

The Lectures of Rudolf Steiner

The Unification of Humanity through the Christ Impulse

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Spiritual Science aims at understanding humanity in its essence, tasks, and strivings in the course of evolution. We have often talked about how the outside world misunderstands our spiritual science. This is largely because people nowadays have a hard time getting used to certain fundamental truths — truths that simply must be perceived and acknowledged if we are to understand the life and nature of humanity at all.

Let us begin today by asking what modern scientific thinking, whose great and significant triumphs over the last four centuries we must fully acknowledge and appreciate, is based on. It is based on what it can perceive, on what is manifest, in physical existence. Now, of course, it goes without saying that first we trust in what we perceive as so-called reality in our environment, and then we try to explain this reality on the basis of all that we find within its domain. It is naturally difficult for us to be aware at the outset that this reality itself may well contain an element of semblance or illusion, that it may well be deceiving us. Those who truly want to understand spiritual science must first overcome this stumbling block. They must realize that the reality around us can indeed deceive us — it can mislead us into interpreting it falsely. Much of what we have learned in spiritual science over the years has convinced us that immediate reality, as it surrounds us, may indeed be deceptive.

Today we will start from a particular point that can only be reached through spiritual science. In spiritual science we must first understand things; then, when we have understood them, we can find them confirmed in reality. Some of the most important things in spiritual science must first be understood before they can be seen. It would be easy to show that this same method is frequently applied in the outer world, notably in the sciences, but we will not go into that today. It is not always possible to develop everything from the beginning.

Now one aspect of the outer appearance or physiognomy of reality that is most apt to deceive us about this reality is the differences, the diversities among human beings. When we look at the human beings inhabiting the earth, we realize that no two of them are alike on the physical plane. Here in the physical realm all human beings are different from one another. Once we have accepted this diversity of human beings as a fact — I mean the diversity of their physical bodies — it is quite natural that people then try to find out, on the basis of the facts of earthly life, why human beings are different, why they look so different.

However, from the point of view of spiritual science we see something very different. According to spiritual science, if we consider only the forms the physical body can take through the forces of the earth, we find that human beings could not be different but rather would all have to be alike and have the same outer form. Indeed, the forces that exist on earth to give us our physical shape are such that if only these formative forces were to work on us, we would all have the same outer, physical form. This is because the physical human body has undergone a long preparation. We know

it was prepared through the epochs of Saturn, Sun, and Moon. It was prepared by forces that worked during these three epochs in such a way that the forces of the earth itself could influence our physical body in no other way than to give it a uniform shape if they had indeed been the only forces at work. I might put it this way: Through all the forces that have been incorporated into our physical body during the Saturn, Sun, and Moon epochs, we human beings are so fortified against any diversities coming from earthly forces that if we were left to the earthly forces alone, we would be alike everywhere on earth. Spiritual science, therefore, must start from the fact that a single and uniform shape is predestined for humanity so far as the terrestrial forces are concerned.

Even if we consider just the difference between male and female what I have just said is true. This difference is not caused by the work of earthly forces; it is the result of quite other forces, which we will speak of presently. Thus, we can assume a certain totality of earth forces that works formatively upon human beings and wants to produce absolutely identical human forms everywhere on earth.

Of course, we must now ask why human beings are so different after all. We know we must consider not only our physical body, but also the etheric body that stands behind it. Spiritual science shows us that while we should all be alike in our physical body, in regard to our etheric body we must be different because earthly forces are not the only ones that work on our etheric body. Forces coming out of the cosmos work on our etheric body, forming and shaping it.

We must therefore distinguish between the uniform earthly forces working all over the earth that would make all human forms the same and the forces working out of the universe on the earth, making each etheric body different. We can see the differences between etheric bodies through spiritual scientific research. At the one extreme are those etheric bodies that have strong forces and are tough, retaining their form almost as much as we do our physical form. This is one kind of etheric body. There is a second kind that is mobile, like something that is fluttering and always in movement, flowing and moving. But these two kinds of etheric bodies still reveal themselves in such a way that we can describe their inner tone and shading as being more or less alike. There is another kind of etheric body that is inwardly tinted, inwardly shimmering, not uniform in color but having various tones and colors. There is a fourth kind of etheric body that has one primary color throughout its whole substance, but this color changes over time though we cannot pinpoint other than purely inward causes for this. These etheric bodies are not shimmering in different colors or shaded in many tones; they have only one color, but they change it in the course of time. We may call them chameleon-like etheric bodies.

Then there are those etheric bodies that have a strong tendency to light up inwardly, growing at times brighter and brighter. Other etheric bodies have a powerful faculty to reproduce the harmonies of the spheres. Finally, there are those etheric bodies that appear especially in inventive people and persons of genius — etheric bodies that, if I may say so, reveal forces within them that are rare and strange in this earthly world. Whereas the above-mentioned six kinds of etheric bodies are found among ordinary, even average, human beings, the last kind of etheric body produces the type of human being with powerfully developed faculties, those we often say are “not of this earth” — poets, artists, and the like.

