

Souls of the Nations

BEING A HELP TO THE STUDY OF RUDOLF STEINER'S LECTURE-CYCLE
(GIVEN AT OSLO, NORWAY, IN 1910)

‘THE MISSION OF FOLK-SOULS

IN CONNECTION WITH GERMANIC AND SCANDINAVIAN MYTHOLOGY’

by
GEORGE KAUFMANN

ANTHROPOSOPHICAL PUBLISHING COMPANY

London, 1938.

By the same Author:

Space and the Light of the Creation: a New Essay in Cosmic Theory.
Physical and Ethereal Spaces.
Christ in the Power of Memory and in the Power of Love.

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FOREWORD

This little guide to study was written for a special purpose and it will help the reader, where and whensoever he may use it, if this is explained. For the autumn term of 1938, various working groups of the Anthroposophical Society in Great Britain — notably the group meeting week by week in Rudolf Steiner House in London — had resolved to study the psychology of nations and the character of lands and peoples — the spiritual realities that underlie them. The lecture-course referred to in our sub-title, wherein the founder of modern Spiritual Science, Rudolf Steiner, primarily deals with this great subject, is not an easy one. I therefore undertook to write this guide to study, which is now being printed so as to make it available to all who may need it, whether now or in the future.

It is therefore essentially a piece of working material of the kind often required in a University or School where systematic study is going on. In such a publication one will look to find accepted forms of expression, technical terms at least a few, and references to special literature; in a word, all things belonging to the life and practice of the school in question. The references in this booklet are of this character, and it is written in the style and context with which students in the spiritual school arising out of Rudolf Steiner's work are familiar.

The lecture-cycles of Rudolf Steiner — shorthand reports of his spoken word — are in themselves working material of this kind, and in their publication he insisted that this should be made clear. In reading them we should have in mind the time and situation — the audience to which they were spoken. They contain many things indispensable to students — things not contained, at least not explicitly, in Dr. Steiner's actual writings. Yet they cannot be read quite in the same way as we should read a written book. We have to call the spoken word to life and in a way transplant what it contains into the living present. Whether we read them individually or in working groups together, we must endeavour to renew by our own spiritual work some of the magic touch, the immediate presence of the Spirit which was felt when they were given. For this reason too it may be good that the result of work upon them by one individual student — 28 years after, so it happens — should circulate among other students. It is in intercourse that these things prosper.

While I have followed, in a free way but fairly closely, the main line of Dr. Steiner's exposition, I have not hesitated to insert explanations of my own or references to his other works, notably the lecture-cycles of those years. Many of these are better known to students, and such relationships — they could of course be multiplied — will help in making thoroughly intelligible what this particular cycle contains.

This booklet is what is said in the sub-title: help in the study of another, the essential work. I always had in mind while writing, that those using it — individuals or study-groups

— would have Rudolf Steiner's lectures before them, in the original or in the English version, even as I had. Readers familiar with certain elements, at least, of Anthroposophy may indeed find in it an introduction to this spiritual science of the Nation-Souls, but it will scarcely satisfy unless it leads them on to the actual lecture-cycle, the contents of which it *indicates* rather than summarizes. For those on the other hand who already know the lectures, it may be of value as a brief reminder of the extraordinarily rich and varied contents of this course, and of how the subject is developed.

GEORGE KAUFMANN.

Michaelmas, 1938.

INTRODUCTION

In studying — alone, or in study-groups together — the lectures of our teacher Rudolf Steiner about the Missions of the Nation-Souls, we want to be imbued with the feeling that what we do is for the benefit of all mankind. The present ailments and convulsions of mankind will only be healed out of the great resources of the Spirit, and these in turn can only be approached with inner quiet and serenity. ‘The mills of God grind slowly.’ The occult disciple must learn to distinguish reality from illusion. Unreal and destructive things which are being done on so vast a scale to-day are mostly done out of excitement and fanaticism. What will outlive them will be born out of this faculty — discriminating real things from vain — to which belongs quiet conviction of the inherent power of the pure Spirit. To approach the Spirit in this way is the deed of Faith in our time, and will be needed more and more. We may then enter upon this study with a good heart and in good faith; the Spiritual World will be able to make far more of it than we can know.

