzerland. He had been ill for at least a year with an undisclosed stomach ailment, although there is some speculation he had been poisoned. He continued lecturing until it was physically impossible for him to do so, and his followers were astounded when, on the evening of his last scheduled lecture, they found a note saying that it had to be cancelled because of the Doctor's health. Nothing like this had ever happened before. The Doctor, they believed, was invulnerable.





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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



The Scribe

Within the din of life, one must strive to develop spiritual ears to hear those in the higher realms who reach down to us and desire nothing more than to help humanity reach the heights intended for it by God.

~ Anthony

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