It is not by arbitrarily picking the number seven that we distinguish these seven forms of etheric bodies. We simply have to count, and we find no others besides those I have just described as typical. For this simple reason, there are seven kinds of etheric bodies. There are seven different kinds of human etheric bodies, and in the etheric bodies we have forces that are not earthly, but come in from the cosmos.



Etheric Body

Our etheric body forms and molds the physical body. If only earthly forces worked on us, we would all be alike in our physical body. However, the influence of the etheric body makes us different. The astral body brings about further differences, such as those between male and female bodies, through forces it develops between death and a new birth, during the time when we prepare ourselves for the gender that karma requires us to have in the next incarnation.

But for the moment, let us just look at the etheric body. If we take only earthly forces into account, we can say that our physical bodies would have to be alike. However, because our etheric bodies differ in their constitution, composition, and structure in the cosmos, there would have to be seven groups of human beings. This is the fact we gradually arrive at when we investigate the relationship between our etheric body and our physical body with the methods of spiritual science. Now this difference is connected with the racial diversities on the earth. Basically, because of this difference in etheric bodies, the several races can always be reduced to the number seven. Even though certain typical forms atrophy, and though natural science may distinguish fewer than seven basic races, there are really seven basic racial distinctions in the human species. These diversities are brought about by the etheric body; they do not result from the earthly forces that work during our evolution, but originate in cosmic forces.

Now, when we trace the evolution of the earth back into the Atlantean or even into the Lemurian epochs, we find that initially impulses and tendencies existed that would have prevented our physical body from developing the physiognomy it now has through the power of the etheric body — that is, the diversities. Instead, if everything had gone a certain way (we shall see directly in what way), the seven-colored etheric body would have brought about diversities in our physical form, but successively, one after the other. Thus, the etheric body would have created one form of human

being in the fifth period of Atlantis, a second in the sixth period of Atlantis, a third in the seventh, a fourth in the first post-Atlantean period, a fifth in the second post-Atlantean period, a sixth in the third, and a seventh in the fourth post-Atlantean period, that is, in the Greco-Roman time.



Ahriman & Lucifer

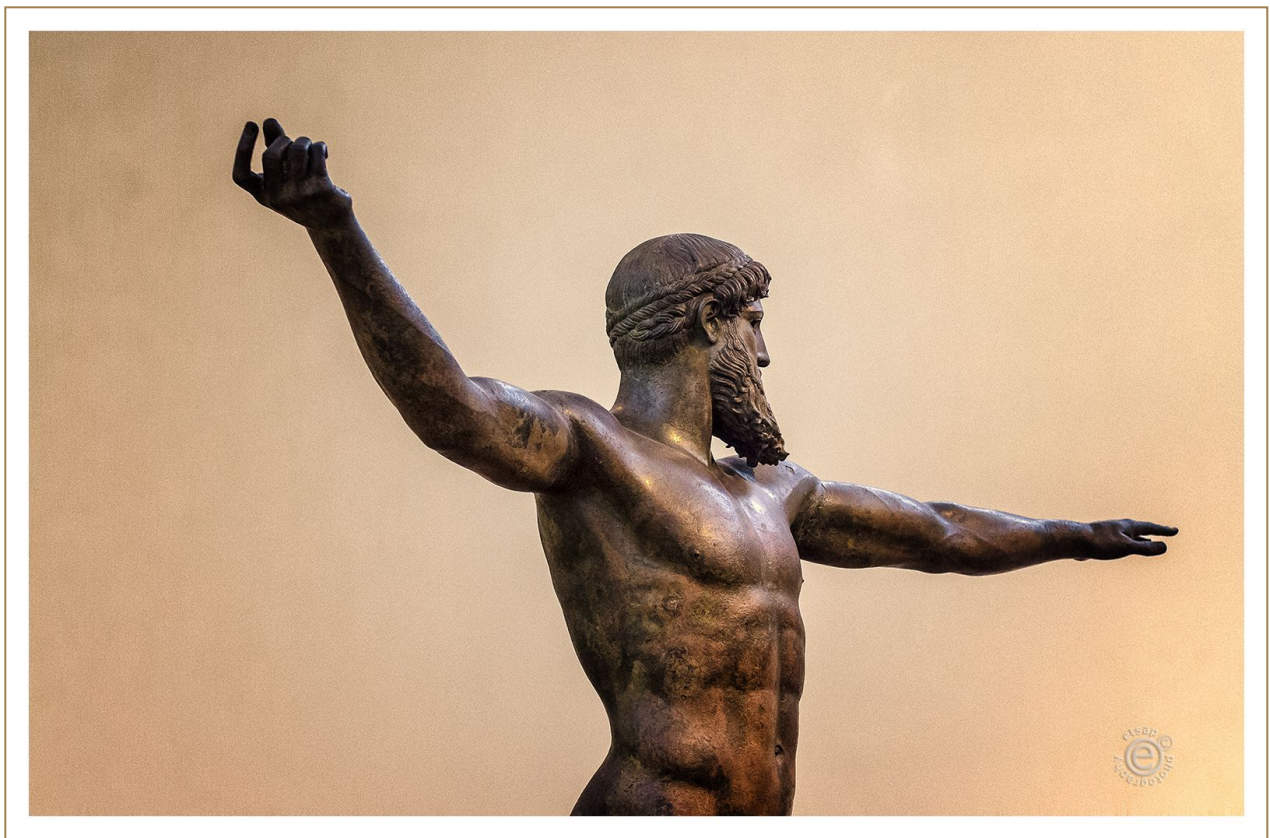
That is what would have happened; various types of human beings would have appeared one after the other. Thus, in the fifth Atlantean period we would have had human beings in whose physical formation *one* type of etheric body would have predominated. In the sixth Atlantean period, the second of the etheric bodies just described would have been at work, and so on right until the fourth post-Atlantean period. That was the original conception. However, Lucifer and Ahriman opposed this; they did not want it to happen that way. They fought against this harmonious tendency of development in the evolution of humanity, and they managed to change the whole process so that various developments were shifted and displaced. While there should have been basically only one form of human being in the fifth Atlantean period that was to develop gradually into another type, Lucifer and Ahriman preserved the form of the fifth Atlantean period into the sixth, and again that of the sixth Atlantean period into the seventh, and even into the time after the Atlantean flood.