It is important that human beings turn to Reality in these great questions of mankind, race and nation. For in Reality alone is the creative source of peace and harmony. The ground on which we stand (I write in autumn 1938, when in a number of working groups in this country we are entering, on this particular course of study) gives us the opportunity, denied to-day through a great part of Europe, to work together freely. We use this ground on behalf of all mankind. The knowledge we shall gain, once founded in our hearts, will find its way into the world of outer realities also, to help in mankind's liberation.

We base our studies primarily on the lecture-course about the [*Mission of Folk-Souls*](#) (Cycle XIII), given by Dr. Steiner in Oslo — or Christiania, as it then was — in June 1910. This course contains only a part of all that Dr. Steiner gave upon this subject, especially in later years, and in the Bibliography we therefore draw attention to some — if only to a very few — among his other lectures and writings containing spiritual knowledge about the peoples, countries and civilization-epochs of our Earth. Nevertheless the ‘Folk-Souls’ cycle, as we may briefly call it, will naturally and rightly be taken as the centre and starting-point in an approach to this realm of Spiritual Science.

A word or two more may be said about the history and circumstances of this lecture-cycle. Held in the summer of 1910, four years before the outbreak of the Great War, it is the first of the numbered and printed lecture-cycles of Rudolf Steiner to have been given in Scandinavia. Like all the lecture-cycles until 1912, it was held within the Theosophical Society. Dr. Steiner, as General Secretary of the German Section, was speaking by invitation in the Norwegian branch of that Society. In Hamburg on his way thither (May, 1910) he had been

giving the well-known lectures on the [*Manifestations of Karma*](#). The Christiania course was followed, in August of the same year, by the first of the four Mystery Plays, [*The Portal of Initiation*](#), and by the [*Genesis*](#) lecture-course, in Munich. Then in September Dr. Steiner went to Berne and gave the lectures on *St. Matthew's Gospel*. (The [*St. Luke*](#) lectures had been given a year previously.) The [*Outline of Occult Science*](#) had just been published in its first edition. These were the works of Dr. Steiner immediately before and after the [*Folk-Souls*](#) cycle. I will however also mention certain other lecture-courses, the subject of which is related to this one. The souls of the nations (Archangels) and the guiding Time-Spirits (Archai or Principalities) are Beings of the Hierarchies, and in this cycle much about the spiritual Hierarchies in general is contained. Dr. Steiner himself frequently refers to his earlier lecture-course, [*Spiritual Hierarchies*](#) (Düsseldorf, April 1909, Cycle VII). His other well-known lecture-course on the same theme, [*Spiritual Beings in the Heavenly Bodies and in the Kingdoms of Nature*](#) (Cycle XXI) was given two years later, 1912, in Helsingfors.

Two other works of Dr. Steiner bear very closely, from another aspect, on the subject of the 'Folk-Souls' cycle, namely the lectures on the *Apocalypse* (1908), in which the history of mankind, the sequence of races and civilization-epochs is dealt with in some detail, and then the lectures given in Copenhagen a year after the Folk-Souls course, in June, 1911, which Dr. Steiner himself — against his usual custom — revised for publication in book form ([*The Spiritual Guidance of Man and of Mankind*](#)) immediately after they were held. The last-named and the 'Folk-Souls' lectures were among those to which Dr. Steiner in later years — during and after the War — repeatedly referred, indicating that he had dealt with these subjects at the time he did with fully conscious purpose. There can indeed be no doubt that Dr. Steiner in those years very deliberately chose to speak upon the ground of Occultism concerning the character of nations and details of the spiritual guidance of mankind, and that he afterwards looked back with satisfaction upon the fact that this had been done before the outbreak of those terrible events — events in the midst of which, after all, we are still living. In the preface to [*The Spiritual Guidance of Man and of Mankind*](#) (August, 1911), apologising for his departure from his usual custom of not mixing up the written and the spoken word, he says: "I have reasons for publishing this work precisely at this moment, and to re-write it completely on this principle would take too long." And in the introductory lecture of the 'Folk-Souls' cycle itself (page 2 in the English edition) he says still more definitely:

