

Spiritual Science



Deep Dive Article

Rakshasas, Asuras and the Eighth Sphere

Mankind's Primary Enemy in the Fifth Post-Atlantean Epoch

Sources:

<https://anthroposophy.eu/Rakshasas>

and

<https://anthroposophy.eu/Asuras>

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1 Rakshasas

Rakshasas is the name for a race or class of adverse spiritual entities (not perceptible to physical eyes) also called 'seducers of Mankind', that represent the enemy of the normal evolution of mankind and the planet Earth.

These adverse beings have been called rakshasas or asuras. Rudolf Steiner usually uses the term [Asuras](#) (see the separate topic page), see also their leader: [Sorat](#).

A race of demonic beings was created as a result of 'sinful' interaction between remaining Sons of God of the Abel line 'akin to the divine', and the daughters of the worldly Cain line, the [two streams or subraces of Mankind](#). These beings acted seductively upon the human race and caused its downfall in the [Atlantean epoch](#) through rise of [black magic](#). They continued to influence human desires until the time of Christ.

[Black magic](#) represents the opposite of white magic, the good: it is the mis-use of spiritual powers by and for the I at the expense of other life. See also [Eight sphere](#).

When Christ descended into Hades or Hell, he was confronted there by spiritual beings, the Rakshasa beings. Christ-Jesus was able to bring them into a state of paralysis, unable to move, because he could oppose them from two sides. This was possible due to the dual nature of Christ-Jesus: the human physical chela nature and the spiritual Christ nature. Thereby he banished the 'enemies of mankind' into chains until this 'antichrist' makes his appearance again around the 20th century. Nevertheless the fight against the Rakshasas remained after the MoG and into the middle ages. On that basis we can state struggle against the Rakshasas remains a challenge for mankind upto today.

Lecture coverage and references

Man: fragments of forgotten history (1885)

in Chapter 11

*Rakshasas (demons), souls or astral forms of sorcerers, men who have reached the apex of knowledge in the forbidden art. Dead or alive, they have, so to say, cheated Nature, and **will defy the order of the general evolution until our planet goes into obscuration**, when they will have to turn round and fall into the main current, and have a fresh start in the course of life.*

...

This vile art was at its height during the close of the Atlantean race period, when the everlasting struggle between the black magicians and the Adepts of the Good Law raged most fiercely.

Sorcerers and black magicians, the most powerful of those vile fraternities, attain at the conclusion of a great cycle of activity, what is called Avitchi-Nirvana. At the beginning of the next period of activity they commence a nameless life of spiritual wickedness, to be ended only at the next period of rest. The name of these beings of misery and horror, the cursed alike of man and god, is never pronounced or written, but they have nothing to do with the mortals who pass through the seven spheres.

These are the habitants of the eighth sphere, which has sixteen grades. *In the first fourteen of these the entity loses, after prolonged periods of suffering, its seven astral and seven spiritual senses. The mysteries of the last two grades are never communicated outside the sanctuary of initiation.*

It may be stated, however, that from the last, the entity, having lost the accumulated vile energy of its past, emerges as a new individuality, to begin a new course from the lowest rung of the ladder of life.

In the Secret Doctrine by Blavatsky also some cryptic clues are offered in several places. Not all of them are listed here as they not of relevance, but the following seem to be consistent with the overall picture.

.. it is only from the time of Atlantis that one ought to speak of Man, since only the fourth race was the first completely human species. However these brown and yellow giant races were much larger in size than we are now. ..

It is chiefly that race which became "black with sin" that brought the divine names of the Asuras, the Rakshasas and the Daityas into disrepute, and passed them on to posterity as the names of fiends.

*For the Suras (gods) or Devas having incarnated in the wise men of Atlantis, **the names of Asuras and Rakshasas were given to the Atlanteans**; which names, owing to their incessant conflicts with the last remnants of the Lemurian race and the "Sons of Will and Yoga," have led to the later allegories about them in the Puranas.*

"Asura was the generic appellation of all the Atlanteans who were the enemies of the spiritual heroes of the Aryans (gods)."

...

Whereas the Rakshasas are generally translated by "Evil Spirits" and "the enemies of the gods," which identifies them with the Asuras.

and another quote of Secret Doctrine (Vol 2 p 273)

The first Atlantean races, born on the Lemurian continent, separated from their earliest tribes into the righteous and unrighteous, into

- *those who worshipped the one unseen spirit of nature (pantheists) the ray of which Man feels within himself .. and*
- *those who offered fanatical worship to the spirits of the earth, the dark cosmic anthropomorphic powers, with whom they made alliance.*

These were the earliest gibborim, the might men of renown in those days (Genesis 6), who became with the fifth race the kabirim: Kabiri with the Egyptians and Phoenicians, Titans with the Greeks, and Rakshasas and Daityas with the Indian races.

C.G. Harrison - The Transcendental Universe (1894)

in lecture 5:

These semi-human creatures, the progeny of the fallen angels, are known in the Hindu scriptures as the Asuras and are sometimes called Rakshasas or demons.

1904-06-10-GA093

is the key lecture extract

You will now understand how it is that the episode of Cain and Abel falls into the period between Adam and Seth. A new principle entered into mankind, the principle of heredity, the original sin consisting of being dissimilar to the generation which had gone before.

But there still remain some Sons of God. Not all of those belonging to the Abel line were eradicated. And now we see what took place when to the question: 'Where is Abel, thy brother?' Cain answered: 'Am I my brother's keeper?' No man would have said that previously. That can only be said by an understanding which reacts as though acoustically to the

spiritual. Now the principle of struggle, of opposition, is added to the principle of love; now egoism is born: "Am I my brother's keeper?"

Those who still remained of the Abel line were Sons of God, they remained akin to the divine. But they now had to guard themselves against entering the earthly sphere. And from this resulted what was to become the principle of asceticism among those who dedicated their lives to the service of God. It became a sin for such a dedicated one to have anything to do with those who had committed themselves to the affairs of earth. It was a sin when 'The Sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair' and took them wives; they took them wives from the daughters of Cain.

*From this union resulted **a race of men which is hardly even mentioned in the published books of the Old Testament, but is only hinted at; it is a race that is not perceptible to physical eyes. It is called 'Rakshasas' in occult language and is similar to the 'Asuras' of the Indians.** It consists of demonic beings who really did exist at one time and who acted seductively upon the human race and caused its downfall.*

This flirtation of the Sons of God with the daughters of men produced a race which worked particularly seductively upon the Turanians, the members of the fourth sub-race of the Atlanteans, and led to the destruction of humanity. Some things were preserved and carried over into the new world. The Deluge is the flood which destroyed Atlantis. Men who were seduced by the Rakshasas disappeared by degrees.

And now I have to tell you something which will in any case appear extraordinary to you, which is particularly important. It has been an occult mystery for the outside world for many centuries and will seem incredible to most people, but is nevertheless true. I can assure you that every occultist has often convinced himself of its truth through what is called the Akashic Record. But so it is.

These Rakshasas were real beings, they really existed — actively and effectively — as seducers of mankind. They continued to influence human desires until the time when Christ incarnated in Jesus of Nazareth and the Buddhi principle itself became present on the earth in a human body. Now you may believe it or not: ***this is something of cosmic significance, of significance which reaches beyond the earthly plane.*** It is not for nothing that the Bible expresses it thus:

'Christ descended into the forecourts of Hell.'

*It was not human beings He met there, He was confronted by spiritual beings. The Rakshasa beings were brought thereby into a state of paralysis and lethargy! They were at the same time kept in check so that they became unable to move. They could only be lamed in this manner because they were being opposed from two sides. **That would not have been possible if there had not been two natures combined together in Jesus of Nazareth:** on the one hand the old Chela nature, deeply connected with the physical plane, which could also work effectively on the physical plane and through its power could hold it in balance: on the other hand there was Christ Himself who was a purely spiritual being. **That is the cosmic problem which is fundamental to Christianity.** Something occurred at that time in occult spheres; it was the banishment of the enemies of mankind which has its echo in the Saga of the Antichrist, who was put in chains but **will make his appearance again**, if not opposed once more by the Christian principle in its primal force.*

*The whole occult striving of the Middle Ages was directed towards nullifying the effect of the Rakshasas. Those whose vision extends to the higher planes have long foreseen that the moment when this could happen might be **at the end of the nineteenth century, at the transition from the nineteenth to the twentieth century.***

Nostradamus, .. was able to foretell the future. .. In 'Centuries' by Nostradamus (Century 10, 75) the following prophecy can be found: At the close of the nineteenth century a Hermes

Brother will come from Asia and bring unity to mankind. The Theosophical Society is nothing less than a fulfillment of this prophecy of Nostradamus. The annulment of the Rakshasas and the reestablishment of the primal mysteries is an aim of the Theosophical Society.

*You know that Jesus Christ remained on the earth for ten years after His death. The Pistis Sophia contains the profoundest theosophical teachings, it is much more profound than Sinnett's Esoteric Buddhism. Jesus incarnated again and again. His task was to renew the mystery wisdom. This is no mere fact of cultural or historical interest, but it is the fact I have described to you, which is well known to all occultists, namely, **the struggle against the Rakshasas**. You see there is a deep and important occult secret lying hidden therein.*

Contemplation about re-appearance

If the re-appearance of the enemies of mankind was foreseen or expected end of 19th or early 20th century (or the 21st century) then this may already have appened in the last 100 years between 1920 and 2020.