Thus, forms that should have disappeared remained. Instead of racial diversities developing consecutively, older racial forms remained unchanged and newer ones began to evolve at the same time. Instead of the intended consecutive development of races, there was a coexistence of races. That is how it came about that physically different races inhabited the earth and are still there in our time although evolution should really have proceeded as I have described it. Even when we consider only what resulted from the development of the etheric body, we see everywhere that Lucifer and Ahriman play their part in the earthly evolution of humanity.

Now we must ask what the intended consecutive development of humanity up until the Greco-Roman epoch meant in the larger cosmic context. As we know, around the Atlantean time, human souls gradually came down from the planets to which they had ascended. You may remember that I

described in my *An Outline of Occult Science* that the souls had ascended and then came down again and that the life of earthly incarnations, properly speaking, begins with their descent. Thus, the I of human beings, their individualities, would have gone through the various human forms mentioned above in consecutive periods. In the fifth Atlantean period, the I would have had one human form, in the sixth another, in the seventh again another; in the first post-Atlantean epoch it would have had yet another form, and so on. We would all have lived through these types of humanity, one after the other.

Indeed, it was planned that human beings would thus complete the necessary schooling of human individuality by passing through various etheric formations that had different effects on their physical body. In fact, according to the original plan, there could have been a type of human being on the earth who would have been the result, as it were, of seven successive periods of development, each of which would have contributed to the perfection of that human type. In the fifth post-Atlantean period, then, there would have been one united type of human being spread over the whole face of the earth.



Ancient bronze sculpture of Zeus

However, Lucifer and Ahriman interfered and thwarted the original design. As a result, the ancient Greeks could only dream of an ideal, superhuman type, which they tried to represent in various ways, for example, in the form of Apollo, Zeus, or Athena. They could not fully encompass this type simply because it did not really exist. But if we have a sense for Greek sculpture, we can feel how the ancient Greeks dreamed of a uniform, perfect, beautiful type of human being that should have developed. This development did not occur because Lucifer and Ahriman preserved older racial forms that had developed, so that there was a coexistence of races rather than a succession.

In the fourth post-Atlantean period, in the Greco-Roman era, human evolution was faced with the fact that what the gods guiding the evolution of the earth had intended for the outer forms on this earth had not been realized because of the luciferic-ahrimanic influence. The spirits of the hierarchy of form had intended that the harmonious working of the various hierarchies of form should really lead to a human type with perfect physical development. As it turned out, the ancient Greeks could only dream of this perfect type and express it in their art.

It is a deeply moving experience to realize in the course of spiritual research why the Greeks created such perfection in their plastic art. They did it because through a soul-spiritual instrument they perceived that Lucifer and Ahriman had disappointed the good divine-spiritual beings, whose plans for humanity were different from the development that actually occurred. What should have developed through the work of these good divine-spiritual beings weighed on the ancient Greeks' minds, and so they wanted to at least represent it even though it did not exist in outer reality. It is great and wonderful and also deeply moving to behold these inner forces of human evolution that appear there in artistic forms, striving to express what could not be achieved in outer reality. Such insights shed new light on Greek art as it was developed so uniquely and unrepeatably at that time.