"It is not without reason that in our time we should also choose to speak quite candidly upon this subject which we are naming: 'the mission of the several nation-souls within mankind.' As good a reason as there was for silence hitherto (on the part of occultists) about this mission, so good a reason is there to begin to speak about it now. It is important because the approaching destinies of mankind will, in far greater measure than was hitherto the case, bring human beings together into a mission common to all mankind. To this, the members of the different peoples will only be able to bring their free and proper contributions if in the first place they have an understanding for their nationality — if they appreciate what we may call: 'self-knowledge of a people.' For even as the saying 'Know thyself' played a great part in the Mysteries of Apollo in ancient Greece, so likewise in no distant future this will be spoken to the folk-souls or nation-souls: 'Know yourselves as nation-souls!'"

At the same time, while emphasizing how important this knowledge is for the present age, Dr. Steiner realizes that there are special difficulties in the way of its reception, — national prejudices, jealousies, emotions. A still higher degree of open-mindedness, he says, is necessary for the receiving of these things without resistance or antipathy. And he refers in this connection to the occult degree of 'homelessness' or of the 'homeless man,' where the

disciple appears to lose his connection with his particular country or nation, yet in reality only does so to reach up to it again on a higher level. In 'homelessness' he learns to know and understand the great laws of all-human evolution, uninfluenced by his own country or nationality, — 'without admixture of the particular shades of sentiment or feeling that might arise from home and soil.'

It is no doubt significant that these lectures were held in a Scandinavian country. In a peculiar way these Northern lands have been protected; they are far less involved in political strife, in matters of national prerogative. To speak and listen with detachment was more possible in Norway than it would have been in many other countries. Moreover Dr. Steiner chose to relate his main theme, that of the Nation-Souls, with the Germanic and Norse mythology, thus giving it a setting reaching far away back into the pre-historic beginnings of European culture. One feels transplanted, as it were, into a clearer and a cooler air; the deeper sources, the eternally appointed tasks of European humanity as a whole are touched upon. Thus one is taken right away from the rather narrow international rivalries which are so largely at the surface of men's minds to-day.

The mythological aspect mainly comes in during the latter half of the lecture-course: I may here mention the full title and its translation, and clear away one or two possible misunderstandings. This is the title Dr. Steiner gave in the original: *Die Mission einzelner Volksseelen im Zusammenhange mit der germanisch-nordischen Mythologie*. We may translate it: 'The Missions of Individual Nation-Souls, in connection with Germanic and Scandinavian Mythology.' For Scandinavian — *nordisch* — in this booklet I have sometimes also written 'Norse' or even 'Northern'; the words, I trust, will be understood in their right context. In the existing English translation the hyphenated adjective which Dr. Steiner uses has as a rule been rendered 'Germanic-Scandinavian.' In one place it is translated 'Northern Germanic' — surely misleading — though 'Northern *and* Germanic,' with the 'and' rightly understood, would be admissible. Altogether, it seems to me truer to replace the frequent hyphen of the German by an *and*.

These are more subtle difficulties. There is however one very grave error which must be guarded against, and as unfortunately it occurs in the Synopsis at the beginning (though not, so far as I have seen, in the actual text) of the present English edition, it shall be mentioned. The word *germanisch* means, not German, but Germanic. *German*, as we use the word in modern English, is the name of a nation, whose name is really *deutsch* in their own language, and also incidentally — spelt *duitsch* — in the language of that other nation whom *we* call 'Dutch'! *Germanic* on the other hand, *germanisch*, is the name of a race — one to which not only the German but the Dutch, the Scandinavian, the English and several other nations belong.