This topic relates to topic of the physical incarnation of Ahriman (with lots of speculation about this), as well as the impact of [Sorat](#) (the 'Beast' from the Book of Revelation) each 666 years.

It is an interesting exercise to contemplate where this influence is to be found. Which influences have thrown humanity off course, or rather represent major challenges for its righteous development?

- Most popular sources like to put forth the second world war .. and given the two world wars are related as one this could be seen as a single thirty years war with major impact.
- Other sources point to the rise of the mobile computing (with the personal computer, mobile phone and the smartphone all in a few decades, say the work of a single generation) with the selfie culture. This evolution drastically pulled and pulls Mankind out of the physical world and direct human interaction, and rechannels much mental and emotional energy into a virtual world (of the small screen) consisting

of or owned by a network of (computer) machines. Whereas the elementals related to computer machines are easily linked with Ahriman, the selfie may be seen as a symbol of overdoing I-centric egotism at the cost of less attention for other human beings (which could be seen as an Asuric symptom).

- Yet other sources however clearly point to the increasing lower drives and sexual aberrations in society and culture, pornography, etc, pointing to Rudolf Steiner's pointers (see [Asuras](#) page: 'the many sexual aberrations of the present can be traced back to their strong influence').
- Furthermore, certain sources point to rise of individuals who go out to take lives (re the killings in American schools, or in France, Norway, etc). leaving it open whether it is conscious or being used unconsciously in a way programmed by others, because this so clearly matches the aims of [black magic](#) to take life.

Relation with Luciferic - Ahrimanic - Asuric beings, the rise of black magic and evil

Rudolf Steiner would certainly not have used the terminology he used in the lecture quoted above, if the entities belonged to the Luciferic or Ahrimanic class. Rudolf Steiner usually uses the term Asuras and only once linked in the term Rakshasas in an early lecture in 1904, whereby we can better trace the origin to the [Abel/Cain streams](#) and the [Atlantean epoch](#). See also sections on the [Atlantean epoch](#) as well as [Christ Module 14](#).

It is understandable that Rudolf Steiner did not go into black magic and evil more than limited mentions, this was not his mission and maybe also outside of 'the allowed' that he could disclose. As a result, focus in his teachings lies on Lucifer and Ahriman. However in comparison with Asuras and Sorat as their exponent, Lucifer and Ahriman are 'misguiding' Man left and right from the right and balanced path represented by the Christ (love). In comparison, black magicians and Asuras/Rakshasas are a head-on confrontational opposite, causing death of other living beings for the strengthenings of one's own selfish powers. These beings are already on another developmental trajectory, that of the creation of hierarchies of evil beings and the eight sphere.

As explained by the opposite characteristics of opposite planes, the 'wheel of planes' shows the eighth sphere as opposite to budhi which is love.

2 Asuras

Asuras or [Rakshasas](#) are a group of spiritual beings that represent a third type of adverse counterforces for Man's development, besides the Luciferic and Ahrimanic.

Because their leader is [Sorat](#), we call these soratic influences (consistently with Lucifer and Ahriman) even though often the term asuric is also used.

The Asuras stand higher in their will towards evil than the ahrimanic and luciferic beings by one and two grades, respectively (1909-04-21-GA110). They are beings that stayed behind on Old Saturn, and 'infected' humanity in the Atlantean epoch (see more on the [Rakshasas](#) page) and gave rise to the practice of [black magic](#). Their goal is the development of [evil](#) rather than good or love, and they carry or sidetrack human material down into the [Eighth Sphere](#) which separates it from the normal development in the current solar system evolution.

Aspects

- the beings of the very greatest egoism who remained behind during Old Saturn evolution, and strive for the Eighth sphere.
- want to condense matter, increasingly to press it together so that it cannot be spiritualized again and led back to its original state.
- Asuras inhabit the Moon and influence human beings, whom they wish to pull down into the eighth sphere and thus tear them away from progressive evolution and their goal —the Christ.
- All who are striving toward the eighth sphere will ultimately find their existence on a moon (Future Jupiter).

- AUM as a connection with the three Logoi godhead, and a protection to ward off bad influences when one says it in the right way

[Learn more about AUM in [this video](#).]

- the indian sanskrit term asuras means non-gods, the opposite of the term suras for gods ('asu' meaning 'breath')

Lecture coverage and references

Helena Blavatsky

in The Secret Doctrine, Book 2, ('On the Myth of the Fallen Angel, in its various aspects') p.500.

Esoterically, the Asuras, transformed subsequently into evil spirits and lower gods, who are eternally at war with the great deities — are the gods of the Secret Wisdom. In the oldest portions of the Rig Veda, they are the spiritual and the divine, the term Asura being used for the Supreme Spirit and being the same as the great Ahura of the Zoroastrians. There was a time when the gods Indra, Angi, and Varuna themselves belonged to the Asuras.

Only in Atlantean times, at the transition from Lemuria to Atlantis, were these originally high gods transformed into non-gods.

1904-GA011

makes clear that the term Asuras or Original Forces or Spirits of Personality are all terms for the Archai, beings who reached the human stage CoC4 on Old Saturn

*Then follows the activity of the **"Spirits of Darkness."** **which are also called "Spirits of Personality" or of "Self-hood" (Egoism).** They implant a kind of sensory organs in the body, which are the germs of the sensory organs which later develop in the human body in the course of the development of earth.*

..

But these Archai can treat the images of the sensory germs through their own soul in such a way that, with their aid, they can perceive external objects, as does man during his earthly development. In their work on the human body, the Archai pass through their own "stage of humanity." Thus they are men from the middle of the fourth to the middle of the fifth Old Saturn cycle [CoL - Condition of Life].

*These spirits implant selfhood, egoism in the body of man. Since they only attain their stage of humanity on Old Saturn, they remain connected with the development of mankind for a long time. Thus they have important work to perform on man in subsequent cycles as well. This work always acts as an inoculation with selfhood. **The degenerations of selfhood into selfishness must be ascribed to their activity, while on the other hand they are the originators of all of man's independence. Without them man would never have become a self-enclosed entity, a "personality." Christian esoteric teaching uses the expression "Primal Beginnings" (Archai) for them, and in theosophical literature they are designated as Asuras.***

1904-05-23-GA093

*The other intuition was the basis upon which the ancient Persian mysticism was founded, and this led to the veneration of beings who were also only twofold in their nature: the Asuras. They, too, possessed what we call soul, but the soul organ was enclosed within a physical body developed in sublime and titanic fashion. The Indian view of the world, which clung to the Deva worship, looked upon the Asuras as something inferior; whereas those who inclined to the viewpoint of the Northern peoples adhered to the Asuras, to physical nature. Thus there developed in the Northern Zone more especially **the impulse towards controlling the things of the sense world in a material way, towards an ordering of the world of realities by means of the***

highest technical advancement, through physical arts and so on. Nowadays there is nobody who still persists in Asura worship, but ***there are many among us who still have something of this within them.*** Thence comes the ***tendency towards the materialistic side of life and that is the basic tendency of the Northern peoples.*** ***Whoever acknowledges purely materialistic principles can be sure that he has something of the Asuras in his nature.***

1904-10-17-GA089

To understand the position of the principle of spiritual evolution we have to consider a significant development in the Atlantean race. Spirits that had initially been [full of wisdom] now became rebels, agitators wanting to gain their independence. Suras became asuras. Until then they had been latent on Earth. They are the powers which now, at the present time, represent the intellectual and mental side of humanity.

other translation

If we wish to understand the point of view of spiritual evolution we must be clear about an important event of the Atlantean epoch. Those beings which had originally been spiritual, now appeared as revolutionaries striving for independence. Suras now became Asuras. Until this time they had taken no part in evolution. They are those powers which, just as in our day, represent the intellectual and spiritual side of human nature. This side of Lucifer's nature is that which also stood for Christianity during the first centuries. There are two documents referring to that, one is in the Vatican and a copy of it is in the possession of the most thoroughly initiated Christian of the western world: The Count of St. Germain.

The substance in astral space which is pressed together by passionate thoughts is the same as that which surrounded the previous planet, the Old Moon, out of which the Moon has developed to a higher stage. Thus wherever such substance exists, a certain danger is present. We human beings are created in such a way that we are obliged to incarnate in the physical matter of today. On the earlier planet there was not as yet physical matter of this kind; it was more highly developed than that of present day animals and less so than that of present day man. This substance in which Jehovah seeks to incarnate provides, as such, no favourable habitation. But the beings which are so far advanced that they reached their proper stage on the Old Moon will cause no harm. They have no liking for this substance.

*It is not the substance in which man is now incarnated. But **certain retrograde beings who had fallen behind on the Old Moon had discovered in this astral substance** - food for their gluttony. They want to feed on it; it has for them a great force of attraction. This shows that we are continually surrounded by beings whose higher nature is related to our lower. When someone produces egotistical thoughts, this is very welcome to these beings. **In other respects they are actually more advanced than man, but they have the craving to embody themselves in the astral forms which we ourselves create. They are the so-called Asuras.** Through our baser thoughts we provide nourishment for these asuric beings.*

*When people whose nature is not yet purified, not yet free from passions, meditate, creating strong thought forms, they conjure up around themselves a powerful aura of desires. In this incarnate asuric beings of this kind which are then able to draw such people downwards. If a person drowsy with sleep meditates and in so doing does not rise clearly enough into thoughts, he creates this substance, and because he has no counterbalance, such beings incarnate in his thought forms. **These are higher beings because they had completely***

developed Manas on the Old Moon, before the coming of the Buddhi impulse; they therefore do not possess this impulse. Hence with them Manas is egotistical.