The Greek era was also the time when humanity faced a crisis because of the luciferic-ahrimanic influence. Lucifer and Ahriman had caused races to live side by side instead of one after the other. At the same time, however, all the forces the spirits of form were pouring into human evolution on the earth were immobilized. Now they could do no more than stimulate and inspire the creative imagination of the Greeks so that it developed as I have described it. The spirits of form had to decide whether the human race should continue to develop so that human beings would never again be united in earthly evolution. For this indeed is what would have happened. If earthly evolution had continued beyond the fourth, the Greco-Roman period, in the same way it was prior to that, then humanity would have become separated into seven groups due to luciferic and ahrimanic forces. These seven groups would have been as different from each other as the various species of animals. Animal species do not understand each other, but regard each other as foreign. Similarly, toward the end of the fourth post-Atlantean period and in the fifth one, in which we live, people would have had to develop more and more the view that there are seven groups of human beings on earth that see each other as completely different species. This view would still have prevailed in our time; in fact, the separation between the seven groups would not yet have reached its culmination or completion, but would still be developing and widening. The term "human being" for all people on earth would have seemed wrong; we would have had seven different terms, one for each of the seven groups.

Therefore, in the fourth post-Atlantean age, in the Greco-Roman period, something had to be done in the universe to forestall the development that threatened to result in the future, at the end of earth evolution, namely, the evolution of seven groups of human beings, each called by a different name, just as each animal species has a different name. These groups would not have regarded each other as belonging to the same species, and at most there would have been handed down to them some copy of the Greek forms, such as the statues of Zeus or Apollo. They would have regarded these statues as something alien to them — something that could never have existed on earth. Precautions had to be taken to prevent such a development. Physical evolution had already gone too far and could not be changed anymore. Therefore, precautions had to be taken for our etheric body; an impulse had to enter our etheric body that would counteract the separating of earthly humanity into seven groups. This impulse that was to counteract the growing fragmentation of humanity and that was to make it possible for the term "human being" to retain — and, in fact, increase — its true meaning over the whole face of the earth was the Mystery of Golgotha, which we can now see in a new light.

The first attempt that had been made with earthly humanity before the luciferic and ahrimanic impulses interfered in evolution was to create unity among human beings everywhere through the forming of the physical body. This attempt by the spirits of form failed because of luciferic-ahrimanic interference. But it could not be allowed to fail altogether; precautions had to be taken to prevent complete failure and to immobilize and offset the work of Lucifer and Ahriman. The physical body could no longer be worked on as was originally intended; therefore, the etheric body had to be worked on. This was done by the divine-spiritual being we have so often spoken of — the Christ Being — taking on human form at the time in human evolution when the possibility to express the archetype of humanity was the greatest.

At what period in human evolution was this? All the forces that counteract the original, identical design of our physical body are at work in us mostly in the first seven years of life, when the physical body is still soft and pliant. They do not allow our physical body to become the same everywhere, but from within the body they immobilize the forces for the original identical design. These opposing forces can still go on working in the second seven years until puberty; indeed, they can even continue to work in the third and fourth seven-year periods during the development of the astral body and the sentient soul. However, in the middle of the development of the intellectual or mind soul, which evolved above all in the fourth post-Atlantean or Greco-Roman time, the extra-earthly forces are less and less able to reach us. And in the very midst of this development, that is, in the period between our twenty-eighth and thirty-fifth years, they have least access to us. If we add two years at the beginning of this period and subtract two years at the end, the time in question is that between the thirtieth and the thirty-third year. In the time following those years, extra-earthly forces once more have the greatest influence. The period from the thirtieth to the thirty-third year, however, is the time of the greatest influence of earthly forces on the human being. And if in this period of three years there remained only the degree of diversity that existed in younger years and only what is to appear in later years would be added — in short, if only what works on human beings between the thirtieth and the thirty-third year remained effective, then people would indeed be much more alike.

Christ had to use these three years — very special and unique years — to unite with those earthly forces in human beings that had retained most of the earthly element in the human being. To this end, as we have discussed, the body for Christ was prepared through the two Jesus bodies up to the thirtieth year. Then, from the thirtieth to the thirty-third year, Christ took possession of this body. Where the earth forces were most active and where deformations could have set in, there no further development was possible, and physical death occurred. Thus, the sun-being, Christ, really entered into the earth sphere and united with the whole etheric body of the earth, as I have often explained. He then entered into the earth aura and now continues to work there. This sun-being must work for us in such a way that we realize more and more that in Christ the divine spirit was sent to us who was to counterbalance and redeem from within the separation and diversification in humanity created by Lucifer and Ahriman's opposition to the original impulses.

