

Circular Letters for the Systematic Development of the Anthroposophical Doctrine

Maximilian Rebholz

New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Preliminary Remarks

The *Circular Letters for the Systematic Development of the Anthroposophical Doctrine* are only for members of the Anthroposophical Society or intended for those readers in whom a complete familiarity with the work of Rudolf Steiner may be presupposed, for the letters start only where the mere knowledge of the spiritual scientific writings no longer suffices but a systematic processing of them is necessary.

It is an experience often made that the deeper one penetrates into the anthroposophical doctrine, the greater are the difficulties that arise at first to harmonize not only the remarks by the spiritual researcher that represent different viewpoints of the same thing but the often seemingly downright contradictory expressions about one and the same object of knowledge. One only has to leaf through the *Guide to the Lecture Cycles* by Adolf Arensen to often find next to each other two seemingly completely opposite statements about the same thing.

The solution to such “contradictions” comes to me in most cases through a systematic survey of *all* the indications by the spiritual researcher about the subject in question. We feel not only called to this work by the form of the work of Dr. Steiner, but the latter himself has often expressed it as a task to be performed by us:

One can never look at the truths about the higher worlds from too many aspects. One should realize that from any one aspect it is possible to give only the poorest sketch. And when one looks at the same thing from the most diverse aspects, the impressions one receives in this way only gradually complement each other to form an ever more animated *picture*. (*Cosmic Memory*, chapter 16, GA011) — It is good to not only look at things as they occur in the course of the lecture cycles but also to relate the individual things to one another. [...] You only have to make the effort of not just continuing to read and read but of actively trying to combine the things that have been put forward. For by thus processing the material offered in the cycles, one proceeds further from an external absorbing to an internal processing.

(1915-01-09-GA161, translated by HWH)

And once again Dr. Steiner admonishes in a “Letter to the Members” in 1924 that

the work [...] that is embodied in the printed Courses and Lectures, should not be undervalued. [...] By reading together passages that are found separated in different Courses, you will discover the right points of view for expounding and elaborating the Leading Thoughts.

(*Anthroposophical Leading Thoughts*, “How the Leading Thoughts are to be Used,” GA026)

This overview method will be nurtured and supported by the *Circular Letters*. Whoever has only experienced the beginnings of such a thing will know what delightful and fruitful results can be gained from

it. Not only that the points of view brought together illuminate each other and the apparent contradictions gradually dissolve, but totally new insights not directly expressed by the spiritual researcher appear, which in turn can throw whole regions of spiritual science into a new light because they are concerned with descriptions of reality and not with theories.

Such work, however, requires not only a great deal of time to locate the material to be grouped but also the possession of the documents in a certain degree of completeness. In both respects the *Circular Letters* would support their readers in their work, while on the other hand they would count on the cooperation of the circle of readers in the ongoing treatment of spiritual scientific questions and the answers to such.

The *Circular Letters* therefore hope to serve a real need of the anthroposophical work and to contribute their part to a fruitful processing of the spiritual goods entrusted to us.

The *Guide to the Lecture Cycles of Rudolf Steiner* by Adolf Arenson and the continuation of this work by Dr. Kalkhoff and the editor serve as the basis of our consultation. Only a small part of the material available in books, lectures, and periodicals could be gathered so far however. The work still to be done is as great as it is urgent. In order to bring it forward rapidly, it needs support through collaboration or financial aid.

Freiburg i. Br., October 1946

The Publisher

M. Rebholz

1. The Passage of the World's Thoughts through the Human Being

The treatment of the theme that I would first like to make the subject of a work according to the method of combining cycle material can be applied to the following sentences, which are just as serious as they are difficult to understand, from the sixth “Letter to the Members” that accompanied the Leading Thoughts¹:

After it has been stated in that letter that the gods have withdrawn from the world that visibly surrounds the human being as nature and cosmos, and thus this world continues to exist only in the aftermath of the former activity of the gods, it continues:

Into this world that has become empty of God, man will carry what is in him — what his being has become in this present age.

Humanity will evolve into a new world-evolution. *The Divine and Spiritual* from which man originates can become *the cosmically expanding Human Being, radiating with a new light through the Cosmos* which now exists only as an image of the Divine and Spiritual.

The Divine Being which will thus shine forth through Humanity will no longer be the same Divine Being which was once the Cosmos. In its *passage through Humanity* the Divine-Spiritual will come to a realisation of Being which it could not manifest before.

(*Anthroposophical Leading Thoughts*, “The Activity of Michael and the Future of Mankind,” GA026, emphasis by Rebholz)

The significance of human thinking, feeling, and willing for the construction of the future Jupiter existence is talked about here. Almost endlessly many things are compressed in these sentences. In order to elucidate their content, let us consider what has been said about this subject in various places from the most varied points of view. At the same time the results of this work will also be able to throw light on two other important points that are difficult to understand and that may be directly related to our theme.

The first is contained in the third part of the Foundation Stone Verses:

For the world-thoughts of the Spirit hold sway
In the being of worlds, craving for light

(1923-12-25-GA260)

The other is found in the fifteenth scene of the mystery drama “The Soul’s Awakening,” the words Benedictus says to Ahriman there:

Whoe'er thou art, tis sure thou only canst
Serve Good when thou dost strive not for thyself,

¹ Appeared in book form also under the title *The Michael Mystery*

When thou dost lose thyself in human thought
To rise newborn within the cosmic life.

(*Four Mystery Dramas*, GA014)

These words say that the good divine-spiritual beings do just what Ahriman is called upon here to do: that *they* serve the world's progress by losing themselves “in human thought to rise newborn within the cosmic life.” That this process has something to do with the “passage through Humanity of the Divine-Spiritual” should already be clear. But that the same also applies to the quoted passage from the Foundation Stone Verses will become more and more evident in the course of our observations.

First let us turn to the remarks of Dr. Steiner in his fifth “Letter to the Members” in which he speaks of the transition of cosmic intelligence to the human being, for this process seems to provide the basis for the fact that in the second half of the Earth's development, the progress of world evolution can only take place through the human being as an instrument of the gods. The development of the world, it is said in the above-mentioned letter, is to proceed in the sense of Michael in such a way

that that which works as intelligence throughout the whole Cosmos should later become concentrated within the human individuality. As a result the following takes place: — there comes a time in the evolution of the world when the Cosmos subsists no longer on its own present intelligence, but on the cosmic intelligence belonging to the past. For the *present* intelligence must then be sought in the stream of human evolution.

(*Anthroposophical Leading Thoughts*, “The Experiences of Michael in the Course of His Cosmic Mission,” GA026, emphasis by Rebholz)

A particularly important indication of the time and nature of this transition of the cosmic intelligence to the human being is given in the seventh lecture of the cycle *The Karmic Relationships of the Anthroposophical Movement*:

It was in the first third of the 15th century, in the time when behind the scenes of modern history the Rosicrucian School was founded. Ordinarily when one looks down to the earthly realm from the life between death and a new birth, one sees the deeds of the Seraphim, Cherubim and Thrones taking place in a uniform and steady way. One sees the Seraphim, Cherubim and Thrones carrying the Spiritual from the realm of the Exusiai, Dynamis and Kyriotetes down into the Physical, and by their power implanting the Spiritual into the Physical. But, ever and again after long epochs of time, one witnesses an awe-inspiring departure from what is thus seen in the ordinary course of being. It was in the Atlantean time that such a thing had last shown itself, as seen from the aspect of the Supersensible. What is taking place at such a moment in humanity shows itself thus: — As one looks down from the spiritual world, one sees the earth in all its realms flashed through by lightning flashes; one hears a mighty, rolling thunder. It was one of the cosmic thunderstorms that take their course while human beings upon earth are as though wrapt in sleep. But it revealed itself mightily to the spirits around Michael. [...] In Atlantean time, when the Cosmic Intelligence, while remaining cosmic, had taken possession of the hearts of men, such an event had taken place; and now for the present earthly realm it once again broke forth in spiritual lightning and thunder. [...] in that age [the beginning of the fifteenth century] the earth appeared, to the spirits in the super-sensible worlds, surrounded by mighty lightnings and thunderclaps. The Seraphim, Cherubim and Thrones were carrying over the Cosmic Intelligence into that member of man's organisation which we call the system of nerves and senses, the head-organization.

(1924-07-28, GA237)

The following picture from the Apocalypse refers to this process according to Emil Bock:

Then the angel took the censer and filled it with fire from the altar and threw it on the earth; and there were peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake. (Revelations 8:5)

It seems to me to be quite clear from the account of the spiritual researcher that with "Cosmic Intelligence" here is meant a substantial force which, through the first hierarchy, has been *incorporated* into the *physical* nervous system of the human being in the literal sense of the word.

And because these cosmic thought forces are now connected with the human brain

the position is such that certain thoughts can only be grasped by the super-sensible hierarchies if men grasp them here in earthly existence. The gods only think certain thoughts if they live in human bodies.

(1916-10-01-GA171)

Therefore, in the third scene of the "Guardian of the Threshold," Maria can say to Capesius:

The body which is proper to Earth-souls
Bears in itself the means to recreate
In lofty pictures loveliness sublime:
Which pictures, even if their substance now
Seems but a shadow in the human soul,
Are yet the buds which in the future worlds
Will open out to blossom and to fruit.
So through his body man may serve the gods.

(*Four Mystery Dramas*, GA014)

That human thought must provide to the upper hierarchies the building blocks for the construction of the future Jupiter existence, as stated above, can be verified from numerous lectures. Some selections have been selected here since a mere reference to sources would probably not help the reader. The thirteenth lecture of the cycle *The Destinies of Individuals and of Nations* (GA157), which is of particular importance in this context, will be discussed in detail later.

Our thought process is acutely not something unnecessary for the world. Our thought process is something not only for ourselves, but it stands within the whole world development and contributes to it so that something new can continuously be woven into the world development. If we were not born as single individuals, if we had no thoughts, if we had not preserved memories in us, then at our death [when the memories are handed over to the world ether with the dissolution of the ether body], that portion which would have been able to be woven out of our thoughts, [...] that would be lost for world development.