*Had not the human being on Earth, from that point of time at which Manas came to him from outside, also received the impulse of Buddhi, had he only developed further the forward urge of Manas, he would have become in the strongest sense of the word an egotistical being. Manasic evolution is one tending to egoism and independence. Its task was to make man independent, but then the Buddhi nature was necessary. **The asuric beings already referred to, because they developed Manas too early, have missed this impulse of the Buddhi nature. On the one hand therefore they stand at a higher stage and on the other hand they cannot progress, but go on developing the Kama-Manas, which is egotistical.***

1906-11-01-GA266

(SWCC)

On Old Sun, Christ is the regent of the archangels (fire-spirits). The satanic hosts are the fallen archangels that remain behind. The satanic beings begin their 'work' in the Atlantean race (black magic). They are the gods of hindrance.

On Old Moon it is the Luciferic spirits. In the Lemurian race Lucifer intervened in human development. He was drawn into earth development and served as a liberator through giving man independence and enthusiasm for wisdom.

*The Asuras remain behind on Old Saturn. **The Asuras intervene only now in the fifth epoch. They are by far the most harmful and work mainly into the sexual life, i.e. the physical body.** The many sexual aberrations of the present can be traced back to their strong influence. All forces of hindrance work in such a way that they seek to hold on to what exists at present, what is imperfect, to carry it through and reinforce it in its imperfection.*

The Luciferic beings still worked as liberators, because they gave independence, the egoity together with egoism. We had to pass through egoism, which was, as it were, the first expression of the I – just as error is the first expression of wisdom in a world of becoming, and animalistic love is the first expression of the highest spiritual love. Our task is the transformation in each case. The third epoch and root-race saw the separation of the sexes, in the sixth epoch it will be overcome; this has to be prepared in the next sixth cultural age.

The reproductive forces of man are undergoing transformation. Reproductive force in itself is the most holy in our possession because it is directly divine. The more divine what is dragged through the mud by us, the greater the sin. The reproductive organs in us will be heart and larynx. As the word became flesh in Christ, so in the time of the fulfilment of Christianity the flesh has to become word.

[...]

Good and evil are as yet differentiated relatively little. And our eyes do not much penetrate the behind the uniform appearance of the flesh. Now it is still a relatively small step from evil to good, from good to evil. When the powers of the Masters and of those who support them with all their strength and will, and the powers of the gods of hindrance, also called Mammon (the Satans and Asuras), with their human following, intervene ever more strongly in the life of humanity, in earthly development – then good will develop into a divine good, and evil into something terrible, the Anti-Christ. Then every single one of us world-helpers (may this word be spoken in deepest humility) will need all the strength that can be gained from suffering and the overcoming of suffering, from evil and the overcoming of evil. It is the task of Theosophy (Anthroposophy), of Rosicrucianism, to summon human beings to this battle through knowledge of such things, and in the battle to bring them peace.

*Asuras are spirits of the very greatest egoism who remained behind during Old Saturn evolution. They want to condense matter and compress it ever more so that it can't be spiritualized and brought back to its original condition. They're the dregs of the planetary evolution that goes from Old Saturn to Future Vulcan. **The asuras inhabit the Moon and from there they work on the men whom they want to drag down into the eighth sphere** and thereby tear away from progressive evolution and its goal — the Christ. All those who strive towards the eighth sphere will eventually live on a moon. AUM. One wards off bad influences when one says it in the right way; it connects man with the creating Godhead, the three Logoi. The evil beings who want to tear men away from the Godhead can't stand it.[...]*



...they wish to pull down into the eighth sphere...

or again:

Asuras: the beings that strive for the Eighth sphere. They want to condense matter, increasingly to press it together, so to speak, so that it cannot be spiritualized again, that is, led back to its original state. They are the "dregs" of the entire planetary evolution, which begins with Old Saturn and goes through Old Sun, Old Moon, Earth, Future Jupiter, Future Venus, Future Vulcan. The Asuras already inhabit the Moon and influence human beings, whom they wish to pull down into the eighth sphere and thus tear them away from

progressive evolution and their goal —the Christ. All who are striving toward the eighth sphere will ultimately find their existence on a moon (Future Jupiter).

1907-06-02-GA099

*These beings, whose lowest member is the I, are those who come into special consideration for us in the Old Saturn stage, when they were at the stage where humanity stands today. .. They were the human beings of Saturn and the ancestors of our present humanity. They irradiated the surface of Old Saturn with their I-hood, their external nature, they were the implanters of I-hood in the physical corporeality that was forming on the surface of Old Saturn. Thus they made it their care that the physical body was prepared in such a way that it could later become the bearer of the I. Only such a physical body as you have today, with feet, hands and head and the sense organs incorporated in it could be I-bearer on the fourth stage, the Earth. To this end the nucleus of it had to be already implanted on Old Saturn. **One also calls these I-beings of Old Saturn, Spirits of Egoism.***

*Egoism has a two-fold character; it is excellent and desirable or obnoxious and evil. If at that time on Old Saturn and on the succeeding planets the essential nature of egoism had not been again and again implanted, man would never have become an independent being who can say " I " to himself. Into your bodily nature there has been instilled ever since Old Saturn the sum of forces which stamps you as an independent being, cutting you off from all other beings. To this end work **the Asuras or Spirits of Egoism.***

Among them are to be found two kinds, apart from slight deviations.

- *The one kind has elaborated egoism in a noble, self-reliant way, and has risen higher and higher in the perfection of the sense of freedom: that is the rightful independence of egoism. These spirits have guided*

mankind through all the successive planets; they have become the educators of men towards independence.

- Now on each planet there are also Spirits who have remained behind in evolution, they have remained stationary and not wished to progress. You will recognise a law from this: If the most outstanding fall and commit the "great sin" of not advancing with evolution, then they become the very worst of all. The noble sense of liberty has been reversed into wickedness, into its opposite. **Those are the Spirits of Temptation, and they must be taken gravely into account; they lead to the evil side of egoism, even today they are still in our environment, these evil Spirits of Old Saturn. All that is bad draws its power from these Spirits.**

1909-03-22-GA107

Lucifer anchored himself in the sentient soul [...]. [...]

It was in [...] the intellectual soul [...] that Ahriman established his footing. [...]

And in the age now, approaching, those spiritual Beings known as the Asuras will creep into the consciousness soul [...].

quote A

The asuric powers corrupt man today in a way that is more theoretical than actual. Today they deceive him by various means into thinking that his 'I' is a product of the physical world only; they hue him to a kind of theoretic materialism. But as time goes on — and the premonitory signs of this are the dissolute, sensuous passions that are becoming increasingly prevalent on earth — they will blind man's vision

of the spiritual beings and spiritual powers. Man will know nothing nor desire to know anything of a spiritual world. More and more he will not only teach that the highest moral ideals of humanity are merely sublimations of animal impulses, that human thinking is but a transformation of a faculty also possessed by the animals, that man is akin to the animal in respect of his form and moreover in his whole being descends from the animal — but he will take this view in all earnestness and order his life in accordance with it.

..

Man does not as yet entirely base his life on the principle that his true being descends from the animal. But this view of existence will inevitably arise, with the result that men will also live like animals, will sink into animal impulses, animal passions. And in many things that need not be further characterized here, many things that in the great cities come to expression in orgies of dissolute sensuality, we can already perceive the lurid, hellish glare of the spirits we call the asuras.

1909-04-21-GA110

Q&A (not on rsarchive)

The asuras are evil beings who stand one degree higher in their will towards evil as the ahrimanic beings, and two degrees higher as the luciferic beings.

1910-08-21-GA122

in the cycle on Genesis, describes how the backward Old Saturn beings played during the Old Sun evolutionary stage, especially the backwards Archai.

To get to the bottom of this, we must again go back to the earliest point we can reach in the development of our planet. As we have often said, we must think of the Old Saturn existence as a condition of pure warmth, and that with the transition to Old Sun there then took place on the one hand a densification to air or gas, on the other hand a rarefaction in the direction of the etheric, to light-ether. We have said that the passage in which the words ring forth And God (the Elohim) said, Let there be light; and there was light is describing a kind of repetition of this coming into existence of the light-ether.

Now we may ask: **Was the darkness there of itself; or does spiritual Being lie behind this also?**

*If you read the relevant passages in my Occult Science you will come across something extremely important for the understanding of all development — the fact that at each stage of evolution certain beings remain behind. Only a certain number of beings reach their goal. ... Thus we may say that **during Old Saturn evolution certain beings did not reach their proper goal, they lagged behind. During Old Sun evolution they still remained at the Old Saturn stage.***

*How could one recognise on the Old Sun the beings who were still really Old Saturn beings? By the fact that they had not acquired the light nature, which was of the very essence of the Old Sun state. But because these beings were nevertheless there, the Old Sun, which I have described as an inweaving of light, warmth and air, had darkness as well as light in it. And this darkness was the mark of the beings remaining at the Old Saturn stage, just as the weaving light indicated the Beings who had progressed regularly to the Sun stage. Thus, there was an interweaving of Beings who were still at the Old Saturn stage of development with beings who had progressed normally to the Old Sun stage. From the inner aspect these Beings moved in and out among one another; and outwardly they manifested themselves as an interplay of light and darkness. **We can call the manifestation of the***

more advanced Beings, light, and the manifestation of the Beings remaining behind at the Saturn stage, darkness.