In outer human nature, the good spiritual beings work together with Lucifer and Ahriman. But what human beings originally, at the beginning of earth evolution, were intended to have on the outside, namely, uniformity and the applicability of the term "human being" everywhere on earth, was now to be brought forth out of the innermost essence of the human being through the Christ-Spirit. It is one of the many meanings of the Mystery of Golgotha that with the Christ-Spirit something was given to the earth that, when rightly understood, makes the name "human being" again applicable to all earthly humanity. The real substance of Christianity, which has already been partially revealed through its teachings, will be explored by those who, in regard to Christ, seek in the spiritual world what Christ is continually revealing in accordance with his words: "I am with you

always, to the close of the age." When what can be conveyed to human beings in the name of Christ from within thus gradually becomes known, then, as a result, what Lucifer and Ahriman did in earthly humanity can more and more be made up for and redeemed.

We may, of course, ask now if there is any meaning in this detour. This is really a childish question, and it is often raised by people who think themselves cleverer than the cosmic wisdom — and indeed there are many who aspire to such superior cleverness. Such people say, "If there are mighty divine beings, could they not have eliminated the luciferic-ahrimanic influence at the beginning of earthly evolution in order to protect their work?" This may be human wisdom, but in St. Paul's sense it is "folly with God." It is nothing more than mere human wisdom.

In our lectures, we must look at things as we are now doing, and then what has developed through the opposition of Lucifer and Ahriman does not seem absolutely evil to us, but only relatively evil. For let us now consider the other side of the matter. Let us assume the original, divine cosmic plan for the earth had been fulfilled. Imagine that in the regular course of evolution the Greco-Roman era would have arrived, as I have pointed out, and that beautiful, harmonious type of human being the Greeks dreamed of would not only have been created by their sculptors, but would have lived among them and would gradually have spread over the whole earth. All other human forms would gradually have disappeared, and only what lives in the Apollo type, the Zeus type, the Diana type, and the Athena type would have spread over the earth. Since such beings would have recognized each other as belonging to the same species, they would have given themselves the name "human being." Then the term "human being" would indeed have been applicable, and at the same time there would have been a sense of the equality of all people.

In that case, a human race of Grecian beauty would have spread over the earth, and in our age we would already see humanity approaching more and more this beautiful Grecian type, which would reach its perfection when the earth arrives at its goal in the seventh post-Atlantean epoch, after which it will pass over into other stages of existence. However, human beings would have advanced to this common humanity in unfreedom — that is what we must bear in mind. We would have been *compelled* to see all human beings everywhere as the same beings. It is only because such an identical form did not develop that all the other things could happen that allow us to see others as different, so that each sees the other as unlike himself and does not love his neighbor as himself. You will probably understand that if human beings had really become outwardly as alike as the original divine-spiritual forces had intended if Lucifer and Ahriman had not interfered, the feeling that one must love one's neighbor as oneself would necessarily have developed. There would not have been any choice; for anything else would have seemed to be nonsense, both in terms of feeling and of perception.

However, this development was not supposed to come from the outside because then it would have made us into beings who love automatically — that is, we would have loved others because they are our own kind, but without knowing the force that urges us to this love. Thus, what would otherwise have come to us in unfreedom was prepared for freedom through Lucifer and Ahriman's opposition. This sanction of the opposition is therefore inherent in the original plan of divine wisdom. Indeed, we may say that in still earlier periods of earthly evolution, the opposition against the harmonious progressive divine-spiritual powers was created precisely so that it could later bring about freedom.

At this point, we must realize that our concepts must change when we leave the sphere of physical observation and ascend to a higher order of perception. Many of you probably know that philosophy speaks of antinomies, and that Kant has even gone so far as to claim that it can be proven with equal conclusiveness that the two statements "the world is infinite in terms of space" and "the world is

finite in terms of space" are correct. Similarly, both "the world has had a beginning" and "the world has had no beginning" can be proven conclusively. Why is this? It is because logic does not apply when we come into a sphere that can no longer be comprehended by physical means. We finally have to realize that our physical logic works neither in the realm of philosophy nor anywhere else where we concern ourselves with other than physical forms of existence. We must not make the mistake of looking at the opposition of Lucifer and Ahriman as we would at the antagonism between a good and an evil person on earth. This kind of mistake occurs when we continue to carry over the earthly into the super-earthly realm.