(1916-03-07-GA167)

[Man] is here also as a being on whom the Gods themselves may work, in order to lead the Cosmos on from epoch to epoch. Moreover I would say this: What the Gods are to weave into the Cosmos as thoughts has to be prepared by them through all that can be thought and produced during

individual human lives. Here is the nurturing-place where the Gods have to tend the thoughts they need for the continuing evolution of the world — thoughts they then incorporate into the Cosmos as active impulses.

(1923-08-26-GA227)

This gives human self-knowledge a very special cosmic significance. [...] Nowadays we speak of angels, archangels, archai, and so on. They were thinking in the past, just as we are thinking today. And what they thought has remained as their memory, and it is this memory we now perceive. [...] What the gods thought during earlier planetary conditions has been externalized and we see it as external nature. — It is true, profoundly true, that as long as we are earthly human beings we think. We send our thoughts down into our soul life. There they become the beginning of a natural world. But they remain in us. Yet when the Jupiter existence comes, they will come forth. And what we are thinking today, in fact all that we experience, will then be the external world.

(1916-01-27-GA166)

It may be deduced from this last-mentioned statement, especially when it is compared to others with a similar meaning, that in the second half of the planetary development, the humanity of every planetary epoch (Saturn, Sun, Moon, Earth) is the thinking faculty of the upper hierarchies. In the first half they create the planet and the human organization from the Logos formed during the pralaya. In the second half they use these to prepare the following planetary existence through them and the hierarchy going through the human stage.

With special reference to the “passage of the world's thoughts through the human being,” the cycle *Anthroposophy, An Introduction* states:

The universe needs us because, through us, it ‘fulfils’ itself — fills itself again and again with its own content. There is an interchange, not of substance but of thoughts between the universe and man. The universe gives its cosmic thoughts to our etheric body and receives them back again in a humanised condition.

[...]

But it is something new that it receives, for we have experienced it all in a particular way. The world receives our whole experience and impresses it upon its own ether.

(1924-02-03-GA234)

The thoughtforms that are to be used for the construction of the future Jupiter existence must be enscribed into the still unshaped thought-substance of the upper Devachan, where the archetypes, the original forms for the later formation of the life of Jupiter, gradually develop from them.

We know from *Theosophy* (GA009) that Devachan is divided into a sphere of the unformed and one of the formed world of thought:

In the three top regions (Arupa-Devachan), the thought-substance is present in a still *unformed* state.

In the four lower regions (Rupa-Devachan), it is *formed as the archetypes of the physical, etheric, and astral worlds*, which already received their form in the primordial past of the development of Earth. They are essentially a result of the development of the Moon, as the archetypes of Jupiter according to the above

will be a result of the second half of the Earth's development. In these archetypes and their reflections in the kingdoms of nature, one has to see the ancient, fading, dying world-thoughts.

The thoughts conceived by divine-spiritual Beings in the past live on in these kingdoms and they continue into present existence, just as our memory-pictures continue into our present life of soul.

(1913-02-11-GA141)

They form a world-thought organism detached from the present direct activity of the gods. The *present* activity of the gods only still takes place in the human being and through the human being, however. As we have seen, the result is the gradual emergence of an initially purely spiritual archetype of Jupiter existence in the unformed thought-substance of the upper Devachan regions.

This unformed thought substance is sometimes also called *Akasha* by Dr. Steiner.

The substance of the Arupa plane [...] is Akasha

(1905-10-19-GA93a)

it says in a lecture, and it is also said that this substance is shaped by human life.

Related to this, an important statement can be found in the lecture "Occult Science and Occult Development" given in London:

One of the finest, most highly attenuated substances within the reach of human faculties is called *Akasha*. [...] What a man acquires in the way of *occult* knowledge [...] is inscribed into the Akasha-substance of the world. When we make a thought of occult science come alive in our souls, it is at once inscribed into the Akasha-substance and this is of significance for the general evolution of the world. *For no being in the whole world other than man is able to make in the Akasha-substance the inscriptions that can be called by the name of Occult Science.*

(1913-05-01-GA152, emphasis by Rebholz)

Now contrary to this statement, that only the ideas of spiritual science are inscribed in the Akasha substance, we may justly raise the question,

What is the position with those thoughts that have been gained only from the world of the senses; what is the position with the experiences of our ordinary consciousness in general?

In many places, Dr. Steiner pointed out that after being stored in the ether-body, *all* our thoughts and experiences of soul are handed over to the universal world-ether after death and are written into the Akasha Chronicle.

In various lectures, this world ether and the Akasha substance are described as identical, for example:

The teachers of the first mysteries were the initiates of reading in the cosmic ether, which can also be called the reading in the chaos, in the Akasha.

(1923-07-21-GA225; translated by HWH)

Dr. Unger also speaks of the “transformation of the human etheric into cosmic Akasha substance” in the dissolution of the etheric body in his expositions on the Leading Thoughts (*The Language of the Consciousness Soul*).

What is the difference then between the conceptions of the ordinary consciousness and spiritual scientific thoughts in regard to their entry into the Akasha substance and their importance for the construction of Jupiter existence?

On this question, the twelfth lecture of *The Riddle of Humanity* gives the answer: The thoughts of the ordinary consciousness, which pass into the universal world ether with the dissolution of the etheric body, do not initially become cosmic reality in the full sense. They are held back from being world-forming forces before the human being has matured them for this in the course of his incarnations. As the human being thinks today, these thoughts would often represent disastrous forces for the cosmos.

That, however, is what would happen if man were not able, through repeated earthly lives, either to correct thoughts that are not worthy of permanence or entirely reject and substitute others for them. [...] and he can strive to the end that after his final incarnation on Earth only that will have been given over to the etheric substance of the cosmos which is worthy of permanence. [...] This holds good for the whole of the normal life of soul during the Earth period, that is to say for the life of soul unfolded in waking consciousness between birth and death [...]. The *Spiritual Science* which from now onwards must flow into human consciousness if humanity is to reach its earthly goal, springs, however, from sources other than those of normal waking consciousness.

(1916-08-27-GA170, emphasis by Rebholz)

For these spiritual scientific thoughts, the following is valid:

Something new occurs [...] when a conception, or expression, characterises something that is spiritual in the sense of spiritual science and thus has real spiritual content. In such a case it does not remain in the personal etheric body until death, but is carried *directly* from consciousness into the spiritual-etheric world. [...] This must come to pass; it is necessarily so. It is necessary for the evolutionary process of the world that the contents of spiritual science now be inscribed upon the world.

(1916-08-27-GA170, emphasis by Rebholz)

From present times onward, however, a new factor is added to this: What has been said of the withholding of ordinary earthly thoughts from the cosmic reality is in the future valid only for what human beings *themselves think* but not for what Ahriman and Lucifer make from human thoughts when they take possession of the intelligence.

Even in our fifth post-Atlantean epoch it must be said that everything produced by a person *out of himself* can be corrected later. But if you do not learn to be on guard against Lucifer and Ahriman, the things that you think and do under their influence [...] will be engraved into the substance of the world. Where only the results of spiritual science would otherwise be engraved, these events will also be written down in the same manner.

We must learn to draw a fine distinction:

1. On the one hand there is what we cause to be engraved only in ourselves [which does not directly become cosmic reality but must first be corrected] and
2. what is [directly] engraved in the universal ether-substance of the world because of its spiritual scientific content.
3. On the other hand, there is what is engraved [also directly] in the universal world-substance through the agency of Lucifer, the Tempter or Seducer, or by the agency of Ahriman, the Spirit of Falsehood.

(1916-08-27-GA170, emphasis by Rebholz)

The fact that ordinary earthly ideas have no objective cosmic meaning in the marked sense was essentially true up to the present. But now Lucifer and Ahriman are beginning to seize human thoughts in order to accomplish with them what should only happen with spiritual scientific thoughts. Just as these latter are the building blocks of the gods for a new world, so Lucifer and Ahriman want to use human thought to build *their* world, *their* cosmos, from the objectified but immature human thoughts. And that they are able to do this is probably connected with the transition of the “present cosmic intelligence” to humanity. Thus from the present onwards, we are living in an ever-increasing struggle of spiritual beings for human intelligence.

To give human beings the strength to hold their ground in this struggle and to not let human thoughts fall prey to Ahriman and Lucifer but to have them thought for the divine-spiritual beings, the Christ has descended

so as to be there when the intelligence is wholly with the human individuality.

(*Anthroposophical Leading Thoughts*, “The Experiences of Michael in the Course of His Cosmic Mission,” GA026)

Thinking must be permeated with Christ. We will still have to consider what that means and how the Christ impulse fits in what has been said so far.

Before that, however, we want to address an objection that might arise while reading the cycle *The Karmic Relationships of the Anthroposophical Movement*. Dr. Steiner gives a definition of “cosmic intelligence” in a later passage than the one quoted earlier, in the eleventh lecture, which appears to contradict the conception developed by us that it is a substantial force that was incorporated into the physical head organization of the human being:

I have said: the Cosmic Intelligence came down to the single men. But this, my dear friends, is only an abstraction. For what *is* Intelligence? Needless to say we must not conceive that when we ascend into the higher regions we shall be able to take hold of the Intelligence there as we take hold of trees and shrubs here in the physical world. [...] ‘Intelligence’ means the mutual relationships of conduct among the higher Hierarchies. What *they* do, how they relate themselves to one another, what they are to one another, — this is the Cosmic Intelligence. And since as human beings we must first consider the kingdom that is nearest to us, concretely speaking the Cosmic Intelligence will be for us the sum-total of the Beings of the Hierarchy of Angeloi.

(1924-08-08-GA237)

In my opinion, we are dealing here with two entirely different, distinguishable concepts and points of view from which we can regard what can be called the intellect, the power of thought.

- In the one case, a substantial force is meant as such;
- in the second case, the use which the Angeloi make of *their* thinking power.