*If we know this, we shall expect **the relationship between advanced and backward Beings to reappear during the recapitulation of the Saturn and Sun epochs in Earth evolution.** And because the backward Old Saturn beings represent an earlier stage of evolution, they will appear earlier than the light in the recapitulation also. Thus, quite rightly, in the first verse of Genesis we are told that darkness prevailed over the elementary substances. That is the recapitulation of the Saturn existence, now a backward one. The Sun existence has to wait; it comes later, it comes at the point where the Bible says: Let there be light.*

Thus we see that the Genesis story is in complete accordance with the recapitulation described in my Occult Science.

If we would understand existence, we must be clear that what emerged at an earlier stage does not just go on for a time and then disappear. Something new is continually arising, but the old remains actual alongside the new and continues to work within it. And so even today we have co-existing the two stages of evolution which we can call light and darkness. Light and darkness permeate our existence.

... The concept of matter which is put forward today is simply a fantasy; it is an illusion. Matter is in reality a soul-spiritual being, which is to be traced everywhere where the polaric contrast of light and darkness is effective. The physical notion of matter which is generally accepted is, in truth, a chimera. In the regions of space where, according to physics, we are to look for a sort of apparition called "matter," there is in actual fact nothing else but a certain degree of darkness. And this dark content of space is filled out with something of a soul-spiritual nature, something akin to what is intended in Genesis in the passage where "darkness" (the word used to denote the collective whole of this soul-spiritual entity) is described as weaving over the elementary existence. [1] All these things are much more profound than modern natural science dreams! Thus when Genesis speaks of darkness, it is speaking of the

manifestation of the backward Saturn Beings. And when it speaks of light, it is referring to the advanced Beings. They interact and interweave with one another.

We said yesterday that the main lines, the main features, of evolution were laid down by Beings at the stage of the Exusiai, the Spirits of Form, so that these Beings plan the general direction of the activities of light. And further, we have seen that they make use of the Spirits of Personality as their servants, and that behind the expression yom, day, we have to see a Being of the rank of the Archai, appointed under the Elohim. We may also assume that, just as on the positive side these servants of the Elohim, these Spirits of Personality indicated by yom, are active, so also the backward spiritual Beings, who work in opposition to them in darkness, play their part. Indeed we may say that darkness is something that the Elohim find already there. Light is something they bring into being through their musing, their meditation. When they think out the two complexes from what has remained over from the earlier existence, it comes about that darkness is interwoven therein as the expression of the backward Beings. They themselves bestow the light. But just as out of the light the Elohim appoint the Beings represented by yom, day, so out of the darkness come Beings who are of the same rank as these, but Beings who have lagged behind at an earlier stage. Thus we can say that all that manifests itself as darkness stands together on one side in opposition to the Elohim. And now we have to ask, who are the Beings who oppose the Archai, servants of the Elohim, the Beings indicated by the word yom? Who are the corresponding backward Beings in opposition to them?

To avoid misunderstanding, it would be as well to clear up first another point — whether we have always to look upon these backward Beings as evil, as something wrong in the world-context. It is easy for the abstract man, the man who is concerned only with concepts, to feel something like indignation over the backward Beings; or he can make the mistake of being sorry for the poor things! We should not harbour feelings and ideas of such a kind as regards these tremendous realities of the universe. That would lead us completely astray. On the contrary we should remind ourselves

*that everything happens out of cosmic wisdom, and that **whenever Beings remain behind at a particular stage of development, it means something**; it has significance for the whole for Beings to remain behind, just as it has for them to attain their goal; in other words, there are certain functions which cannot be carried out by the advanced Beings, functions for which Beings are needed who remain at an earlier stage. They are in their proper place in their backwardness. What would become of the world if all those who ought to be teachers of young children were to become university professors? Those who do not become professors are much better where they are than the professors would be. Those who occupy academic chairs would probably turn out to be very badly suited for the instruction of seven-, eight-, nine- and ten-year-olds! Something of the same kind is true in cosmic relationships. There are certain tasks for which those who attain their goal would be little fitted. For certain tasks those who have remained behind — we could equally well say those who have renounced progress — must take their place. And just as the advanced Spirits of Personality, the Yamim, were given their task by the Elohim, so **the backward Archai also, those Spirits of Personality who reveal themselves not through light, but through darkness, are made use of in order to evoke the laws of earthly development. They are allotted their proper place, so that they may make their contribution to the orderly development of our existence.***

...

It was necessary for the Saturn Beings to be kept back in cosmic evolution, so that they could undertake the rebuilding of the physical body during sleep, while there was no light. Thus the backward Saturn Beings have their part to play in our existence; without them we should be exposed to nothing but destruction. There has to be an alternation, a co-operation, of Sun Beings and Saturn Beings, of light and darkness. Thus if the activity of the light Beings is to be rightly guided by the Elohim, they must inweave into their own work in an orderly fashion the work of the Beings of darkness. There can be no stability in cosmic activity unless the force of darkness is

everywhere interwoven with the force of light. And in this complication of the forces of light and darkness lies one of the secrets of cosmic existence, of cosmic alchemy.

...

*Thus we must never forget that the interplay between the forces of sun-light and Saturn-darkness is a necessity of our existence. When therefore the Elohim placed the Spirits of Personality as their deputies in charge of the weaving of the light forces, of the work which is performed upon us men and upon other earthly beings while the light is affecting us, they had also to appoint the backward Saturn Beings as fellow-workers; they had to see that the whole work of the universe was carried on by the normally advanced and the backward Archai together. The backward Archai are active in the darkness. **Hence the Elohim employ not only the Beings designated by yom, day, but they set in opposition to them Beings who weave in the darkness.** And the Bible says with a wonderfully realistic description of the facts: And God called the light Day (yom), and the darkness He called Night (lay'lah). [2] And lay'lah does not mean our abstract night, but **lay'lah are the Saturn Archai, who at that time had not advanced to the Sun stage.***

*And **to this day it is they who are active in us during sleep, when they work upon our physical and etheric bodies, building them up.** This mysterious expression lay'lah, which has given rise to all kinds of myths, is neither our abstract "night" nor is it anything which need lead to myth-making. It is simply the name of the backward Archai, who unite their activity with that of the advanced Archai.*

Thus we have paraphrased the appropriate words in Genesis somewhat as follows: The Elohim planned the main lines of existence; they deputed the advanced Archai to work under them, and appointed to help them those Archai who in resignation had remained in darkness at the Saturn stage, in order that existence could come about. Thus we have yom and lay'lah as two contrasted groups of Beings, who help the Elohim and who are at the stage of the Time-Spirits, the

Spirits of Personality. We see existence being woven out of the Spirits of Form and the Spirits of Personality, out of advanced Beings and the backward Beings of these two hierarchies.

1911-10-01-GA130

as part of the Q&A

We have the physical world, the astral world, the lower and the higher spirit world. If the body is thrust down lower even than the physical world, it comes into the sub-physical world, the lower astral world, the lower or evil spirit world, and the lower or evil spirit world.

- *The evil astral world is the province of **Lucifer**,*
 - *the evil lower spirit world the province of **Ahriman**,*
 - *and the evil higher spirit world the province of the **Asuras**.*
-

1919-12-15-GA194

projects the three streams of adverse powers

In the last five or six years more lies have been told among civilized humanity than in any other period of world history; in public life the truth has scarcely been spoken at all; hardly a word that has passed through the world was true.

While this stream empties into lies (see drawing), the middle stream empties into self-seeking; and an economic life like the Anglo-American, which should end in world-dominion — if the effort is not made to bring about its permeation by the independent spiritual life and the independent political life, it will flow into the third of the abysses of human life, into the third of these three.

- *The first abyss is lies, the degeneration of humanity through Ahriman;*
- *the second is self-seeking, the degeneration of humanity through Lucifer;*
- *the third is, in the physical realm, illness and death; in the cultural realm, the illness and death of culture.*

The Anglo-American world may gain world dominion; but without the Threefold Social Order it will, through this dominion, pour out

- ***cultural death and cultural illness*** over the whole earth; for these ***are just as much a gift of the Asuras*** as
- *lies are a gift of Ahriman, and*
- *self-seeking, of Lucifer.*

So the third, a worthy companion of the other two, is a gift of the Asuric powers.

Discussion

[1] - Asuric influence on Man

Introduction

Rudolf Steiner expanded in great detail and coverage on the Luciferic and Ahrimanic influences, but quite noticeably covered the Asuric influences much less. Although he does mention them explicitly with basic descriptions, Steiner does not expand or offer an in-depth understanding with an evolutionary positioning and the challenge they represent to humanity, with the same transparency as he does for the Luciferic and Ahrimanic influences.

Hence it is up to us to connect the dots and bring the clues and perspectives together, and there are plentiful.