Most people picture Ahriman and Lucifer as evil beings — albeit much more intensely evil than human beings. But this is not true; we must keep in mind that certain earthly feelings we associate with our concepts lose their meaning when we go beyond the earthly realm. Thus we cannot say that there are good gods on the one hand and the evil gods Ahriman and Lucifer on the other. We must not assume that a trial should be held in the universe where a highly qualified cosmic judge would sit on the cosmic judgment seat and sentence Lucifer and Ahriman to be locked up once and for all, so that only the good gods can get to work. True, locking somebody up can at times make sense in earthly life; in the cosmos it would not make any sense because there such ideas and concepts have no meaning. The opposing forces were created by the good gods themselves in an earlier period so that they would be able to bring to bear their full force for the development I have described.

For freedom to enter in so that human beings did not develop an unfree love through their outer shape or form, the luciferic and ahrimanic elements had to be part of our evolution. Only in this way can we arrive from within ourselves at the unity indicated by the term "humanity." Thus, the gods allowed humanity to be fragmented by the opposing forces, so that later, after their bodily nature had been thus separated, human beings could again be brought into a unity in their spiritual nature through Christ.

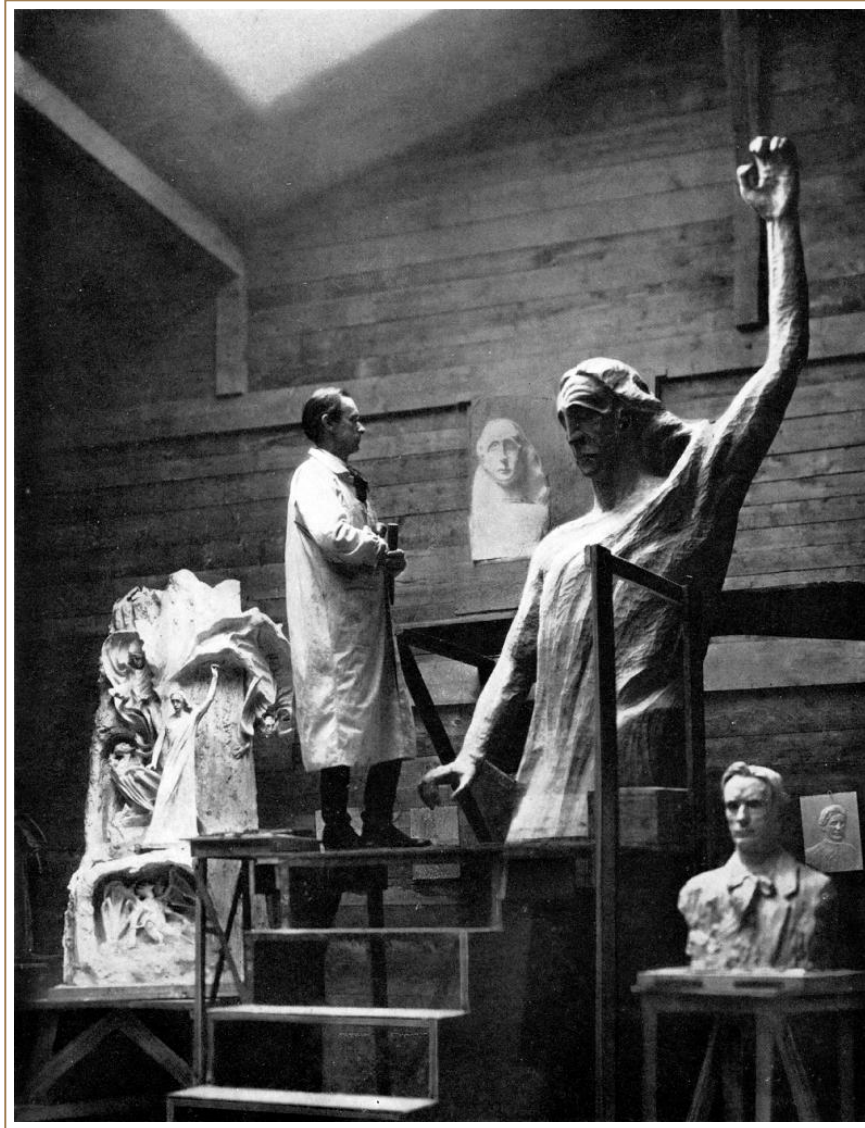
This is one of the meanings of the Mystery of Golgotha: the attainment of the unity of humanity from within. Externally human beings are becoming more and more different. The result will be not sameness but difference over the earth, and human beings must exert all the more force from within to attain unity. There will always be setbacks in this process of achieving unity — we can see them coming if we look for them. What was actually intended only for an earlier epoch is preserved into a later epoch, and what was to create differences in consecutive periods coexists. Human beings form different groups, and while they are struggling for unity all over the world in the name of Christ, through the Christ impulse, differences remain as aftereffects and setbacks. Such differences will always exist because human beings will only gradually be able to attain unity. At the same time, different groups will fight each other tooth and nail about everything concerning their outer life. There are setbacks from earlier epochs that run counter to the Christ impulse, rather than in harmony with it.