This power of thought, in turn, seems to me to be something else than the force that was incorporated into human beings at the beginning of the fifteenth century and is called the “present” cosmic intelligence. Up to this point, however, the latter appears to have been “available,” so to speak, to the higher hierarchies. Now it has passed to the human being, and if the Angeloi wanted to continue living with it, they had to descend into the region in which it now reigns. What they do together from *their* power of thought is then “cosmic intelligence” in the other view and meaning different from the former. Precisely because the present cosmic intelligence has changed from cosmic to human, but the thought form preparatory to Jupiter existence can only be enscribed into the Akasha out of this power, these thought forms must now be thought by human minds.

Perhaps some light is cast on the nature and the origin of this power if we take for comparison the indications given by Dr. Steiner on the thinking power of the Archai on old Saturn, which are to be found in the Düsseldorf cycle *The Spiritual Hierarchies*.

It is shown in this lecture how the Saturn fire, that is, the sacrificial substance of the Thrones, becomes at first an inner soul-power of the Archai, who on Saturn passed through their human stage as we know. The Saturn fire is expressly referred to as the *power of thought* of the Archai.

What is the power that rules in the Spirits of Personality on ancient Saturn? It is no other than that which we know in modern man as the power of thought.

(1909-04-13-GA110)

This does not mean that we are now thinking with Saturn fire, but for the Archai the Saturn fire *corresponds* to the power with which we today form our thoughts and conceptions. One has to imagine that at the beginning of the development of Saturn, the Saturn fire was first present in a purely mental form, the same as the thought-substance from which the world of Devachan is formed. And as the unformed substantiality of the upper regions of Devachan receives forms through human life, so did the sacrificial substance of the Thrones upon ancient Saturn through the life of the Archai when they expressed their thoughts in it. Only later did this mental substance become the external warmth of Saturn by the Archai having to condense and objectify their thoughts outwards in order to have something in which they could reflect themselves and come to ego-consciousness. All this explained at the above mentioned lecture. The sacrificial substance of the Thrones is therefore the “unformed thought-substance” of ancient Saturn and at the same time the “power of thought” of the Archai.

If we apply this to the present conditions of the earth, and Dr. Steiner expressly requests this in this lecture, then the sacrificial substance of the Thrones would now correspond to that of the Spirits of Form, and this would be *our* power of thought, the “present cosmic intelligence”!

Another parallel fully in line with this appears when the conditions during the development of Saturn (according to the indications in the above-mentioned lecture on the Saturn fire as the inner soul-power of the Archai) illuminate the corresponding Earth conditions. We have received the ego as the fourth member of the human being at the beginning of the development of the Earth from the Spirits of Form; it is formed from the sacrificial substance of these beings. As is said, for example, in the ninth lecture of cycle *From Jesus to Christ*, the human ego formed in the Lemurian period through part of the substance of the Spirits of Form entering human incarnations.

In accordance with this, in the cycle *The Spiritual Hierarchies*, the Saturn warmth, that is, the sacrificial substance of the Thrones, is designated in its entirety as the “ego” of the Archai. In reference to the above-mentioned objectification of the Saturn warmth, a later passage in that cycle says that

[t]he Spirits of Personality would have allowed their ‘I’ [!] merely to [stream] out eternally [without having become aware of it] if they had not left something outside that could offer resistance to them.

(1909-04-13-GA110)

The Archai, however, were in a somewhat different position than the humanity of Earth, when our ego in its formation already encountered a resistance in the form of the three lower members of the human being, while the Archai had first to create a reflecting organism by the objectification of a part of their ego.

The sacrificial substance of the Thrones, the ego of the Archai, the power of thought of the Archai — all three are thus designated in this cycle in a certain sense as identical.

Should it not be the same with the sacrificial substance of the Spirits of Form, our ego, and that power of thought that we believed we could regard as the “present cosmic intelligence”?

As we have seen, there is also an intimate relationship of this power of thought to the Akasha substance. When we now heard that only a part of the substance of the Spirits of Form has entered into the formation of the human ego, should we not seek the other part in that Akasha substance, and by this supposition, would not the existing intimate connection between the two be especially evident?

To avoid any misunderstanding about the concept of the ego, which we presupposed in our observations so far, I would like to include here a brief description of

- the difference between the ego as a *shell*, as the fourth member of our supersensible organization,
- and the innermost core of the human being that we mean when we say, “I am.”

There seems to be a considerable lack of clarity about this difference. I would therefore like to cite a few passages in which the ego is clearly referred to as a shell.

Let us begin with the innermost member of the human being, the ego, which as you know we regard as the youngest — or better call it ‘the ego-bearer’.

(1911-08-23-GA129)

If we consider these bodily members of the human being in the light of spiritual investigation, however, we discover how in the physical body, in the etheric body, in the astral body, in the I-body, there lie the seeds for cosmic worlds.

(1921-10-09-GA207)

It is stated in a lecture that

[i]n the condition of sleep, of course, the human being as a whole has not his astral body and ego-organisation in him at all.

(1923-12-30-GA233)

Also in *Cosmology, Religion, and Philosophy*, what is usually simply referred to as the ego is characterized as a supersensible corporeality:

We get a vision of how [during incarnation] the astral and Ego-organization covers itself with an etheric organization which comes from the etheric Cosmos, and with a physical one which arises from the sequence of heredity.

(*Cosmology, Religion, and Philosophy*, chapter 4, GA025)

And finally a passage of which I cannot say at the moment from where it is:

That which is the content of your souls was not in the human being at that time (in the Lemurian period). The ego was, as it were, a hollow space for absorbing these forces. And this cavity is still present in the interior of the human being. What the human being today calls his deepest interior was previously outside the human being; at that time it sank into the human body. Before it was a part of the divine nature; it still rested in the womb of the deity.

(not yet online)

In the ego-body the innermost essence of the human being, that to which we say “I am,” comes to the consciousness of itself. The ego-body or the ego-carrier comes from the substance of the Spirits of Form; the innermost essence of the human being, the “little spark of God” of Meister Eckhart is substantially one with the Father God. “Your substance is our substance,” it says in the Trinitarian prayer of the Christian Community.

These observations are by no means offered as a complete study result with definitive formulations — I would like to expressly emphasize this — but as an example of the progressive search for and elaboration of such results. I would warmly welcome the cooperation of the readers in this work, whether by corroboration or by correction of the foregoing.

2. The Passage of the World's Thoughts through the Human Being (continued)

The continuation of the thoughts addressed in the first circular letter can tie in to the nineteenth and twentieth of the “Letters to the Members” where it says:

The consciousness of the seer finds the macrocosm increasingly alive, the more his vision penetrates into the past. In the far distant past, the macrocosm so lives that there ceases to be any question of ‘calculating’ the manifestations of its life. Out of this living condition man is then brought forth as a separate being, while the macrocosm enters more and more into the ‘calculable’ sphere.

But in this it undergoes a slow process of death. In the same measure in which man — the microcosm — arises as an independent being from the macrocosm, the macrocosm dies.

In the present cosmic time, a dead macrocosm is existing. But it was not only man who arose in the process of its evolution. The Earth too came forth out of the macrocosm.

(Anthroposophical Leading Thoughts, “What is the Earth in Reality within the Macrocosm?” GA026)

Then is shown how on Earth, an excess of the germinal powers of the plant kingdom and also certain surplus forces of the mineral kingdom and animal kingdom radiate from the earth into the extraterrestrial cosmos. Before the imaginative consciousness

there stands before the human soul — not a sharply outlined Earth in mineral, plant and animal kingdoms of Nature — but a vital process, kindled to life within this Earth and flaming forth into the Macrocosm.

(Anthroposophical Leading Thoughts, “Sleeping and Waking in the Light of Recent Studies.” GA026)

The force coming from the mineral kingdom

has the task of carrying the forces from the plant-world to the right places in the macrocosm. Under the influence of the mineral forces, the plant-forces become a newly fashioned picture of a macrocosm.

Likewise there are forces proceeding from the animal nature. These however do not work, like the plant and mineral forces, radiating from the Earth. They work in such a way that the plant-nature, which the mineral forces carry in clear formation into the great Universe, is gathered into a sphere, so that the picture arises of a macrocosm compact and self-contained on all sides.

It is thus the spirit-seeing consciousness beholds the essence of the earthly realm, *which stands as a new, life-kindling element within the dead and dying macrocosm.*

As when the old plant has died and fallen away, the new plant, however large, is formed again from the seed in space so insignificant and small — so while the old dead macrocosm falls asunder a new macrocosm is coming forth from this ‘speck of dust,’ the Earth.

(*Anthroposophical Leading Thoughts*, “What is the Earth in Reality within the Macrocosm?” GA026)

But from the dying life of the macrocosm, human beings also have their powers of thought. In human beings these have to die completely in order to become thoughts. — From the germination life of the earth, on the other hand, originates his willpower. This carries the human being into the life after death and gives him substance, “essentiality,” in the sea of spirit.

This polarity in the origin of human thought forces and willpower is also expressed in the Foundation Stone Verses (1923-12-25-GA260), which say on the one hand,

Soul of Man!

Thou livest in the limbs [into which the will-element brings movement]

Which bear thee [...]

In the spirit’s ocean-being [into the future after death and into the further cosmic future]

and on the other hand,

Thou livest in the resting head

Which [...]

Opens to thee the world-thoughts

that is, in the head in which the dying life of the macrocosm has come to rest.

Into this picture of the dying macrocosm and of the earth emanating its surplus energies as the germinating point of a new cosmos, it is now necessary to introduce the *human being*, since we have already realized that the design of the future Jupiter existence, which is of course again the issue here, has to occur *through* the human being. According to all that has already been put forward and as is also evident from various other excerpts with which we still have to deal, the above picture is to be conceived in such a way that a *designed and living* new macrocosm could *not* emerge from the germinating forces of the earth alone without the human being, but a dead Jupiter would be born. Clouds of life would probably drift over it, Steiner once elaborated, but this life could not develop into definite forms. — In any case, Jupiter could not reach the next, higher stage of development of the planet and its realms intended for it, if this germinating life streaming from the earth was not empowered and shaped by the results of human thinking, feeling, and willing.