Foundational pre-reading

With reference to:

- [Fall and redemption - original sin and grace](#)
 - the explanations given for Schema FMC00.343A and Schema FMC00.337
 - Topic 1 - What is going on in the world today?
- the context on this page 'Asuras' as well as its second topic page [Rashasas](#)

For contemplation

Whereas Luciferic influence happened on Old Sun, when the archangels were going through the human stage (CoC=4), and the Ahrimanic influence is linked to Old Moon when the angels went through the human stage, the Asuras are fallen suras or archai who fell behind or stayed back on Old Saturn.

It is also said (tbc)

- Lucifer is a fallen being from the hierarchy of the archangels fallen to the stature of an angel
- Ahriman is a fallen being from the hierarchy of the archai, fallen to the stature of an archangel
- Sorat is a fallen being from the hierarchy of the SoF, fallen to the stature of the archai (or 'suras').

The Luciferic infection was into Man's astral body, and the Ahrimanic infection influences Man's etheric body.

When Man cleanses his astral body and develops the spirit self or manas, he redeems lucifer - re the link to the holy spirit.

The Christ is to help Man overcome the Ahrimanic influence - see the seduction of Christ-Jesus in the desert - this plays in the etheric by the effect of Christ's budhi or life-spirit as the spirit of the Earth, whereby Man

now gets an etheric 'tailwind push in the back' for its etherization, away from physical material incarnation and taking the ascent as a future fully spiritual being.

From the above, what can we deduce for the asuric influence on Man? The Old Saturn stage is where the physical body of Man found its origin, and the warmth of the archai was the core seed for the I of Man.

From the [Spectrum of elements and ethers](#) - see Schemas FMC00.084 and FMC00.172 - it can be gathered that the asuric influences are working in the life ether, thrown down into the sub-physical world (whereas electricity is compressed light ether and luciferic - see yellow: element air, astral; and magnetism is compressed chemical ether and ahrimanic - - see blue: element water, etheric).

If we consider for a moment a logical reasoning by extension or extrapolation, it would mean that the asuric influences give an infection into the level of the physical body and the consciousness soul, that is - the highest level of I-consciousness. Rudolf Steiner positions Sorat as the anti-christ .. but it correlates even to a level higher, to spirit-man or atma.

Then consider Schema FMC00.185 on [Epochs in Earth physical round](#). It shows the third divine intervention, still to happen, in the sixth epoch. Which gives some correlation to the 666 thread.

Hence, maybe Rudolf Steiner did not go into Sorat because it represents a challenge for the next epoch?

On the other hand, the [war of all against all](#) seems to be a war of I-person to I-person, driven by the utmost egotism.

Contemplate: how could an infection inside, into our I-material have taken place? Compare with the luciferic and ahrimanic influences and the threefold soul. See also FMC00.246 on the interventions of Christ on [Christ Module 14 – the counterforces: Lucifer, Ahriman and Asuras](#)



Eighth Sphere

The Eighth sphere is the name for an additional sphere of downward development that stands apart from the seven normal evolutionary spheres or planetary stages of our solar system evolution. In the normal development beings develop and rise along a ladder of [Conditions of Consciousness](#).

The Eighth sphere represents the opposition of normal or 'good' development, or [evil](#), and the '[sixteen paths of perdition](#)' to get off of this normal development (see also [human races](#) for background, and Schema FMC00.233 on [Development of the I](#) for an illustration of the sixteen paths). More specifically, the Eighth sphere is connected with the extreme form of evil called [black magic](#) that appeared in the middle of the Atlantean epoch (see also: [Rakshasas](#) or [Asuras](#) and [Sorat](#)) and is reappearing again in the current stages of the [Current Postatlantean epoch](#).

For individuals who, out of free will, put themselves in the service of their egotism and devote their life to do conscious harm (as in [black magic](#)), the state of 'avitchi' (or avichi, see below) describes the state whereby these languish eternally as a 'place of no return', because their lower I or threefold soul has lost the connection with the higher or true spiritual I. The soul is banished into lower more animalistic levels and the personality eventually annihilated. (See explanations by Blavatsky below, and also Schemas FMC00.128 and FMC00.289 on [Human 'I'](#) that illustrate how [Man's higher triad](#) has its roots of essence in the higher worlds of budhi and nirvana planes, where there is and can be no evil. Hence the spiritual disconnects and closes down from such connections, and the soul below gets caught in a dead-end street.)

The future of all beings in the Eighth sphere is that they are cast back to a lower level and are unable to participate in the evolution. They can only be taken up into the regular evolution again after a whole round of evolution (or one [cosmic breath of Brahma](#)), when the First Logos 'recycles' the Eighth sphere along with cosmic dust byproducts of evolution. In this case they return banished as manifesting as the lowermost entity.

Aspects

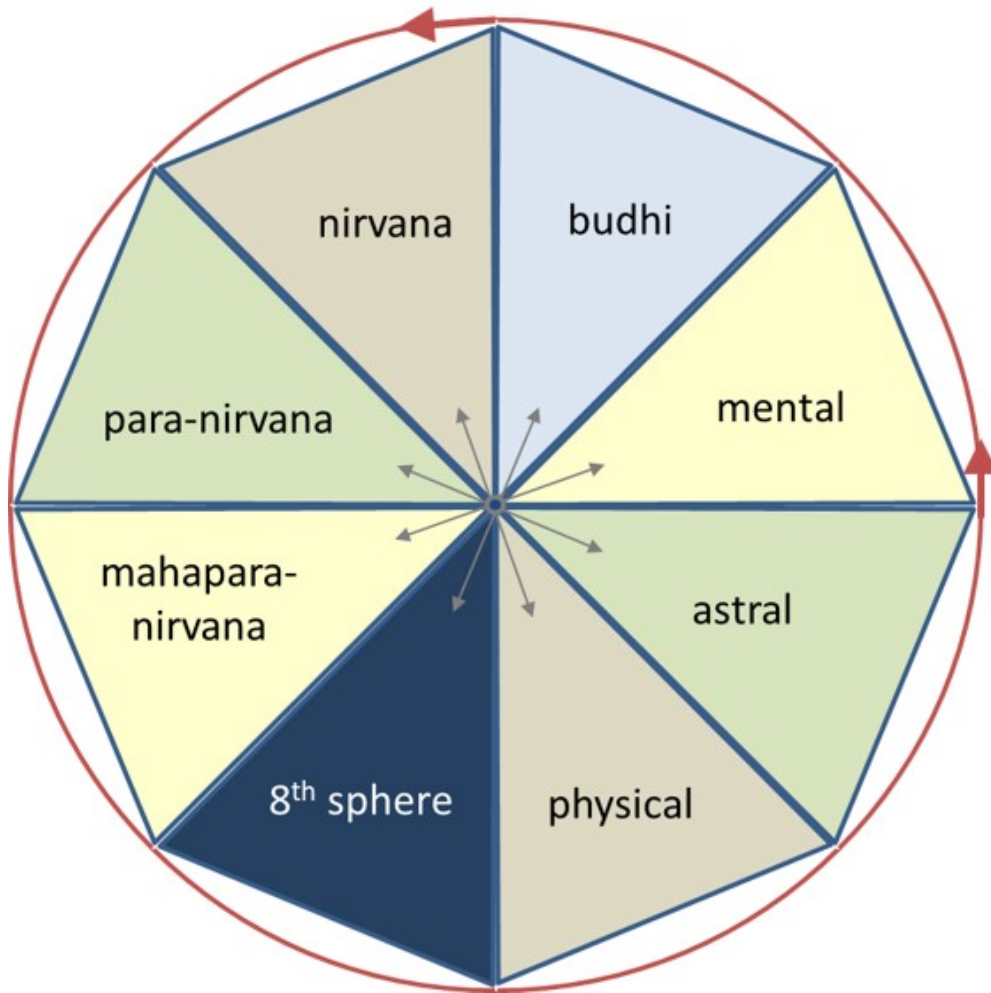
- The Eighth sphere was created in the [Lemurian epoch](#) (see [Man's higher triad](#) and reference 1905-10-16-GA093A below) on the basis of

the parts of the astral bodies that fell off when the higher triad united with the lower Man. It provides shelter for astral beings which have come into existence through the fact that Man has thrown something off. This is like the concept of a garbage collector for byproducts of the regular evolution, see also the concept of 'irredeemable moon' or 'unredeemable moon' on [Future Venus](#).

- Ultimately, only the first Logos at the highest level of mahapara-nirvana is able to take up again anything which has fallen into the eighth sphere, takes it along with the cosmic dust for the next cycle of creation as the 'wheel of planes' goes full circle and starts anew (see Schema FMC00.078 below and its references).
- The descriptions above do not contradict the fact that the evil will develop into future evil races (see Schema FMC00.077A on [Creation of solar system](#)), however with a turning point at the 666 evolutionary stage on [Future Venus](#) which is the 'last moment for salvation', as on Future Vulcan nothing more can be saved. See more on the topic page [Evil](#).
- There is a link between the Eighth sphere and the Moon as pointed out by Sinnett and Blavatsky, and corrected by Steiner (ao 1916-11-27-GA172)

Illustrations

Schema FMC00.078 shows the 'wheel of planes' (see [Planes or worlds of consciousness](#)) that positions the Eighth sphere as outside of the normal evolution between mahapara-nirvana and the physical, and opposite of the budhi plane or world. See the lecture extract 1904-11-10-GA089 below.