One other matter of translation: the German *Volk*, which Dr. Steiner uses for example in *Volks-Seele*, is a word in daily use, both for 'people' in the sense of 'the common people,' and also for 'nation.' At the same time it has something of the meaning and sentiment of the cognate English 'folk.' It is impossible to render it quite truly. 'Nation' is always in danger of being interpreted too nationalistically, too politically. 'Folk,' as we understand the word to-day, is too archaic and limited in meaning. 'People' is nearer than either, and for *Volks-Seele* we may rightly say 'the soul of a people.' Perhaps it will be best for us to speak of *Nation-soul* and *Folk-soul* alternatively, the one expression to some extent correcting what might be misleading in the other.

FIRST LECTURE

In this first lecture, after the introductory passage to which we have already referred, Dr. Steiner goes on to speak of the difficulty our age may experience in taking seriously the idea of real Beings who have no immediate manifestation on the physical plane. Such Beings, none the less, are the souls, or Spirits, of the nations. [Dr. Steiner does not confine himself to the use of the word ‘nation-soul’ (*Volks-Seele*, as in the title of the course), but also speaks synonymously of the ‘nation-spirit’ (*Volksgeist*).] As real as is the Spirit of a man — distinct from the ten fingers which this Spirit uses as his organs — equally real is for example the Spirit of the Swiss people, distinct from the so many million men and women inhabiting the mountain regions of the Alps and Jura.

It is significant that the example of the Swiss nation is taken first, so that we see a nation need not necessarily be characterized by what might appear the most obvious criterion: possession of a common language. This too would indicate that deeper insight is required, to know when a ‘nation’ really is a nation; so that the spiritual knowledge of the nation-souls is of importance even at this stage, for the realities of the physical world.

Now to lead up to some conception of such a purely spiritual Being as a nation-soul or folk-soul, we are guided along this line of thought: —

Man, as we know from elementary Theosophy, consists of physical body, etheric body, astral or sentient body and ‘I’ or Ego. Moreover from the ‘I,’ the inmost member of his being, he is destined in future ages to transmute the three other members. He will transmute, in the first place, his astral or sentient body into Manas or Spirit-Self; thereafter, at a still higher stage of his development, he will transmute his ether-body or life-body into Budhi or Life-Spirit; and at the highest stage — still working from within the ‘I’ — he will transmute what to-day appears to us as the lowest member, namely the physical body, into the highest and most perfect entity of all: Atma or Spirit-Man.

These transmutations of the three bodily members into the realization of the threefold Spirit will be the work of future epochs of World-evolution (Jupiter, Venus and Vulcan evolutions, as we are wont to call them). Man now is only just beginning with the first of the three transmutations — that of the astral body into Manas or Spirit-Self. Yet in the present, Earth-epoch of evolution there is already a foreshadowing, a kind of preparation for the three higher members on a less potent level, inasmuch as the ‘I’ works through the three bodily members, learns to control them and so develops out of them the threefold soul:

the Sentient Soul by transformation of the astral or sentient body, — therefore the Sentient Soul is a foreshadowing of Manas or Spirit-Self;

the Intellectual or Mind-Soul [‘Mind-Soul’ (*Gemüts-Seele*), alternative name for the Intellectual Soul, is translated in some passages of the English version ‘Soul of the Higher Feelings,’ a translation due either to a misunderstanding of the word *Gemüt* or to a rather too cold and narrow interpretation of our own word, mind. ‘Mind-Soul’ was Dr. Steiner’s own rendering.] by transformation of the ether-body, — this therefore is a foreshadowing of Budhi or Life-Spirit;

lastly the Spiritual Soul (or Consciousness Soul) by the ‘I’ working right down into the physical body, — a faint foreshadowing of Âtma or Spirit Man.