That the creative germinal life of the earth (at least in this last-intended sense) was first *kindled* by the Mystery of Golgotha is expressed in the Hamburg cycle about the Gospel of John (GA103). It is initially stated that in earlier times of human development, the etheric body was much more outside the physical body than is the case today and has only gradually entered until coinciding with the latter. But today the etheric body is already in the process of going out of the physical body more and more. When it goes out, it leaves behind a physical body that would have to dry up if the etheric body did not give it life. The enlivening wisdom, however, which the latter had brought from its cosmic origin, is due to dry up; the human being has consumed it by life in the physical body. He should have been able to acquire *new* wisdom in the physical body, in order to then work *back* upon it in an enlivening way when he emerges from the latter. But he could *not* acquire this new wisdom in the physical body. Only through the Mystery

of Golgotha has the possibility arisen that the etheric body can receive a new life and can work back upon the physical body in an enlivening way.

[A]s the blood flowed from the wounds on Golgotha [...], it happened for the first time that rays streamed forth from the earth into cosmic space, where formerly there had been none. [...] It became possible as well for this same force to permeate man. This was the first impulse toward [...] the radiating of the Christ force into the etheric human body; and thanks to the streaming in of this astral force it could start absorbing new vitality such as it will need in the distant future. [...] The earth of itself had nothing left to infuse into the etheric bodies of men. Some time later, however, the etheric bodies of those who had found a contact with the Christ impulse were irradiated: men who understood the Christ absorbed the radiant force that has been in the earth ever since — the earth's new radiance. [...] What takes place, now that there is always something of the Christ light in human etheric bodies? What occurs in that part of the etheric body in which the Christ light has been received? [...] It is the possibility that was given at that time, as an effect of the Christ light, for something new to appear, something living and breathing and immortal, something that can never perish in death. [...] And this something [...] now streams back again — out into cosmic space [...]. And this force will in turn create a sphere around our earth [...]: a sort of spiritual sphere is forming around the earth, composed of the etheric bodies that have come alive. The Christ light radiates from the earth, but there is also a kind of reflection of it that encircles the earth. What is here reflected as the Christ light, [...] this is what Christ called the *Holy Spirit*. Just as the event of Golgotha provided the first impetus for the earth to become a sun, so it is true that beginning with this event the earth began to be creative, surrounding itself with a spiritual ring which, in turn, will in the future develop into a sort of planet circling the earth.

(1909-07-06-GA112, emphasis by Rebholz)

The latter probably means a physically invisible pre-image of the future Jupiter.

The higher stage of the development of Jupiter will consist not only of the ego but now also the spirit-self expressing themselves *physically*.

This is indicated in the cycle *The Gospel of John* (GA112) by the fact that the emerging spirit sphere in which the archetypes of Jupiter and especially its human form are formed is called the “Holy Spirit.” This same spirit sphere is also apparently meant in the account of life after death in a lecture in the cycle *Anthroposophy as Cosmosophy* in which is described first how the human being lives after death in what his will-being was and has become during earthly life and how he looks back from this to the earth. He does not see it physically, however, but in a spiritual-etheric atmosphere from which the results of his thinking and feeling shine back towards him. Then it continues:

This will also be the future; this will also be Jupiter existence. [...] Everything that people weave around the earth by their feelings and by their thoughts will remain. What will disappear is what is present today as the material earth, for that will perish. That melts into the cosmos, turns into dust, and that which is woven out of our feelings [and thoughts] will become the future earth, which densifies more and more, which actually becomes the Jupiter planet. [...] And between death and a new birth, what emanates there from the earth is in fact a finely-woven planetary existence, something that one then feels as a transformed earth towards which one looks back, which one continues to weave from life to life. Thus, when the earth will have reached the end of its development, the human being will go over with it to Jupiter, and precisely through what he has

woven, he will be able to develop his spirit-self also *physically* on Jupiter. For he has laid the foundation for it through his own inner being during his earthly existence.

(1921-10-21-GA208, translated by HWH)

Thus we have here a different aspect of the sphere of the Holy Spirit from which the deceased perceives in the manner described the piece woven by him, his contribution to Jupiter existence.

We will still see that it is the *Christ* who assembles all these pieces towards the end of the development of Earth into the primal image of the life of Jupiter.

It was stated in the first of these circular letters that only the *occult* insights of the human being are entered *directly* into the Akasha substance. Now we can add that also this has been possible only since the Mystery of Golgotha.

As is said in the 22nd Letter to the Members, the human being, too, has a surplus power: It is the power of memory, which Lucifer continually wants to raise into human consciousness so that the memories would shine continually as conceptions in the consciousness. The human being would thereby lose himself as a self-conscious being, however. That this does not happen is due to the countering activity of *Michael*.

But the excess of force, which presses upward from within the human being through Lucifer's activity, will be transformed in this Age of Michael into the force of Spiritual Imagination. For gradually into the common intellectual consciousness of mankind there will enter the force of Imagination. But this does not mean that man will burden his present consciousness with lasting realities. His present consciousness will still be working in the fleeting pictures that arise and vanish. With his Imaginations, however, he reaches up into a higher Spirit-world, just as with his memories he reaches down into his own human nature. Man does not keep the Imaginations within him. They are drawn as cosmic pictures into cosmic existence and thence he is able to copy them, painting them again and again in his own life of picture-ideation.

Thus what Michael preserves from crystallisation in the inner being of man is received by the spiritual world. What man experiences of the force of conscious Imagination becomes at once a part of the World-contents. That this can be so, is an outcome of the Mystery of Golgotha. *The Christ force impresses the spiritual Imagination of man into the Cosmos*. It is the Christ-force, united with the Earth. So long as it was not united with the Earth but worked upon the Earth as the Sun-force from without, all the impulses of life and growth went into the inner nature of man. He was formed and maintained by them, out of the Cosmos. Since the Christ-Impulse has been living with the Earth, *man in his self-conscious being is given back again to the Cosmos*.

(*Anthroposophical Leading Thoughts*, "The Freedom of Man and the Age of Michael," GA026, emphasis by Rebholz)

With this we have come back directly to the starting point of our considerations: the *emergence* of the human being out of world-thoughts; the *reversal* of the direction of development by the impact of the Christ impulse; the humanized *restitution* of world-thoughts concentrated in the human being and enlivened by the Christ; the *unfolding* of the human being into a new cosmic future into which the human being "will carry what he has become."

What is the essence of these occult insights, these imaginations, in which the human being is to expand again into the cosmos?

Let us repeat: As long as the Christ power worked from the outside as a solar power, all the growth and life impulses went to the human interior. These impulses formed the human being from out of the cosmos and maintained him. The “human interior” is to be understood here as the inner physical and etheric organization. Similarly the following is said in a lecture:

In the past, everything went into the human being; thoughts as living creative forces shaped the human form. Then the Christ, who had been outside in the cosmos, entered into the human body itself, and now we must return to the cosmos what is in us (the formations) and *illuminated* by the Christ as *thoughts of spiritual science*. It begins with a process of cognition. Later it will be other processes. Processes of feeling will arise that emanate from us and pour out into the cosmos.

(1915-07-31, GA162, translated by HWH, emphasis by Rebholz)

For this Dr. Steiner gave an illustration:

The cosmos has died *into the human being*. We must return it permeated by the Christ by drawing the thought forms *out of ourselves, enlivened* by the Christ.

(Ibid)

The occult imaginations are thus derived from the spiritual-scientific view of the etheric-physical human organism. In a lecture at the congress in Vienna (*The Tension Between East and West*) is shown how occult development breaks through the mirror of memory, which conceals the spiritual essence of our body from the ordinary consciousness.

If we also learn to know our comprehensive inner organism, and learn how its individual parts are spiritually derived from the cosmos, our entire being, as we now perceive it, will present itself as a record of cosmic *memories*. We [...] can perceive the nature of our lungs, our heart, the whole of the rest of our organism, looked at spiritually, inwardly. All this presents itself to us as memory of the world, recorded in man just as our memory [...] is recorded in the soul. There now appears in us what we can call knowledge of man as a memory of the world, a replica of the world's development and of the course of the cosmos.

(1922-06-05-GA083, emphasis by Rebholz)

Thus the world-thoughts that form the human being are stored especially in the miraculous structure of our brain.

Let us now bring this together with the other pole of our soul-life, the *will-element*, which we unfold in connection with the germinal life of the earth as that which carries us into the future. We can also regard the germinal life of the earth as a will-like element. Steiner once spoke of the “irrational will-element” of the earth, “which holds the future, however,” as opposed to the luminous but dying *thought-element* of the cosmos. Into this irrational will-element,

the human being now carries the thoughts that he has *preserved* in his head. He sends them over into the future. And while the *cosmic* thoughts are dying more and more, human thoughts are sprouting: From their source point, they will penetrate in the future the cosmic element of the will [the will-element of the earth]. Thus the human being is the preserver of cosmic thought. Thus the human being carries the cosmic thoughts from *out of himself* into the world. Cosmic thought propagates from the primordial age into the future via a detour through the human being.

(1920-12-04-GA202, translated by HWH, emphasis by Rebholz)

The following is stated very concretely in a lecture on the cognition of the cosmos through the cognition of the human organism:

To realize the light and the powers of the sun by concentrating within on the nature of the eye, this is Rosicrucian training .

(1907-12-15-GA098, translated by HWH)

Thus it has become clear enough what it means to return the human being to the cosmos in the imaginations of spiritual science enlivened by the Christ. Through the Christ, the human being first gets the power of imagination in this new form (for it is a matter of a new form as opposed to the old clairvoyance). But Christ is also the one who condenses or compresses all these imaginations and who forms the archetypes of Jupiter and its realms, especially the archetype of the Jupiter human being, which will be the central design idea at the basis of Jupiter existence.