From the *Worlds of Consciousness* Page:

The different states in the evolution of the cosmos are described as the working of the three Logoi in the various states or three dimensions of evolution: Conditions of Consciousness (CoC), Conditions of Life (CoL), and Conditions of Form (CoF).

From this evolutionary dynamic arise different 'worlds'. Man participates in them today, can broaden his consciousness through initiatory practice, and in the future will participate in the different worlds having arrived at states of consciousness much higher than he has today.

Different states of clairvoyance allow the initiate or spiritual scientist to investigate the different worlds .

These world are also called 'planes', but these should not be thought of as physical in time and space, different, or stacked: they interpenetrate as part of the same single cosmos.

1912-06-12-GA137

You see, therefore, it is quite possible to perceive with ordinary intelligence that there are these three styles of consciousness. It would take us too far now to investigate the indications that undoubtedly exist in man of still higher consciousnesses. We have, however, shown that whenever man sets out to reflect on his life as Earth man, he discovers manifestations of higher consciousnesses. It is, therefore, possible to speak to Earth man of these higher states of consciousness. ...

*In spiritual science we speak of **different states of consciousness. In reality they are different worlds and it has become customary to call these different states of consciousness different planes.***

That which can be surveyed with the physical consciousness is called the physical plane;

that which is perceptible to the first consciousness of a super-sensible nature, the astral plane;

to the second, the lower Devachan or mental plane;

and to the third, the higher mental, or higher Devachan plane.

Still farther on, we have the Budhi plane and the Nirvana plane.

All we are doing here is simply to give other names to the findings of spiritual science. In all cases .. it is always man who, in his varying conditions or states of consciousness, is

*active as member of the different planes or worlds. What we have done is to lead over the knowledge of man from the standpoint of esoteric science, where we speak of different Conditions of Consciousness and different Conditions of Life and Form in evolution, to the knowledge of man from the standpoint of theosophy. For **where the spiritual researcher speaks of Conditions of Consciousness, the theosophist speaks of successive planes.** Esoteric or spiritual science can in this manner be communicated openly as theosophy.*

Lecture coverage and references

The Eighth sphere is one of the topics for which the following historical background is relevant:

In 1883, A.P. Sinnet published 'Esoteric Buddhism', a book that became a widespread bestseller despite its esoteric content. Two years later, by 1885, the book was already in its fifth edition. The book contained erroneous information, and Blavatsky's Secret Doctrine continued along such path of containing confusing or erroneous information - clearly from an angle that wanted to eradicate the teachings of the Christ Impulse.

This triggered a counter-reaction. In 1893 the unknown C.G. Harrison gave six (most probably inspired) lectures with deep esoteric contents. Later on Rudolf Steiner also publicly made statements and corrections about the above.

Man: fragments of forgotten history (1885)

Given the fact there is little information available about the Eighth sphere (and rakshasas), we quote the following extract in full, from Man: fragments of forgotten history (1885) (p. 134-135). The book is downloadable from the [Evolution](#) page.

Rakshasas (demons), souls or astral forms of sorcerers, men who have reached the apex of knowledge in the forbidden art.

*Dead or alive, **they have, so to say, cheated Nature, and will defy the order of the general evolution until our planet goes into obscuration, when they will have to turn round and fall into the main current, and have a fresh start in the course of life.** The Atlanteans are often referred to by this name in Sanskrit writings.*

*Most of the magical feats performed by the dabblers in black magic are performed with the help of elementals, and in rare cases also with the aid of elementaries. The more potent evil forces in Nature are known only to the regular adepts in that evil science. Some depraved persons do by the help of black magic obtain husbands and wives from the elemental beings, which, having no definite forms, will readily bring to life the ideal they find present in the magician's mind. Elementaries of suicides, or victims of accident, specially those who die by lightning, are much sought after by black magicians : the reason for this preference is obvious. **Black magic** also gives to its votaries the power of obsessing living men and women. **This vile art was at its height during the close of the Atlantean race period, when the everlasting struggle between the black magicians and the Adepts of the Good Law raged most fiercely.***

***Sorcerers and black magicians, the most powerful of those vile fraternities, attain at the conclusion of a great cycle of activity, what is called Avitchi-Nirvana.** At the beginning of the next period of activity they commence a nameless life of spiritual wickedness, to be ended only at the next period of rest. The name of these beings of misery and horror, the cursed alike of man and god, is never pronounced or written, but they have nothing to do with the mortals who pass through the seven spheres.*

***These are the habitants of the eighth sphere,** which has sixteen grades [editor: see also 1908-05-16-GA102 in the Discussion section of page of [Human races](#)]. In the first fourteen of these the entity loses, after prolonged periods of suffering, its seven astral and seven spiritual senses. The mysteries of the last two grades are never communicated outside the sanctuary of initiation.*

It may be stated, however, that from the last, the entity, having lost the accumulated vile energy of its past, emerges as a new individuality, to begin a new course from the lowest rung of the ladder of life.

Explaining this subject of the so-called personal annihilation our Teacher says :

*"At this point the great law begins its work of selection. Matter, found divorced from spirit as far as that possible, is thrown over into the still lower worlds, into the sixth 'gate' or way of re-birth in the vegetable and mineral worlds, and also in the primitive animal forms. From thence matter, ground over in the workshop of Nature, proceeds soulless back to its mother fount, while the egos, purified of their dross, are enabled to resume their progress once more on earth. **It is here that the laggard egos perish by the million.** It is the solemn moment of the survival of the fittest, the annihilation of the unfit. It is but matter (or material man) which is compelled by its own weight to descend to the very bottom of the 'circle of necessity', to then assume an animal form. Of course the monad never perishes, whatever happens."*

To prevent a misunderstanding it is necessary to point out that what the Master says above does not warrant the belief in a retrogression of souls. A human spirit will never inhabit the form of an animal.

***In its descent through the 'circle of necessity' it loses all trace of humanity, and then the colourless monad begins to reascend through the different grades.** It is as absurd to accuse a man of cannibalism if he eats a turnip grown in a graveyard, as to construe the esoteric doctrine expounded by the Master into a justification of the vulgar idea of the transmigration of souls.*

C. J. Harrison in The Transcendental Universe (1893)

... It will be my duty to explain, to the best of my ability, certain facts in connection with a mystery known as the Mystery of the Eighth Sphere. ... Now I am well aware that there are many occultists who say the subject ought not to be brought before the public at all, and object to the very name being mentioned, ... In reply to such persons it is due to myself to say I am breaking no oath, and violating no confidence. These lectures were advertised in the public journals, and all who choose to attend them are welcome. I regret to be obliged to differ from many persons, whom I hold in the highest respect, as to whether or not the times are ripe for mentioning these subjects. They have been mentioned — prudently or imprudently — and are familiar to all who have taken an interest in the Theosophical Movement ... The first person, however, to profane the mysteries (albeit unconsciously) was Mr. Sinnett, the author of **Esoteric Buddhism, a book which made considerable sensation when it came out, but which contains nothing new that is true, and nothing true that is new.** As he was the first to make public the information that there is an "eighth sphere" and a mystery connected with it of which he is ignorant, it may be as well to say that both these statements are true. But when he proceeds to say that the Eighth Sphere is the Moon, he gives utterance to one of those half-truths that are more misleading than falsehoods ... Readers of *Esoteric Buddhism* will remember that Man is said therein to evolve on seven planets; three of which (including the Earth) are visible, and the other four composed of matter too attenuated to be visible. Also that there is an eighth planet, the moon, in which matter "asserts itself" yet more strongly than on the earth. Anything more utterly misleading it is impossible to conceive. Madame Blavatsky, who knew very well that this kind of thing was sure to be exposed sooner or later, has in her *Secret Doctrine* corrected some of the errors, but as she has not chosen to elucidate any portion of the mystery except such as suit her purpose, and as she is destitute, moreover, of the literary gifts of her disciple, her teaching in respect to the

Seven Planets and the Eighth Sphere will be "caviare to the General", who will continue to regard Mr. Sinnett's explanation as the genuine "Esoteric Buddhism" ..

1904-11-10-GA089

is key, in order to be understood, the short extract below needs to be read in full context of the whole lecture.

With reference to Schema FMC00.078 above (and for context see also Schema FMC00.400 and variant on [Cosmic breath of Brahma](#)).

.. Two planes that are in opposite positions correspond. On the astral plane, desire rules, on the para nirvana plane love, budhi. On the mental plane, perception rules, taking in the thought; on the mahapara nirvana plane the creative thought rules.

The budhi plane is absolute, loving dedication to the divine. Its opposite is a state of having completely turned away from all that is divine. Where the budhi plane is beatific, its opposite has absolute wretchedness. That is the eighth sphere.

...

Imagine a particular entity has turned its back on evolution on some plane or other, going its own way. It would fall into the Eighth sphere and would have to wait until the whole of evolution has gone round. It could only be taken along again, as lowermost entity, in the next evolution.

...

Only the first Logos is able to take up again anything which has fallen into the eighth sphere. It takes it along with the cosmic dust. To be cast out from evolution is to link one's life to something which inexorably remains behind, without fail, and to wait

until evolution once again coincides with the state in question. A native of an uncivilized wild place with the soul of such a native is relatively happy; but imagine a more highly developed spirit in the body of such a native or even a dog, that is banishment indeed. The higher soul has taken the road to a lower manifestation.

To 'go into the eighth sphere' does indeed mean to be no longer progressing in accord with evolution, to be unable to participate in the evolution of the others, but to be cast back to a lower level.