It is perhaps helpful to note that in [*The Education of the Child*](#) Dr. Steiner distinguishes the development of the three fold soul and of the threefold Spirit in this way: whereas the latter will eventually have to be the fully individual achievement of each one of us, in the former work of transformation we are assisted by the whole human race, or more particularly by the civilization-epoch, the nation, or even the clan or family to which we belong. Thus we shall presently understand how certain epochs of civilization — or nations or communities within a given epoch — have the special task of developing one or other of the three soul-members. An individual incarnated in such a nation is quite naturally helped and educated in the development of sentient, intellectual or spiritual soul as the case may be; yet what is given to him thus, as it were by powers of universal destiny and the wise guidance of mankind, is also helping to prepare his Ego in some future time to achieve a corresponding spiritual transformation on a higher level, by his own strength and virtue.

This present stage in man's evolution — wherein he has the three bodily members and looks forward to the development of the three spiritual members in future epochs — follows, we are now reminded, on three former cosmic stages: ancient Saturn, when the physical body of man was first created; Sun, when the ether-body was created; and in the third place the old Moon, — the epoch of creation of the astral body. Moreover in these former cosmic stages other Beings, though not in bodies of flesh and bone, were undergoing the stage in consciousness (self-consciousness, — objective cognition) which man undergoes to-day. These other Beings were, in Christian esoteric terminology: —

the Angels, who underwent their human stage in old Moon and are therefore one stage beyond Man;

the Archangels, who underwent their human stage in old Sun and are therefore two stages beyond Man;

lastly the Archai (Principalities), the ‘First Beginnings’ or Spirits of Personality, who underwent their human stage already in old Saturn and are therefore three stages ahead of Man in evolution.

We are led on to the conception that these Beings, having passed through their human stage in former cosmic epochs, have now advanced to stages of development which Man will only reach in future epochs. They therefore, even now, are developing those higher spiritual members of their being which Man will only develop in Jupiter, Venus and Vulcan evolutions.

Angels (one stage ahead of Man) are now fulfilling their transmutation of astral body into Manas or Spirit-Self.

Archangels (two stages beyond Man) are engaged in transmuting their ‘ether-body’ or ‘life-body’ into Budhi or Life-Spirit.

Lastly the Archai or ‘First-Beginnings’ are to-day “working from the Earth's spiritual environment upon the transmutation of the Earth and in so doing undergoing the final phase, so to speak, in the transmutation of their physical body into ‘Spirit-Man’ or Atma.”

In effect these higher Beings, in the very act of working beneficially upon the Earth and mankind, are at the same time evolving the higher members of their own being. The Archai

work into the physical body both of the Earth as a whole and of human beings — notably into all those things that constitute the physical character of a civilization-epoch, the typical arts and crafts or ways of using material things for spiritual ends — and in so doing they for their own evolution are developing Atma or Spirit-Man. Archangels work into our ether-bodies and in so doing are transforming their etheric body into Budhi. Likewise the Angels, who are engaged in perfecting Manas or Spirit-Self, work beneficially into our astral bodies.

This work of the spiritual Beings is however differentiated, and in a diverse way for each of the three ranks of Beings. The Archai are the guiding spirits of whole periods of Time, or civilization-epochs. They therefore are also called the Time-Spirits, or even (since they depart and return again to such work upon the Earth in certain periods) ‘Spirits of Cyclic Periods.’ Now in any such epoch there is one dominant character of civilization throughout the whole of civilized mankind. Thus in the main one such Archai-being works for the Earth as a whole during a given epoch. Yet within the mission of an epoch there must be many shades and colourings, many special tasks to fulfil. This is the mission of the different nations, and is inspired by the several Archangels. Archangels in effect are the souls of nations, and they work paramountly into the ether-bodies of the men and women belonging to their nations. National character and temperament is therefore mainly situated, not in the physical body as such, nor in the astral (the more personal, individual soul-body), but in the subtle intermediate member between these two: the etheric or life-body, the bearer of our life-forces.