More detailed explanations on the formation of the natural realms of Jupiter through the different stages of occult cognition and teaching can be found in the lecture "The Prophetic Nature of Dreams" in the cycle *The Destinies of Individuals and of Nations* (1915-06-22-GA157, translated by HWH). For this purpose, I have notes from a parallel lecture (1915-06-03-GA162) that complements the former in important points. By using the two together, the following picture is obtained:

These lectures state that alongside the awake "earthly man," we carry in us a dreaming "moon man," a sleeping "sun man," and a deeply sleeping "Saturn man." The Saturn man is that in our organism which is of a purely physical-mineral nature and not permeated by the etheric body. The sun man is that in us which although etherically animated is not astrally empowered, which is thus still at the stage of the old Sun. The moon man is that which although penetrated by the astral body is not yet penetrated by the ego.

Now the *angels* have a special relationship to the moon man in that they imagine what occurs in the moon man accompanying our awakened life of concepts but is subconscious to us, and they condense these imaginations towards the end of the Earth's development in such a way that they can become the germinal forces for the *animal kingdom* of Jupiter.

As we read in other lectures and in *The Riddles of the Soul* (GA021), our wakeful imagining is accompanied by subconscious imaginations, inspirations, and intuitions, which in the process of imagining change into our abstract thoughts, which are shadows of them. An illuminating key to the role of the angels in this subconscious imagining can be found in the lectures on *Occult Reading and Occult Hearing*:

Out there, [that is, in the part of our soul with which we are spread out in our environment also during our waking perceptions and are related to the things outside our body] we are always surrounded by imaginations; we are, as it were, in a sphere of imaginations. [...] What enters into us from these imaginations? Shadow pictures, reflections, mirror images: as our thoughts, as our ideas. Out there are the full-bodied imaginations. If we would take them into us as such, they would destroy our organism. [...] But they must be experienced! We cannot experience them. They must be experienced by stronger beings who can bear them in their spirit-soul organization. [...] While we are thinking, while we are living with our soul, a being must reign over us continually to take away our experience of the imaginations underlying our thoughts and ideas. [...] These are the Angeloi.

Just as the Angeloi are related to our moon man, the *Archangels* are related to our sun man. They are the ones who consciously experience the subconscious inspirations that accompany our imagining and collect them in a certain way in order to later shape the *plant world* of the future Jupiter.

And the intuitions occurring in the Saturn man are experienced by the *Archai* and are used by them for the formation of the mineral kingdom of Jupiter.

Of all that is thought by human beings today, it is only the purely scientific thinking on the one hand (evidently because it is the thinking of the consciousness soul) that acts on the *Saturn man* in us. The spiritual-scientific thoughts on the other hand work on the *sun man*. If there were only the scientific thinking of the consciousness soul, only a mineral, dead Jupiter could arise, for the mineral kingdom of Jupiter is formed from the intuitions of Saturn man. How literally we are to take it that the thoughts we think determine the future design of the nature of Jupiter is evident from a remark by Dr. Steiner that if modern atomism were to remain, Jupiter would actually consist of such atoms as we think of them.

When the mineral kingdom of Jupiter is spoken of here, this appears to be in contradiction with the statement:

Earth will transform itself into Jupiter. Within this state, what is now called the mineral kingdom will no longer exist; the forces of this mineral kingdom will be transformed into plant forces.

(*An Outline of Occult Science*, chapter VI, GA013)

The resolution of this contradiction seems to me to have been given in the lecture of 9 October 1921 (GA207), which states that the lowest realm of Jupiter will be a mineral-plant realm that in contrast to our present mineral and plant kingdoms will be an intermediary. Accordingly, the other realms are also shifted. There will be an animal-plant realm, a human-animal realm and a higher human realm. A similar shift was already present on the old Moon.

For the formation of the plant kingdom of future Jupiter, the scientific ideas, which were gained from external sensory observation, present in the consciousness-soul would not suffice. For this purpose, the thought forms that can be developed only by spiritual science are necessary. Otherwise, as already stated, only clouds of life would pass over Jupiter, but no concrete, designed plant kingdom could arise. The living concepts of spiritual science must be gained in body-free conception, but then it is important that they are thought in human minds in order to be thus impressed upon the Akasha substance of the world. What the Archangeloi experience internally in the sun part of the human being when *such* thoughts are thought, they can inspirationally seize and use for the formation of the plant kingdom on Jupiter.

For the development of the *higher* realms of Jupiter, Dr. Steiner continues, even the concepts of present-day spiritual science would still not suffice. In order for an animal kingdom to emerge, this spiritual science itself must undergo an evolution and adopt other forms in order not only to give human thinking but also human feeling and willing the ideas and impulses that the gods can use as forces to form the higher realms of Jupiter.

What we must now express as spiritual science has the form of the present. [...] But there will come a time that will require that just as we influence the sun man, we also seek to work upon the dreamer in the way all our external science works on the Saturn man. What external science makes of the Saturn man establishes Jupiter as a mineral mass; what spiritual science makes of the sun

man establishes its vegetation; that which will be animal life on Jupiter is developed by something that will follow our present spiritual science, which will be the future of spiritual science. Then there follows still something else that affects the human being of Jupiter. That will still be developed, and that will give us the foundation for the actual Jupiter culture.

Thus, we are now living in the period where we are preparing (through external science) the mineral core for Jupiter, and where spiritual science influences its plant existence, which establishes the vegetation on Jupiter. Something is coming that affects the dreamer, which will then affect the animal world of Jupiter. And only then comes that which corresponds to what the human being now produces through thinking, feeling, and willing, which is directed by a higher wisdom in such a way that when the development of the Earth is finished, the human being *himself* can enter as a human being onto Jupiter.

(1915-06-22-GA157, translated by HWH)

The intuitions of the Saturn man are mediated by the Archai, the inspirations of the sun man through the Archangeloi, the imaginations of the moon man by the Angeloi. For the formation of the Jupiter human being, the human being will be able to use his own ideas, which are developed in the consciousness of the human being himself but which must have as their content a supreme spiritual science that is coming in the future. The notes of the parallel lecture say,

The ideas of earthly human beings will become impulses for the development of humanity on Jupiter through the soul content of the most developed human beings from the end of the Earth period (adepts).

(1915-06-03-GA162, translated by HWH)

In this way, working with the body of thought of spiritual science, even if it is only in the ordinary consciousness of someone who cannot do spiritual research himself, gains a far-reaching significance. In using our thinking for the processing of this body of thought, after it has been carried down to the physical plane by the spiritual leaders of humanity, we serve at the same time the world process that the higher hierarchies have to accomplish through our humanity.

When it was said that it will be the Archai who will design the mineral kingdom on Jupiter, the Archangeloi the plant kingdom, the Angeloi the animal kingdom, the human being the human realm — this order, which may at first appear strange, probably has its reason in that the lower the natural kingdom stands, the more dense is the substance upon which it is necessary to work.

Dr. Steiner does not always speak only of the thoughts, feelings, and will impulses of the human being as building material for Jupiter, but he once says the same of the physical, etheric, astral, and ego bodies of the human being, and another time of the egos that at the end of the development of Earth are all united into a unity that gives the archetype of Jupiter existence, and a third time he speaks of the “phantoms” that we produce in the process of perception and conceptualization, which will form Jupiter after being gathered and condensed by the Christ. And again another time he talks of the “atoms” of Jupiter, which are formed from the contracted and again atomistically divided results of human life on Earth. We will still have to deal with all of this and try to reconcile it. This will be the starting point for the continuation of our observations in the next circular letter unless objections and questions from the circle of readers first take us in another direction.

3. The Passage of the World's Thoughts through the Human Being (continued)

In the third lecture of the cycle *The Inner Nature of Man and the Life Between Death and a New Birth* given in Vienna, Rudolf Steiner explains how the earthly consciousness of the human being has been attained by the fact that

in consequence of light and colour, there appears what we might call a sort of light-corps or colour-corps. [...] Imagine that whenever we confront the physical world and have our sense-organs open, we always receive into us the corpses of all our sensations, as phantoms — but active phantoms. (1914-04-11-GA153)²

From these perception corpses, to which similar thought corpses are still added, are formed the signs that make up our treasure of memory and that we transform again into mental perceptions in the process of remembrance.

What flows in during perception is elemental essence (from the realm of elementals described in the circular letter on the elemental beings and below). For example, by being reflected from objects or passing through a crystal or a flower petal, the light appears differently colored. Some of the elemental spirituality “enchanted” in things mingles with this colored light. Different beings live in blue light than in red light (see the lecture of October 15, 1911, given at the dedication of the room for the Stuttgart branch, GA284). But at the same time, the formative forces that have shaped things live in this elemental realm. What flows in during the process of perception actually wants to continually assert *its* formative impulses in the human being. The perceptions of the mineral world want to form crystalline forms; the impressions of the plant and animal world want to evoke corresponding forms in the human being, and he must constantly resist this by integrating these formative forces into his human form.

This is probably the reason that the “phantoms” arising in the process of perception are

strangely enough, similar to the human form itself; if you take the upper parts of the human figure, the head and at most something of the upper torso and the hands, you have that which can be observed every time in the human etheric body when a human being forms a memory of an experience. [...] From every such human image, a fine imprint is also produced in the physical body.

(1915-05-29-GA162, translated by HWH)

Therefore, the human being in the process of perception unites what once came out of the cosmic primordial man, Adam Kadmon, who still contained all other beings within himself, and spread out around him as the manifold forms of the natural kingdoms — that seems to me to be contained in this statement. He leads all these forms back to his own. And when he surrenders this sum of phantoms to the cosmos after death, then he returns in a *humanized* form what has flowed to him from the natural realms as elementary essence.

² Although these phantoms are not identical with the phantom (the supersensible force structure) of the physical body, they have something to do with it in so far as they exert a darkening influence on it.

This process of combining is continued in that at the end of the development of Earth, the Christ unites all these phantoms, which surround the earth as a “nebulous formation,” into a single form, which will form the basis of Jupiter existence after the passage through pralaya.