...

On the mahapara nirvana plane it is the creative conscious mind of the Logos. This moves on from there through the Eighth sphere and on to the physical plane, where it becomes the creative powers of nature.

1905-10-09-GA093A

Beside these there is an Eighth Sphere to which everything goes that cannot make any connection with this continuous evolution. This already forms itself as predisposition in the devachanic state. When a human being uses the life on earth only to amass what is of service to himself alone, only to experience an intensification of his own egotistical self, this leads in Devachan into the condition of Avitchi. A person who cannot escape from his own separateness goes into Avitchi. All these Avitchi men will eventually become inhabitants of the Eighth Sphere. The other human beings will be inhabitants of the continuing chain of evolution. It is from this concept that religions have formulated the doctrine of hell.

1905-10-16-GA093a

At that time, the union took place between these forms on the Earth and the other beings already described. The astral body with the head formation united with the winged-serpent body with its fiery opening. It was the fructification of the maternal earth with the paternal spirit.

*In this way there proceeded the fructification with the manas forces. **The lower astral body merged with the higher astral body. A great part of the astral body, as it then was, fell away.***

- *One portion formed the lower parts of the human astral body, and*
- *the other newly acquired astral body, connected with the head, united with the upper parts of the human being.*
- *What was then peeled off abandoned this astral body which was bound up with the form of the winged-serpent; it could no longer have any further development on the Earth. **It formed, as a conglomerate substance, the astral sphere of the moon, the so-called eighth sphere.** The moon actually provides shelter for astral beings which have come into existence through the fact that Man has thrown something off.*

1908-05-16-GA102

(SWCC) talks about the downward evolution and the segment of that does not reach the evolutionary goals. Like during the previous evolutionary phases, they give rise to the lower kingdoms (see off-springs, and how the current nature kingdoms are also a result of this process .. plants and animals did not make it through the evolutionary funnel as Man did). In the future, these will be the degenerated versions of Man that will give rise to the 'evil' kingdoms.

.. Mankind will have gone forward but they too will appear in an ever progressed form. He however who thrusts the Leader of humanity from him must reappear again and again in the same way. That is the legend of Ahasuerus, who has thrust from him the Christ, the Leader of humanity. Man has either hardened or possesses the possibility of developing to higher stages. Races would not stay behind and become decadent if there were not men who wish to stay behind and are obliged to stay behind, since they have not developed their eternal life-kernel. Older races only persist because there are men who cannot or will not move forward to a higher racial form. I cannot today speak about the whole series of possibilities, in the course of earthly evolution, for man to become one with the race, to grow together with what is the character of one race or another. **Think of the Atlantean race; souls have gone through it, but not all have passed out of it. There are sixteen possibilities of becoming merged with the race. They are called the "sixteen paths of perdition."** On these paths man would merge with the material. By striving forward, however, he is drawn up from race to race to ever higher stages.

We see then that it is actually possible for a man to combine with the one incarnation in such a way that he **remains behind in evolution**. His other soul-brothers are therefore at a higher stage when he reappears in a new incarnation. He must then content himself with an inferior incarnation which has been left to him in a decadent race. This is something that takes place, but it need not frighten people for the present phase of evolution. No one is obliged to take all the sixteen paths and thereby fall out of evolution. We must only be aware of the possibility.

Now let us take an extreme case and imagine that a man unites too fully with what is to constitute the character of an incarnation. Let us suppose he reaches what is to be reached in sixteen incarnations; he takes the sixteen false paths. The earth does not wait for him, the earth goes forward and he finally arrives at a point where he can no longer incorporate in a human body, for none are in existence. There will be no

more bodies in which souls that have grown too much involved in their bodily nature can incarnate. Such souls lose the possibility of incarnation and find no other opportunity. Just think what they will have lost. It is possible, but only in exceptional cases, that even during Earth evolution souls will be unable to incarnate because there are no more bodies bad enough. These men have gone so far that they have no other opportunity of incarnating in the normal course of evolution. Let us suppose such beings should remain on the earth — it will only be single cases. And now, since the later is the fruit of the earlier, these would then find no bodies suitable for them. They are, as it were, too good for the bodies of a subordinate order and for the other bodies they are too bad. They must therefore live a bodiless existence. They must cut themselves off entirely from the progress of evolution.

*Why have they deserved this? By reason of the fact that they have not made use of life! The world is around them; they have possessed senses in order to perceive the world, to enrich the life-kernel and mold it to a higher stage. They do not advance with world evolution, they remain behind at a certain stage. **Beings that stay behind at such stages appear in a later epoch with approximately the character of the earlier age. They have grown together with it, but not in the forms of the later epoch. They appear in a later epoch as subordinate nature-spirits.***

***In fact the human race will furnish a whole number of such new nature-spirits in the second half of the Future Jupiter evolution, for man will have fully completed the fifth principle at the Future Jupiter stage.** For those who have not used the opportunity on Earth to develop the fifth principle there will be no available form. **They will appear as nature-spirits and they will appear then with four principles,** the fourth being the highest. Whereas the normally advanced man will have the principles 5, 4, 3, 2 at the Future Jupiter stage, these men will have 4, 3, 2, 1. That would be the destiny of those who have not gradually developed their higher principles by making use of earthly life. They become nature-spirits, so to speak, of future evolutionary periods, working invisibly. Just the same occurred in the case of our present nature-spirits in the earlier periods*

of evolution, except in so far as there are, of course, continual changes according to the character of the different periods. Everything has now been graded, so to speak, according to moral responsibility, and because this is so, the nature-spirits that arise from the human race will have a certain morality. Upon Future Jupiter there will be nature-spirits which have moral responsibility.

Let us now recollect what I have said as to how Future Jupiter differs from our Earth. We have described the nature of the Earth as that of the planet of Love, in contrast to the nature of Old Moon, the planet of Wisdom. As love has evolved on Earth so did the wisdom that we find all around us evolve on Old Moon. Love in its lowest form originated in the Lemurian epoch and becomes transformed to ever higher stages up to the highest spiritual form. When in the future the Earth planet appears as Future Jupiter, the Future Jupiter dwellers will direct their gaze upon love as men on Earth do upon wisdom. We observe the thigh bone into which wisdom is woven; the whole Earth is in a certain sense crystallized wisdom, which was formed little by little on Old Moon. But wisdom was formed gradually just as on our Earth love is gradually formed. And just as we wonder at the wisdom in all that surrounds us, so he who will one day inhabit Future Jupiter will feel wafting towards him the love that will lie in all things. This love will stream forth from all beings and speak to us, as the wisdom speaks to us which is secreted into the Earth through the Old Moon existence.

Thus the cosmos moves forward from stage to stage. The Earth is the cosmos of Love, and every condition has its special task. As a common wisdom prevails throughout our Earth, so will a common love prevail throughout Future Jupiter.

*And as the destructive forces of wisdom originate from those beings who stayed behind on Old Moon, so **there will appear upon Future Jupiter the destructive forces of love from beings who have remained behind. Into the midst of the general tapestry of the Future Jupiter existence will be set the hideous forms of the retarded beings with egoistic demands for love and they will be the mighty devastating powers in the Future Jupiter***

existence. *The staying behind of human beings in individual incarnations creates the destructive nature-powers on Future Jupiter. Thus we see how the world is woven, harmful elements as well as beneficent; we have a moral element woven into the world process.*

1909-05-21-GA104A

.. those who have proven themselves to be immature in the Future Venus stage, who have placed themselves under the rulership of Sorat, must now isolate themselves on a special sphere of Earth while the other seven proceed downward and again upward. Thus the colony of Sorat falls away. The black magicians inhabit this eighth sphere, which goes to the left and away, and the beast gives a home to all that thus falls away: that is the eighth state.

1915-10-18-GA254

is the lecture where Rudolf Steiner spends most 'airtime' on the topic, but without going any more in depth as clearly this is another audience in another context.

This will give you an inkling that the Eighth Sphere is to be observed within the Earth Sphere. It cannot properly be drawn either above or below; to depict the reality it would have to be sketched into the Earth Sphere. I have often given a crude example to express what is here meant. Just as the physical air is around us, so is the Spiritual around us; we have to look for the Spiritual within what is actually physical in our environment. Hence it must be presumed that just as the spiritual is round about us, so we must also look for the Eighth Sphere in our environment. This means that an organ enabling man to perceive the Eighth Sphere would have to be developed, just as his physical senses enable him to perceive the material Earth. He could then experience the Eighth Sphere quite consciously; but unconsciously he is always

within it just as we are always within the air, even if we are not aware of it. And if we have developed an organ for experiencing the Eighth Sphere, we are conscious of it around us. So that if the Eighth Sphere is to be described, it must obviously be described as a realm in which we are living all the time.

..

If the Spirits of Form had achieved everything that their own nature desires and moreover is able to achieve, when the mission of Sphere Three was fulfilled in the Cosmos, Sphere Four would have arisen quite naturally from Sphere Three. That is obvious.

*But we know that Luciferic and Ahrimanic spirits are at work — and they hold back for themselves something of the Old Moon substantiality, wrest it away, as it were, from the Spirits of Form. The fact that Lucifer and Ahriman do so is indicative of their essential nature. Thus as Sphere Three is advancing to a further stage, something is wrested from the Spirits of Form by Lucifer and Ahriman; into this part that is wrested away, Lucifer and Ahriman penetrate, instead of the Spirits of Form. **The activities of Lucifer and Ahriman are added to those of the Spirits of Movement and, as a result, Eight arises out of Three.** (Note by translator: The Eighth Sphere out of the Third Sphere.)*

..