Indeed, here we see a very profound meaning of this Christ impulse. Based on true knowledge, we can say Christ is our savior who keeps humankind from being fragmented into groups. This is not yet fully understood by all people because the old still exists alongside the new. Today, people hardly understand the community of life in the Christ impulse, and this is connected with the fact that this understanding must proceed from our innermost being. We must realize that the Christ impulse has worked in the earth aura for the last two thousand years, but has not been understood. As we have often emphasized, this Christ impulse can only be fully understood through what spiritual science gives us. It is only when a growing number of people can more and more grasp, think, and feel what actually entered our earthly evolution in the fourth post-Atlantean period that understanding for that event will increase. To expect modern humanity to understand the Christ impulse is really asking too much. After all, just think how unwilling people are to acknowledge that this fourth post-Atlantean

period of evolution, the Greco-Roman epoch, is of such paramount, such mighty significance in human evolution. Just think how unwilling people are to recognize any such post-Atlantean age at all with the Greco-Latin epoch as its pivotal point. To accept such truths, people need to take in the ideas of spiritual science. Without them one cannot understand these things at all — that is, one cannot understand the evolution of humanity if one has not taken in these concepts.

We have to understand the significance of the spirits of form, who had intended to develop a homogeneous human race in seven successive stages. This homogeneous human race was fragmented by Lucifer and Ahriman, but the force that wants to spread the one name “human being” over all the earth and unto the end of time — in spite of the outer differences between people — was revived from within by the Christ impulse. One of the chief tasks of the immediate future is to understand that Christ stands between Lucifer and Ahriman and to grasp his significance in relation to them. Therefore, we must always call Lucifer and Ahriman by their true names — we must call a spade a spade, so to speak — and look to the Christ impulse as the one combating them and saving the earth from this one-sided luciferic-ahrimanic impulse. This is what must be presented more and more often.

In our Dornach building we have therefore placed the statue *The Representative of Humanity* [see the image, below – e.Ed.] in the most prominent place; it presents the archetype of humanity that is to be recreated by Christ from within, surrounded by the luciferic-ahrimanic elements. That is the meaning of this central statue in our building. Looking at this central figure, people will realize that this is indeed what the good gods had intended. The human race was fragmented, Lucifer and Ahriman made their appearance, but the Christ impulse triumphs and recreates from within, from within us, what was originally intended for the outside. In the process, our freedom is created. Our building and what will be in it are to place before humanity what must be accomplished in terms of understanding human evolution. What is most needed for humanity in the immediate future is to be revealed in our building; we want people to understand human evolution showing and telling them what is most important for the near future.



Rudolf Steiner in his studio working on the *The Representative of Humanity*



The finished *The Representative of Humanity*

Of course, many objections can be raised, and some of them have already been brought to our attention. After seeing the paintings and sculptures in the Goetheanum, some people have said that a true work of art must be understandable immediately to everyone without requiring an explanation. Here, on the other hand, people need theoretical explanations to understand our art works. Well, if people would only think a little! Imagine a Turk, for example, understanding nothing at all except what is contained in the Koran, a Turk who has heard nothing about Christ except that he must fight against Christianity. Suppose you took this Turk to see the *Sistine Madonna* and showed it to him

without any explanations. Naturally, a work of art can only be understood by those who live in the same spiritual stream out of which the work was created. Thus, our ideal figure surrounded by Lucifer and Ahriman will only be understood by those who live in our spiritual stream.

This is true for all works of art in all ages: they are comprehensible only to those who live in the same spiritual stream. Only within that stream are they true works of art. The spiritual orientation must be inherent in them. Those who understand Raphael's *Sistine Madonna* or, let us say, his *Transfiguration* must know something of the spiritual stream in which the pictures were created. Similarly, to understand what they have seen in our building, people must have some element belonging to our spiritual stream in their souls and hearts. If they have this element within them, then the work of art must speak for itself, and no labels, identifying names, or other comments will be needed to explain or interpret it.

For example, when people look at one of our glass windows, they see in the bottom part a kind of coffin with a dead man in it; above that, they see an old man, a youth, a young woman, and a child standing on a winding path. If people have taken in our spiritual stream, they will realize that this is the review of life. Immediately after we have passed through the gate of death, we will see the course of our earthly life in reverse. Of course, you have to know this fact to make sense of the picture in the window. But if you know this, then the picture works by virtue of what it contains, just as the *Sistine Madonna* works upon those who know the Christian history behind it, but it has no such effect on the Turk. By the same token, what is presented in our building cannot work upon those who have not taken in our spiritual stream. These things just have to be seen in the right way.