[T]he phantom-like beings [...] would all be there. [...] At the end of the ages the remains of our Earth incarnations will stand there like a mighty tableau [...], and what do they come to, taken as a whole? [...] Because *Christ* unites them all — [...] the remains of the single incarnations are all compressed together. [...] Compress what is rarefied and you will get density. Spirit also becomes dense, and so our collective Earth-incarnations are united into [one] spiritual body.

(1914-07-16-GA155, emphasis by Rebholz)

In order that not a dead but a living Jupiter would be born, however,

Christ had to be able to pass into all that we bear within us as the corpse of the light, of the warmth, of the air, and so on. (1914-07-16-GA155)

That he can do this is an effect of his connection with the earth.

From the time in which the Mystery of Golgotha would otherwise have taken place, men would have spiritually created *dense* forms to which they had imparted death. And these dense forms would have become the very things that had to pass over to the Jupiter stage with the Earth. Man would have imparted death to the Earth. A dead Earth would have given birth to a dead Jupiter.

(1914-07-16-GA155, emphasis by Rebholz)

Because the Christ links himself to the sum of the phantoms created by us in all the earthly incarnations, he animates them, and at the same time takes upon himself the “objective guilt” contained in them, which cannot be balanced by the human being through karma.

Here also, in another form, we have the passage of the world's thoughts through the human being, and since the elemental formative forces are all imprinted with the human form in this passage, we may conclude that the one spirit-body formed at the end of the development of Earth will also have the human form, thus, so to speak, constituting a new Adam Kadmon. About this spirit-body, Steiner says further:

This body belongs to us; we need it because we evolve onwards to Jupiter, and it will be the starting-point of our embodiment on Jupiter. (1914-07-16-GA155)

In a lecture from *Foundations of Esotericism* (1905-10-27-GA93a), the same process is presented from another point of view. At the end of the evolution of Earth, it says there, all human *egos* are combined into one great unity, just as if a bunch of circles, each of a particular color, had been superimposed and would collapse into a single circle, which would then appear in an overall color. In this all egos are contained but as a whole. This great sphere, contracted, results in the primal atom of Jupiter. When the new planet emerges from the darkness of the pralaya, this atom multiplies, infinitely reproducing itself, and thus becomes the etheric primal mist spoken of in the cycle *Egyptian Myths and Mysteries*, as we will elaborate shortly.

The egos of which we are speaking here are of course not the “innermost essential core” of the individual human souls but what we described at the end of the first circular letter on this subject as the ego-carrier, ego-body, or ego-organization.

I would like to add to the above-mentioned evidence for this distinction one that can be found in the essays collected in *Cosmic Memory* in the description of the fourth cycle of the earth:

The human ancestor [...] now has the inner formless core of being, a *thought body*, and an astral body.

(chapter 17, GA011, emphasis by Rebholz)

What here is called “thought body” is identical with the ego-body.

Of this, Steiner says in the lectures in *Foundations of Esotericism* that “the Ego was still empty” (1905-10-28-GA93a) and only gradually gains content and form by the fact that the things of the environment are reflected in it. At the end of the physical planet, we have all experiences as a mirror image in the ego, and in the development of Jupiter this emerges as a plastic formative force.³

All individual ego-bodies or thought-bodies are at the same time parts of a general ego-form that the Spirits of Form have created from their sacrificial substance. In the first circular letter on this subject, we indicated the connection that presumably exists between the three concepts of ego-form, the sacrificial substance of the Exusiai, and the unformed Akasha substance of the three upper regions of Devachan, which receives forms through human thought, however.

Already the philosophical consciousness can come to the conclusion that the ego, in so far as it thinks, is part of a larger unity. For example, *Paul Asmus* says,

In thinking the ego has fulfilled its concept; it has given itself up as a single self. Therefore, in thinking we find ourselves in a sphere that is the same for all, for the principle of separation that exists in the relation of our ego to that which is other to it has disappeared in the activity of the self-abolition of the individual ego; there is only *the egohood common to all*.⁴

This universal ego is at the same time what Steiner described in his epistemological writings as the common world of ideas. When Walter Johannes Stein once asked Dr. Steiner whether a concrete, supernatural entity lies at the basis of the “common egohood” in the sense of Paul Asmus, he replied:

It is the oldest of the Archai, who is about to become a Spirit of Form.

(Thomas Meyer, *Walter Johannes Stein - Rudolf Steiner, Dokumentation eines wegweisenden Zusammenwirkens* [Walter Johannes Stein - Rudolf Steiner, *Documentation of a Groundbreaking Collaboration*], Basel: Perseus Verlag, 2009, page 284)

The Archai can be said to be occupied with the development of the human ego and the world of thought unfolding in human thinking. “They work on the basis of human thought, so that the moral order of the world is formed,” says a lecture printed in “Das Goetheanum” on November 27, 1927 (GA??). And in the

³ The ego receives shape and content to the extent that it has consciously developed concepts and ideas. In a certain sense, it consists of these; they are, so to speak, its spirit-body.

⁴ *Die Indogermanische Religion in den Hauptpunkten ihrer Entwicklung* [The Indo-Germanic Religion in the Main Points of Its Development], 1875, vol. I, p. 29.

lecture “Evolution, Involution and Creation out of Nothingness” from the cycle *The Being of Man and His Future Evolution*, Steiner elaborates:

On Saturn, in order to be able to live at all, they needed the physical substance of Saturn which was at the same time the rudiment of human substance; on the Sun they needed the etheric substance that poured forth for man's etheric body; on the Moon they needed the astral substance, and here on Earth they need our ego. Henceforth, however, they will need what is formed by the ego itself, man's new creation out of pure relations, which is no longer physical, etheric or astral body or even ego as such, but that which the ego produces out of itself. This the spirits of personality will use, and they are already using it to live in today. [...] Since the middle of Atlantean times they have begun living in the higher elements that man can bring forth out of his ego. [...] Logical thought, aesthetic judgment or the fulfillment of duty [...] provides the substance in which, in their phase of evolution, the spirits of personality take up their abode. (1909-06-17-GA107)

The Archai are also meant when in chapter one of the first volume of *Riddles of Philosophy* (GA018), beings who cause “the evolution of man's mode of philosophizing while taking [their] own definite course of development” are indicated. And what is said of the oldest of the Archai is valid in the future for the whole hierarchy of the Spirits of Personality: They are about to replace the Spirits of Form (Exusiai) of today, to gradually take over their office, and to become the spirits of Jupiter. Therefore, it is comprehensible that it is they, as servants of the being of Christ, who combine all human ego-bodies with the acquired content of the earthly lives into a unity and form from them the form-idea of Jupiter, which will be the human form expressing the spiritual self in the physical as we explained in the second circular letter on this subject.

I would like to add here in parentheses that in the formation of the human thought-forms impressed upon the Akasha of the upper Devachan regions, a peculiar *inversion* appears to take place in the passage through the pralaya between Earth and future Jupiter.

In *An Outline of Occult Science* and elsewhere, in the description of the first region of Devachan, in which are found the archetypes of the physical forms of nature, it is shown how these archetypes appear as supersensible negative forms of the sensible structures, while the latter are perceived as a reserved space within the archetype acting from all sides from the periphery, while at the same time a reversal of the sensible properties of the corporeal structure, such as its color, into its opposite takes place.

In a lecture of June 8, 1906 (GA094), however, it is stated that only natural bodies appear as such negatives in Devachan, that things changed by human hands are “as if extinguished,” and that the Akashic pictures of man-made things, such as a clock, are seen in the fourth region not as negatives but as they have been created. It is therefore to be assumed that these man-made forms, which are destined to become the archetypes of the nature of Jupiter, experience the meant inversion into the negative in the passage through the pralaya, whereby the point becomes the periphery, expressed in a mathematical picture.

We now resume our observations at the point where we discussed the transformation of the ego-shells that have been combined into a “sphere” into the atoms of Jupiter. In the same way we can think of the “atoms” of Earth having been created from a combination of the results the evolution of the Moon into a unity containing the form-idea of Earth, and again the division of this unity into an infinite number of ether-power-points, each of which carries the form-idea of Earth within itself. Thus, as I said, the description in the cycle *Egyptian Myths and Mysteries*:

When the earth emerged again from the pralaya after the development of the Moon and had condensed to the etheric state, one would have perceived a world mist

as a fine etheric cloud. This mist was much larger than our present earth, for it extended as far as the outermost planets of our solar system and even farther. (1908-09-03-GA106)

A closer look at this primal mist would have given the impression that it were

composed entirely of fine etheric points. [...] This earth-formation consisted of single ether-points, but something special was connected with these ether-points. [...] If now [...] the clairvoyant contemplated such an etheric point in the primeval substance, there would arise for him from the point [...] a light-form, a beautiful form, which in reality is not there but rests slumbering in the point. What is this form that the seer perceives, looking back at the primal earth atom? [...] It is the archetype of the present human form. At that time the human form slumbered spiritually in the etheric point, and the whole earth-evolution was necessary in order that what rested there might develop into present-day man. (1908-09-03-GA106)

This primal image

was not entirely similar to the man of today. If we can think of a kind of combination of man and woman in which the lower part is omitted [...] in which only the upper part of the body is clearly perceptible, (1908-09-05-GA106)

we would have some idea of this image that is the spiritual foundation of the Earth, which is “the meaning of the earth.”

“At that time the earth consisted only of the human atom, of reawakened human beings” of the development of the Moon. This was the “picture of primeval man, of the man who had been breathed forth by the eternal self,” “the primal form of the Godhead,” as it were. (1908-09-05-GA106)

As every single cell of a plant contains the predisposition to the whole plant, namely in that the entelechy (form-idea) of the plant penetrates all the cells as a unit, so the etheric points of force of the primal mist can show to the clairvoyant’s gaze “on closer examination” the *single* picture lying at the basis of the *whole* earth. I remember the drawing that Dr. Steiner had made to accompany a lecture on this primal earth, which was at the same time the primal human being, Adam Kadmon: a circle into which a human face was drawn.

Only later did the *individual* human forms emerge from this primordial earth.