Let me express it schematically, as follows: On the Old Moon certain pictures were present. These should have passed over to the Earth as something everywhere perceptible. But Lucifer and Ahriman retained them for themselves. Lucifer and Ahriman wrested from the Earth certain of its constituents and made them into Imaginations, so that these Earth-substances became, not Earthly formations, but Moon formations. Into our Fourth Sphere, therefore, there has been instilled a sphere that is really a Moon-sphere, but is filled with Earthly substantiality and is therefore a bogus creation in the Universe. To the seven Spheres, an Eighth, created in opposition to the progressive Spirits, has been added. The

necessary consequence of this is that the Spirits of Form must do battle on the Earth for every morsel of substantiality capable of mineralisation, lest it should be wrested from them by Lucifer and Ahriman and borne into the Eighth Sphere.

In truth, therefore, our Earth (the fourth sphere) is simply not what it appears outwardly to be. Were it really to consist of atoms, all these atoms would still be impregnated by formations belonging to the eighth sphere — which are perceptible only to visionary clairvoyance. These formations are present everywhere; so too is the spectre-like content of the Eighth Sphere which can therefore be perceived just as actual spectres are perceived. All earthly being and existence are involved here. Lucifer and Ahriman strive unceasingly to draw from the Earth's substances whatever they can snatch, in order to form their Eighth Sphere which then, when it is sufficiently advanced, will be detached from the Earth and go its own way in the Cosmos together with Lucifer and Ahriman. Needless to say, the Earth would then pass over to Jupiter as a mere torso. But man, as you realise, has his established place in the whole of Earth-evolution, for he is mineralised through and through. We are permeated by the mineralising process which is itself drawn into this battle, so that morsels of this substance can be continually wrested from it. Therefore we ourselves are involved in the battle. Lucifer and Ahriman battle against the Spirits of Form, with the aim of wresting mineral substance from us everywhere.

..

And everything that passes in this way into the Eighth sphere disappears from Earth evolution, does not go forward in the right way with Earth evolution.

1916-11-27-GA172

[Eighth sphere and moon]

... what is called the eighth sphere was introduced into earthly evolution in ancient times.

As one of its aspects, the eighth sphere consists of Man's acquiring such a preference for and attachment to his lower nature that Lucifer is not able to remove the higher nature from it. Every time Lucifer endeavored to spiritualize human beings, they were too strongly habituated to the flesh to follow him. If they had not been possessed by this cleaving to the flesh, to the physical nature, they would have followed Lucifer. This is one of the great mysteries of cosmic existence, that a divine element was actually implanted in human nature so that it might have, as it were, a greater heaviness than it would have possessed if this divine and necessary element had not been implanted in it. If it had not been implanted, human souls would have obeyed Lucifer. When we go back into ancient times, we find everywhere that the religions lay emphasis on the necessity of human beings reverencing what is earthly, what is an earthly connection living in flesh and blood so that they may be heavy enough not to be led out into the universe. Since all things having a relationship to both the human and the cosmic require not only an earthly, but also a cosmic arrangement, what you find described in my 'Outline of Esoteric Science' occurred.

At a certain time .. not only was the Earth formed, revolving in its orbit around the sun, but it was provided with the moon as its satellite. What does it mean that the Earth has a moon as its satellite? It means nothing more than that it acquired a force through which it can attract and hold the moon nearby. Should the Earth not possess this power to hold the moon, then the spiritual correlative of this force would not be able to chain man to his lower nature because this force, from the spiritual point of view, is the same as that with which the earth attracts the moon. It may be said, then, that **the moon is placed in the universe as an opponent of Lucifer in order to hinder him.**

I have already alluded to this mystery and pointed out that in the period of materialism of the nineteenth century, this truth has been exactly reversed in Sinnet's book, 'Esoteric Buddhism'. There the moon is described as something actually hostile to man.

The truth is that it is not hostile to him but prevents him from falling victim to the temptation of Lucifer; it acts as the cosmic correlative of what constitutes the attachment of the human being to his lower nature. Rather than tearing the souls out of the lower nature and thereby preventing its concomitant spiritualization, a subconscious process was required. Had the arrangement been conscious, Man would have followed the urges of his lower nature in full consciousness and would have sunk to the animal level. There had to be something in the lower nature of which man was not conscious and which he did not follow except as a human being on earth would follow what flowed into his lower nature as a divine element. Especially the God of the Old Testament, the Jahve God, was concerned that the human being should remain on earth. Jahve is connected in this mysterious way with the moon, as you will find explained also in Occult Science.

From this statement you can estimate how materialistic it was to designate the moon as the eighth sphere, whereas it really is the force itself, the sphere, that attracts the moon. In her misguided ways, Blavatsky developed special malice in her Secret Doctrine by maligning Jehovah as a mere moon god. She wanted to replace him with Lucifer whom she undertook to represent as the friend of the spirit. To be sure, Lucifer is just that, but only in the particular sense I have explained. Blavatsky tried to represent the Jahve God as the god of the mere lower nature, whereas what really constituted an opposition to Lucifer was implanted in the lower nature.

You see how dangerous it is to set up truths that may be perverted to their opposite. Blavatsky was misled by certain beings who had an interest in guiding her into putting Lucifer in the place of Christ, and this was to be achieved by introducing precisely the opposite of the truth of the eighth sphere and by maligning the Jahve God, representing him merely as the god of the lower nature. Thus did those cosmic powers who desired to advance materialism work even through what was called "theosophy." Materialism would obviously have sunk to its worst abyss if men had come to

believe that the moon was really the eighth sphere in the sense indicated by Sinnett or Blavatsky, and that Christianity must be fought in every way.

The state of avichi

The references below are to be read together with references made to the state of avitchi in other sources (as see above on this page). Note that Blavatsky uses the term 'avichi' without 't', other sources used 'avitchi'.

First, see the quote from the reference higher on this page: [Eighth sphere#Man: fragments of forgotten history .281885.29](#), dating from 1885

Sorcerers and black magicians, the most powerful of those vile fraternities, attain at the conclusion of a great cycle of activity, what is called Avitchi-Nirvana. At the beginning of the next period of activity they commence a nameless life of spiritual wickedness, to be ended only at the next period of rest. ..

These are the habitants of the eighth sphere, which has sixteen grades ... In the first fourteen of these the entity loses, after prolonged periods of suffering, its seven astral and seven spiritual senses. The mysteries of the last two grades are never communicated outside the sanctuary of initiation. It may be stated, however, that from the last, the entity, having lost the accumulated vile energy of its past, emerges as a new individuality, to begin a new course from the lowest rung of the ladder of life.

Explaining this subject of the so-called personal annihilation our Teacher says :

"At this point the great law begins its work of selection. Matter, found divorced from spirit as far as that possible, is thrown over into the still lower worlds, into the sixth 'gate' or way of re-birth in the vegetable and mineral worlds, and also in the primitive animal forms. From thence matter, ground over in the workshop of Nature, proceeds soulless back to its mother fount, while the egos, purified of their dross, are enabled to resume their progress once more on earth.

***It is here that the laggard I's perish by the million.** It is the solemn moment of the survival of the fittest, the annihilation of the unfit. It is but matter (or material man) which is compelled by its own weight to descend to the very bottom of the 'circle of necessity', to then assume an animal form. Of course the monad never perishes, whatever happens."*

Helena Blavatsky

comments as follows on the state of avitchi - for reference see theosophy.wiki for the topic.

The state of avichi begins when the lower quaternary (the four lowest of [Man's bodily principles](#)) retains only the most personal aspect of the soul but, due to its absolute lack of spirituality, loses its connection with the higher I or [Man's higher triad](#). The person then becomes a soulless entity destined to suffer annihilation sooner or later. (SWCC)

*The personal soul in this case .. this **personal soul becomes separated from the I**. It can graft nothing of Self on that eternal trunk whose sap throws out millions of personalities, like so many leaves from its branches, leaves which wither and die and fall at the end of their season. These personalities bud, blossom forth and expire, some without leaving a trace behind, others after commingling their own life with that of the parent stem. It is the souls of the former class that are doomed to annihilation, or avichi.*

Note: for the distinction in bold between the soul and the I, see [Human character - the I and threefold soul](#) Upto a certain stage there is hope still to escape back out of this state:

While yet in the body which has lost its higher "Soul" through its vices, there is still hope for such a person. He may be still redeemed and made to turn on his material nature; in which case either an intense feeling of repentance, or one single

earnest appeal to the I that has fled, or best of all, an active effort to mend one's ways, may bring the Higher I back again. The thread or connection is not altogether broken, though the I gets beyond forcible reach .. but it is not yet totally beyond hearing a strong spiritual appeal.

The result is that a soul in the avichi state is in a loop of incarnations that become more animalistic without improvement path or way to get out

.. expelled forever from the consciousness of the Individuality (the reincarnating I) .. the now separate personality immediately reincarnates .. only in a lower and still more abject creature, a human being only in form, doomed to karmic torments during the whole of its new life. If it persists in its criminal or debauched course, it will suffer a long series of such immediate reincarnations.



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