Today, I wanted above all to explain that Christ was that spirit from the cosmos who, in the course of earthly evolution, brought spiritually what was originally intended for our outer form but could not develop externally, because we would then have become automatons of love and equality. On the physical plane there prevails the fundamental law that everything must operate through antitheses, through polarities. The gods could not simply have sent down Christ at the very beginning of earth evolution, as our naive wisdom might suggest they should have done. For then the antithesis of external fragmentation and inner concentration could never have developed. Humanity, however, must live in this antithesis and polarity. We have the right feelings for Christ only when we see in him the savior, rescuing humanity from dispersion and separateness; only then can Christ fill our own innermost I. Christianity lives wherever people are able to understand this union of all humanity through Christ. In the future, it will not matter much whether what Christ is will still be called by that name. However, a lot will depend on our finding in Christ the spiritual uniter of humanity and accepting that external diversity will increase more and more.

We will also have to accept that there will still be many setbacks for this spiritual understanding of the Christ impulse. What developed at the same time instead of consecutively will for a long time continue to evoke forces that fight against a spiritual understanding of global human equality. There will be many and terrible onslaughts, and, for the most part, their purpose will be to continue the luciferic-ahrimanic war against the Christ impulse. And it will be one of the greatest, most beautiful and significant achievements of our age if we can be among the few who understand this thought of the unifying of all human beings, who understand how remnants of the luciferic-ahrimanic elements strive to bring to the fore what is unique in various groups of human beings so as to exclude all others. It is very difficult to say anything at this time about the final outcome of these matters. As human hearts are now, to speak about that outcome would only be upsetting and bewildering; it may lead to opposition, perhaps even to hatred and abuse rather than to working in accordance with the Christ impulse. However, what can be said about this principle in the Christ impulse, namely, the salvation of humanity out of bodily fragmentation into spiritual unity, must be told, for it must become more and more effective in human evolution.

We have to be able to face calmly and courageously the increasing diversity in human nature because we know that we can carry a word into all these diversities that is not merely a word of speech but one of power. Though there may be groups that fight against each other and though we may even belong to one of them, we know that we can bring something that will express: "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" into every group. We know that this "Christ who lives in me" will not lead to the forming of groups; rather, it will bring about the spreading of the glory of the name "human being" over the whole earth.

The understanding of spiritual science brings to life the realization that we can carry the power that comes from the words "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" into the groups that are fighting each other — no matter into which group we bring our I. This is one of the practical and moral-ethical aspects of our strivings in spiritual science. With the force of these words we bring something into the group that does not belong exclusively to one or the other group but to all humanity. It is only through this that we can arrive at a true spiritual understanding of Christianity.

It is the hallmark of mighty spiritual paths that they are finally expressed in simple words. Think of the simple words that can express the whole of Christianity, which has permeated the world for nearly two thousand years. But these simple words can only be found on the basis of big, long-term developments. These simple words that express Christianity were not just there all at once; they had to be worked for. We must be aware that we are among those people working to make it possible that someday simple words may be found to express, in a basic, elementary way, the truths we have to spread and develop today. Without such development the simple could never come about. We may not yet be able to put our spiritual science into simple words in any language — words that would condense it on a quarter of a page — so that all striving people would understand it, as was done for Christianity when it originated two thousand years ago. Yet, we can be sure that those simple words will contain something of what I said today, something that will direct our attention to the Greco-Roman age, especially to the Mystery of Golgotha during that time, as well as to the contrast or polarity between Christ and Lucifer-Ahriman.

What can be seen everywhere will be concentrated in a few simple words that can then be handed down to future humanity in the same way as the commandment, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." Just as this commandment expresses something that had to be attained as a result of a long development, so, in the future, the findings of spiritual science will be put into simple words, and then all people will understand them.

This requires our spiritual work, for the simple can only arise in the spiritual evolution of humanity when people have been willing to spend long periods of time learning about the details. You are called upon to help in this development, which will lead to something appearing to people in bright clarity, something we cannot yet express because we do not have the words for it in our languages, yet something spiritual science works toward. When you feel you belong to such a spiritual stream, and feel at home in it, because you see that it is necessary for human evolution, then you have the right understanding of our spiritual movement — you belong to it in such a way that you rightly understand the greatest of its goals based on your increasing understanding of the contrast between Christ and Lucifer-Ahriman. You understand that this contrast is vital and had to exist.

This is what I wanted to bring before your souls today. It is all connected with the question of the meaning of our whole earthly evolution. For when spirits from other planets look down upon the earth and ask what the meaning of this earthly evolution is, they will understand it when they learn

about the Mystery of Golgotha. Everything that happens in the course of earthly evolution has its meaning only through the Mystery of Golgotha. The Mystery of Golgotha radiates out into the cosmos and imparts to everything else that radiates out from the earth its meaning, its central meaning.

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