Man is born out of mother earth. That which is now enclosed within the skin has been drawn into him from the whole earth. [...] This earth was extremely important to man, for in its original form it contained all that man later possessed within him. In one part the heart was prepared, in another the brain; in our earth every nerve fibre was prepared.

(1908-06-26-GA104)⁵

⁵ A counterpart of the human organism is even now still to be found in the interior of the earth. “Certain parts of the ninth, innermost layer have a relationship to certain organs of the human body, the periphery to the human brain,

When the earth condensed further and the human being extruded the natural kingdoms out of himself, then they became the “veil of the Maya,” which concealed the true form of the earth from him. When the seer looks back into old times, however,

a striking vision comes before him. The external form of the earth, confronting the physical senses as Maya, vanishes and something comparable to the human form appears, but only a form, a figure. To spiritual vision the outer Mayavic earth (and I say the earth deliberately) changed into the form of man with arms outstretched in the shape of a cross, a male-female form.

(1909-08-25-GA113)⁶

When Christ died on the cross, that figure in the center of the earth changed so that “which had been mere form and figure, became filled with life.” This was the meaning of this figure, that the *life* of Christ was preceded by the *form*, “the world soul crucified on the cross of the world's body, waiting to receive the life of the Christ when He should unite Himself with the earth” (1909-08-25-GA113). It is probably not erroneous to suppose that the forces that change the thought forms produced in the human brain into *living* creative forces of Jupiter existence emanate from this point.

Let us summarize in brief sentences the various points of view under which we have looked at the passage of the world's thoughts through the human being:

From the darkness of the pralaya, as a result of the evolution of the Moon, an earth emerges that appears to the outside as an etheric world mist but that — as seen with clairvoyant sight — as a whole and also in each of its etheric force points already has the primal image of the future human figure at its basis. — From this primordial earth, the individual human bodies are born in which the souls are embodied and in which thinking develops on the basis of the miraculous structure of the brain. — An akashic image of the human archetype has been preserved in the center of the earth as a mere form.

To the extent that the earth and the human being are created out of the macrocosm, the latter dies. The formative impulses acting in the signs of nature are only the echo of the creative world word. The

farther inward to the heart, and still farther inward to the sexual organs”(1906-04-16-GA96, not yet online in English). Think of the “spirit of the earth-brain” in “The Portal of Initiation” (Germanus in Scene 6, GA014, the phrase is not found in all translations). See also “Concerning the Rosicrucian Mystery Play, The Portal of Initiation” (1910-10-31-GA125).

All the old religions and myths knew this primal man — the figure of the earth, the Adam Kadmon of Kabbalah, who still carried all the other creatures as secondary forms within himself. The stigmatized nun of Dülmen, Anne Catherine Emmerich, also knows this heavenly primal man: “The first man was an image of God, he was like heaven; all was one in him, all was one with him” (p. 17). “With the reception of the forbidden fruit, they imbibed a material existence. Spirit became matter; flesh, an instrument, a vessel” (p. 15). “I saw the interior, the organs of man as if in the flesh, in corporeal, corruptible images of creatures, as well as their relations with one another, from the stars down to the tiniest of living thing” (p. 16). (*The Lowly Life and Bitter Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ and His Blessed Mother together with Visions of the Old Testament*, New York: The Sentinel Press, 1914)

⁶ According to Otto Willmann in *Geschichte des Idealismus, Band I*, p. 97, *Porphyrios* tells us that the ancient wise men of India spoke of a cave deep under the highest mountain, near the center of the earth, in which a bisexual human figure in the form of a cross stands as a pillar. In this, the sun is drawn on the right breast, the moon on the left, and on the arms the messenger spirits (Angeloi) and what is in the world: sky, mountains, seas, lands, and all plants and animals. God gave this statue to his son when the latter created the world so that he could have a visible *model*.

development into the future takes place only in the human being and through the human being as the “common organ of the gods” (Novalis).

Since the second half of the Atlantean period (the middle of the development of the earth), the earth begins to emit surplus forces of the natural kingdoms, which form the structure of a new macrocosm. These forces are of a will-like nature. The human being is so placed in this cosmic event that he has the task of combining these will forces with thoughtforms. This, in turn, was possible only because the Christ connected himself with the earth. By him animating the form found in the center of the earth, the thoughtforms created by the human being can now be handed over to the cosmos as living creative forces.⁷

That this new world-thought formation can only be accomplished through the human being (but in the sense of the Pauline word: Not I, but Christ in me!) is a consequence of the event cited in the first circular letter on this subject, by which the “present cosmic Intelligence” was “incorporated” into the human brain.

In processing the environment through thinking, the human being grasps the natural forms, which he has extruded from himself as the manifoldness of the natural realms at the beginning of the evolution of Earth, again in the human form (phantoms). On a higher level, the same occurs with the spiritual cosmos grasped by imaginative, inspirational, and intuitive cognition. He writes the acquired ideas and concepts as forms into his thought-body (“ego-body”) and thus into the previously unformed Akasha-substance of the upper Devachan regions. — At the end of the evolution of Earth, the Archai developing into Spirits of Form combine all ego-shells into a great unity under the leadership of the Christ, from which will emerge the prototype of Jupiter, the human form expressing the spirit-self in the physical.

That not only the ego-body but also the other members of our being are used by the hierarchies for the construction of Jupiter is expressed in the following words from the cycle *The Apocalypse of St. John*, which follow the ones cited earlier:

And just as our inner being was prepared in the earth, in the same way, in that which we shall have developed as our new body when the earth has reached its goal, do we carry within us the form which the future planet, the future embodiment of our earth must assume. To-day man works upon his soul; in this way he makes his body more and more like the soul, and when the earth has arrived at the end of its mission, his body will have become an outward image of the soul which has taken Christ into itself. Such a man will survive and implant in the next embodiment of our earth the forces he has thus developed. Jupiter will have an appearance such as men are able to bring about by constructing it out of their own bodies. This Jupiter will, to begin with, receive its form from that which man has made for himself. Imagine that all the bodies you have fashioned are

⁷ This is the more precise meaning of the explanations given in the second circular letter on this subject. The raying back of surplus forces of the earth to the cosmos would have to do with the age of the earth even without reference to the Christ event. A lecture in *The Influence of Spiritual Beings on Man* describes how the constructive forces that have descended from the zodiac gradually flow back again, and we are already so far that

[i]n a certain sense, therefore, we may say that at the present time, more forces are ascending to the Zodiac than are descending from it. [...] The ascending forces also correspond, in man, to the higher members of his being, to his higher, nobler attributes. The forces which are in the descending phase of evolution have first to pass through man and within him to attain to the stage at which they too can become ascending forces.
(1908-01-27-GA102)

united in a single cosmic globe; that will be Jupiter. In your soul you have the germs of the future form of Jupiter, and of the forces it will contain. And out of Jupiter will be born the Jupiter beings.

(1908-06-26-GA104)

While the passage from the Letters to the Members that we had taken as the starting point of our reflections may have been approximately though not entirely explained by what has been presented, this cannot be said yet of the two quotations that followed (from the Foundation Stone Verses and “The Soul’s Awakening”). When we now try to make up for this, it must again be expressly emphasized that it can be no more than just an *attempt* to unravel the deep secrets contained in these two passages.

Such an attempt does not seem to me to require any particular justification. When Rudolf Steiner declined to give any particular explanations to the Mystery Dramas, the words that *Goethe* gave to Heinrich Luden about the request to give explanations to his *Faust* and the “Fairy Tale” are probably applicable in this case:

With this disclosure the whole glory of the poet would be lost. The poet is not supposed to be his own interpreter and analyze his poetry in everyday prose. The poet places his creation out into the world; it is up to the reader, the aesthetician, and the critic to investigate what he intended with his creation.

When Steiner once said that if all his books including the lecture transcripts were destroyed and only the mystery dramas remained, one could retrieve all of anthroposophy from the latter, then this is almost an invitation to explicate spiritual science from the artistic version.

Perhaps such an aside is necessary, however, against the strange opinion one occasionally encounters that it is not necessary or is even wrong to strive to penetrate into the mental content of the mystery dramas or the truth-wrought words.

Let us ask ourselves then what is to be understood by the “world-thoughts holding sway” in the third part of the Foundation Stone Mantram.

For the world-thoughts of the Spirit hold sway
In the being of worlds, craving for light. (1923-12-25-GA260)

Would this not mean the beings of the higher hierarchies themselves, who are said to reveal themselves at a certain stage of spiritual vision as pure thought organisms?

It says in *Theosophy* that in the spiritland,

[m]an moves among thoughts, but these thoughts are real beings. (chapter 3, part 4, GA009)

And in *The Threshold of the Spiritual World*, we read:

With regard, however, to the beings of the *elemental* world, the soul has the feeling that they have the cosmic thoughts flowing into their own individual beings [...]. But with regard to the beings [...] of the spiritual world, the human soul has the feeling that they consist wholly of thought substance; that not only do the cosmic thoughts flow into them, but that the beings themselves actually live in that movement of thought with their individuality. They entirely allow the cosmic thoughts to think themselves within them in a living way. Their *life* consists in the apprehension of this cosmic language of thought, and their *willing* consists in their being able to express *themselves*

in thought. This thought-existence of theirs reacts vitally upon the universe, for thoughts which are beings converse with other thoughts which are also beings.

(chapter 12, GA017, emphasis by Rebholz)

It is certainly possible to quote a series of statements in which the beings of the elemental world or the etheric formative forces are called “world-thoughts.” In this sense, we have spoken of the fading, dying world-thoughts in the first letter on this subject. Of *these* world-thoughts, which are the *former* thoughts of the gods and which continue to exert their influence in nature and the external cosmos, while the beings of the higher hierarchies behind them have their own further development, a lecture says that they at first veil the world beings.

These world-thoughts, however, belong to real, actual entities that we know as spirit-soul beings, as group souls of the lower realms, as human souls, as the souls of the higher hierarchies, etc.

(1915-05-24-GA162, translated by HWH)

And in the “region of the cosmic Word,” the Devachan region, these souls turn out to be “thoughts that are beings” or “beings that are wholly thought.”