Lastly the single human being, passing from incarnation to incarnation and therewithal from epoch to epoch, nation to nation in his own individual way of destiny, has his guiding and protecting Angel-being; and these Angels, as we can readily understand, are in their turn the mediators between the single human being, and the Archangel, of the folk to whom this soul belongs in a given life on Earth — who pours His deeper Inspirations into the ether-body.

This is an outline of what is given in the first lecture of the course. Yet for a fuller understanding of it Dr. Steiner introduces one other leading idea which we have not yet touched upon. It is to help us understand in a more real way what is meant by the working of the Archangels for example, into the ether-bodies of men, or by the statement that in so doing they are transmuting their own ‘ether-body’ into Life-Spirit, Budhi.

Dr. Steiner here draws our attention to a very real fact of our own future evolution, to which indeed he referred in other lectures even with regard to a less distant future. It is that the more we evolve into the future the more shall we acquire the faculty to direct our bodies from outside. Let us suppose that even now we were one day to become fully conscious in our sleep, when, as we know, with our astral body and Ego we are outside the physical and the etheric. Suppose that being conscious in this way we then began to direct and move our physical and etheric bodies from outside. This then would be an indication of a faculty we shall actually have attained in Jupiter and, even more, in Venus evolution. This in effect will go hand in hand with our development and perfection of the higher spiritual members, Manas and Budhi. We in our Spirit shall direct our bodies from outside. (Dr. Steiner here refers to the bird-kingdom, notably the birds of passage — entities which in connection with their group-soul have in a somewhat premature way, even on the Earth, forestalled what Man will only reach in future epochs.)

This faculty however belongs already now to the more highly developed Beings — the Archangels, the souls of nations. In this way we can understand how they work into the human beings of the nation belonging to them.

“Try to conceive the idea of Beings living and working as it were with their own ‘I’ or Ego in the spiritual atmosphere of our Earth, and with their fully developed Spirit-Self or Manas working on to our Earth, working into the human beings, transforming our ether- or life-body. Beings they are, who are themselves at the stage of transmuting their ether- or life-body into Budhi or Life-Spirit. If you imagine such Beings — at the ‘Archangel’ stage among the spiritual Hierarchies — you will then have a true idea of what are called the nation-spirits, the directing nation-spirits of the Earth ... They, in directing their own ether- or life-body, work also down into mankind and thus include mankind in the sphere of their activity ... If we can recognise the missions of these Beings — inspirers of the nations as they are — then we are able to say what a nation is. A nation is a group of human beings belonging in this way together, — inspired by one or other of the Archangeloi, of the Archangels. ...”

SECOND LECTURE

It may be a help towards the understanding of the last lecture and also the beginning of this one, if we call to mind what has been given in other lectures, concerning the ‘physical body,’ ‘etheric body,’ etc. of the Hierarchies — especially those nearest to Man: Angels, Archangels and Archai. Honestly, one is bound to ask: What is meant by the ‘physical body’ of an Angel, for example, or of an Archangel or Archai-being? Rudolf Steiner answers this question — and the answer leads up to one of the most beautiful of his conceptions — in the seventh lecture of the cycle, [*Spiritual Hierarchies*](#) (1909). Near the beginning of this lecture, the reader will find diagrams consisting of seven interlacing or partly interlacing circles. The accompanying text, down to the Biblical quotation, ‘He maketh the winds His messengers and His ministers a flame of fire,’ is the passage to which I refer. We are shown how we can recognize the ‘physical-body-principle’ of these higher Beings in the water-, air- and fire-elements in the Universe — in Nature all around us.

In the beginning of this second lecture of the ‘Folk-Souls’ course, Dr. Steiner tells of the spiritual auras of different countries and landscapes — something which everyone may feel, and which Initiate perception recognizes as an expression of the etheric working of the Archangel, folk-spirit of the people inhabiting the country. This aura will change sometimes very quickly with the migration of peoples or other historic changes affecting the destinies of nations. Nature, therefore, herself takes part in some way in the life of peoples; Nature is subtly different according to the soul of the people inhabiting the given land.