By the cosmic Word are here meant the thought-deeds of living thought-beings, which are enacted in the spiritual world like a living discourse of spirits; but in such a way that the discourse exactly corresponds in the spiritual world to deeds in the physical world.

(*The Threshold of the Spiritual World*, chapter 14, GA017)

Lucifer in the third scene of “The Guardian of the Threshold” says,

Here words are deeds (GA014)

Now human thinking “has its source” in this thought-life of the higher hierarchies (Leading Thought 59, GA026). In the etheric body, as the basis of thought, an extract of cosmic thought-life is integrated into the human being:

In the etheric body the Intelligence of the Cosmos becomes embodied in the human being. That this can happen, requires the activity of cosmic Beings, who, in their combined working, shape the etheric body of man, even as the physical forces shape the physical.

(Leading Thought 73, GA026)

And it is particularly the activity of the third hierarchy (Angeloi, Archangeloi, Archai) that functions as the spiritual background of human thinking:

The Beings of the Third Hierarchy reveal themselves [to spiritual vision] in the life which is unfolded as a spiritual background in human Thinking. In the *human* activity of thought this life is concealed [to the ordinary consciousness]. If it worked on in its own essence in human thought, man could not attain to Freedom. Where cosmic Thought activity ceases, human Thought-activity begins.

(Leading Thought 66, GA026)

That is, the living thought-weaving in which the third hierarchy is present, although this is unconscious to the human being (Leading Thought 85, GA026), *dies into human consciousness* when it is paralyzed into shadowy concepts in the process of conception, as on the other hand the elemental beings that enter into the perception process — as has just been elaborated — are killed to become “phantoms.”

According to a friend, Dr. Steiner once said in a lecture, “Every time a thought is born in human consciousness, a piece of angelic consciousness dies into man.”⁸ That at least the meaning of this statement is correct is shown by the following quotation, if one can understand the word “submergence” as this giving over of thought being to the human being:

What dying is for the human being, that is for the beings of the third hierarchy the submergence into human nature. If they had only this submergence, their consciousness would diminish; they would *lose their essence*. [...] But in fact, the human being is constantly surrounded around his head by vibrations that are generated in the world-ether by the activity in his head in conjunction with the beings of the third hierarchy. [...] And when the human being passes through the gate of death, [...] then what happens subconsciously in the head as an ethereal thought-weaving quickly disperses into the cosmic ether. [...] And on this the beings of the third hierarchy feed, which compensates for their loss of consciousness.

(1922-09-17-GA216, translated by HWH, emphasis by Rebholz)

In a lecture in *Occult Reading and Occult Hearing*, it says furthermore:

By thinking, *light* arises within us, which radiates from us. There come the Cherubim, collect this light, and use it to further world order. We are all [...] the candlesticks of the Cherubim.

(1914-12-19-GA156, translated by HWH, emphasis by Rebholz)

That the Cherubim are mentioned here of course does not rule out that the third hierarchy first receives this light.

Everything that is produced in this way [through the activity of the third hierarchy behind the mirror of human consciousness] through the human being has developed formations in the cosmic ether, and on this the beings of the third hierarchy feed. So that on the one hand, the beings of the third hierarchy help the human being with regard to his head organization and on the other hand have their own further development through what is done within this head organization.

(1922-09-17- GA216, translated by HWH)

Now the hierarchies do not receive back the world-thoughts, which are dying from their own substance into human thought, in the same form but illuminated by the Christ light via the human thinking that in the above-mentioned sense can be characterized as Christ-permeated thinking. Human thoughts thus acquire a new meaning for the spiritual beings in that the thoughts reflect the cosmic meaning of the actions of the spiritual beings back to them. Human consciousness arises through the reflection of the activity of thinking and in general of the soul's experience with the physical brain. Cosmic consciousness (at least insofar as it

⁸ I would be grateful for an exact source. The publisher

may develop in the future) arises from the reflection of the thought deeds of the higher hierarchies through the thoughtforms formed by the human being and illuminated by the Christ light.

For just as man on the physical plane needs a brain in order to develop consciousness, so do the Beings of the Hierarchies need human thoughts in which their deeds are *reflected*.

(1912-11-05-GA141, emphasis by Rebholz)

When it is said in the quotation cited in the first circular letter on this subject from the lecture of May 1, 1913, that in the future (“formerly it was different”) conceptualization about the facts of the spiritual worlds in the body-free consciousness is only possible through the enscribing into the Akashic chronicle that can only be done by the human being from the earth, this should in a certain sense be equally valid for the beings of the third hierarchy as for the human being because human consciousness in the life between death and a new birth is *analogous* to that of the third hierarchy. Our consciousness is, in a certain sense, that of the third hierarchy in which we are participating,

where higher beings are conscious in us or where higher beings pervade our consciousness.

(1921-10-22-GA208, translated by HWH)

There we live in the spiritual sun (that is, however, in our Angeloi etc.) and look back on the conceptual world we have developed.

After death the world of concepts is seen as a kind of net stretching across existence.

(1912-01-29-GA130)

And

Just as here, in the physical world, we need light in order to perceive so do we there need what separates itself from us. [...O]ur thoughts, our inner life, become what illumines our external world.

(1917-08-07-GA176)

Now, if the conceptual world that shines towards us (and the beings of the third hierarchy) consists of conceptual insights of spiritual science that are the results of a thinking permeated by Christ, it is precisely the *Christ light* that shines towards the hierarchies as “the cosmically expanding Human Being, radiating with a new light through the Cosmos” (first page of first circular letter on this subject, from GA026). “The world-thoughts of the Spirit,” the higher hierarchies that “hold sway in the being of worlds” (1923-12-25-GA260), crave for this light — thus we understand it.⁹

Perhaps one can imagine that as long as the Christ acted from the cosmos through “the gate of the solar Spirit of Wisdom” and all the creative impulses for the formation of the earth and the human being radiated from the periphery towards the center (second circular letter on this subject), the Christ light

⁹ Of course, this conception is valid only on the condition that the assumption made by us, that the world-thoughts that are meant here are identical with the beings of the third hierarchy, is correct.

came to the beings of the third hierarchy in this sense “from above” as their “being filled with spirit,”¹⁰ but from now on it illuminates them in the concepts of spiritual science conceived in the human mind.

The “book of life” from which Capesius reads in the first scene of “The Soul’s Probation” speaks of these aims of the gods, which acted from out of the cosmos as impulses in the creation of the earth and the human being:

‘Abandon thou thyself to cosmic thought,
Experience thyself through cosmic force,
Create thyself anew from cosmic will.
End not at last in cosmic distances
By fantasies of dreamy thought beguiled.
Do thou begin in farthest spirit-realms
And end in the recesses of thy soul.
The *plan divine* then shalt thou recognize
When thou hast realized thy Self in thee.’

(*Four Mystery Dramas*, GA014, emphasis by Rebholz)

The words that Benedictus speaks from the viewpoint of the spirit world to the soul of Capesius in the realm of Lucifer in the sixth scene of the “The Guardian of the Threshold” seem to me to express the future aspect of the development of the earth. They sound like a reversal of the above:

Win thou thyself in power of cosmic thought,
Lose thou thyself in life of cosmic force;
Thou shalt find *earthly aims* reflect themselves
Through thine own being in the cosmic light.

(*Four Mystery Dramas*, GA014, emphasis by Rebholz)

As the human being recognizes himself as the goal of the gods, so the gods recognize in the thought light radiating from the human being the goal of the development of the earth, the meaning of their cosmic activity, which is reflected back to them by the essence of the human being.

As is said in the saying from the “book of life” to the *human being*, “Abandon thou thyself to *cosmic* thought,” so conversely the beings of the higher hierarchies are dependent on losing themselves

in *human* thought
To rise newborn within the cosmic life.

(*Four Mystery Dramas*, GA014, emphasis by Rebholz)

The latter words of Benedictus to Ahriman in the 15th scene of “The Soul’s Awakening” are preceded by these:

¹⁰ See the cycle *The Spiritual Beings in the Heavenly Bodies and in the Kingdoms of Nature* (GA136) on the consciousness of the third hierarchy

But when a spirit-messenger draws near
And manifests to us from his own worlds,
Then he must needs first win our confidence,
This he can only do if he appears
Without disguise unto our spirit-gaze.

This is precisely what Ahriman denies to Benedictus in this scene. The latter cannot recognize him at first, apparently because Ahriman restrains his essence. It seems that in spiritual vision, the being that is perceived has to give itself over to the spectator, has to lose itself in his thinking, if the human being is to *think* about it as it really is, as if he recognized it. For the answer of Ahriman is:

Dost thou not strive for knowledge of thyself!¹¹
So stranger spirit-beings, who might wish
To render thee a service, are compelled
To *show themselves* as parts of thine own self,
If they may only help thee *undisguised*!

And now follow the words of Benedictus that are so closely connected with our theme:

Whoe'er thou art, tis sure thou only canst
Serve Good when thou dost strive not for thyself,
When thou dost lose thyself in human thought
To rise newborn within the cosmic life.

The key to these words lies in the sentence quoted above, "Every time a thought is born in human consciousness, a piece of angelic consciousness dies into man," and additionally, in the indication of the compensation for this loss of consciousness by the light that human thinking reflects back to the cosmos.

But what if a being of the spiritual world wants to know nothing of this thought light permeated by Christ, if it rejects this, if it does not want to find itself "reflected in this thought"?

Then this being, if it is "thought of as it really is" by the human being, would only have a loss of consciousness and would gradually have to lose its essence. This seems to be the basis for the words of Ahriman that now follow:

It is now time for me to haste away
From this environment, for whensoever
His sight can think me as I really am,
He will commence to fashion in his thought
Part of the power which slowly killeth me.

Benedictus, who now recognizes the vanishing Ahriman, reflects,

¹¹ Self-knowledge as it was characterized in the first and second circular letters on this subject.

As yet he knows not that the only way
For him to find release in future is
To find himself reflected in this thought.