An essential point is that the Archangels cannot work down into purely physical conditions, such as the configuration of mountain-ranges and the like; these are the work of higher, more potent Beings. Therefore we have the wanderings of people, guided by their Archangels to seek the ‘promised land’ they need, and — which is also an important thing to note — the coming and going of the Archangels themselves, their incarnation and exarnation, so to speak. For an Archangel is not at all times working as the folk-spirit of a nation upon Earth. There are times when the Archangel withdraws into another state of consciousness (then the nation He belonged to passes away from earthly history); after an intervening time He may return again, to ensoul another nation in a new historic epoch.

Dr. Steiner now tells of how this ether-aura of the nation-spirit works in its turn into the individual's etheric body, making that subtle thing which we describe as national temperament. “Think of the ether-body of the human being” he says in conclusion (pp. 18–19 in the English version) “and picture it quite realistically: the ether-body of the human being, embedded in the ether-body of the nation as a whole. Think too of how the latter is reflected

in the temperamental qualities of the nation — the mingling of temperaments in the many individuals concerned. Therein you have the secret of how the folk-spirit or nation-spirit reveals His character within a given people.”

A very interesting statement is that the ether-aura of the nation only affects the sanguine, choleric and phlegmatic temperaments in individual man — not the fourth, the melancholic. Remembering how the four temperaments are related to the Elements of air, fire, water and earth respectively, we may come back to this where in a later course of lectures [Anthroposophical Life-Gifts, — see the bibliography.] Dr. Steiner tells of how the nation-souls work in the several elements, in different nations of Europe.

The lecture now (page 19) passes on to a quite different aspect of the subject and plunges rapidly into a theme which from now onward plays a predominant part in the whole Cycle. It is the theme of *spiritual Beings who have remained behind*.

Dr. Steiner begins by pointing out that there are characteristics of a nation obviously more robust and tangible than ‘temperament.’ The most evident is language. The spiritual Beings who are responsible for this must therefore be of greater power than the Archangels or normal folk-spirits, who only work in a subtle and intimate way into the psychological and etheric aura of a people. Language is something more physical and has to do with physical organs — larynx, etc. — in the formation of which there will no doubt be delicate differences according to the language spoken. We have therefore to look for Beings who in some way are working on a level with the nation-souls, yet with superior creative power. Hereat we are reminded of the sequence of the Hierarchies and of how the Beings advance from stage to stage in successive cosmic epochs. Upward from Man we have the following:

Spirits of Form

Archai or Spirits of Personality

Archangels

Angels

Man.

We remember now that the Archangels, two epochs ago, *i.e.* in the old Sun-evolution, were at their ‘human stage’ — the stage of Man. Yet a like thing applies to the higher Spirits also. Those who are Spirits of Form to-day were also — in evolutionary rank — two stages farther back in the old Sun epoch. That is to say, they were at the Archangel stage in consciousness and power. In normal evolution, they would advance to the Archai-stage by the old Moon epoch, to become Spirits of Form — according to their name — in the present, Earth epoch.

Now it is possible for Beings to remain behind — not, Dr. Steiner warns us, out of lassitude or opposition, but as a deed of sacrifice for which we must be deeply thankful. And in effect, we are here introduced to two other ranks of Beings, who, if they *had* evolved in the normal way, would have been Spirits of Form to-day. We find them therefore, like the normal

Spirits of Form, at the Archangel stage of development on the ancient Sun. One of these ranks of Beings remained behind twice over — from Sun to Moon and then again from Moon to Earth. Spirits of Form therefore according to what they *might have been*, actually they are at the Archangel stage to this day. These are the ‘abnormal Archangels,’ responsible for the languages of nations, — Beings who work in the same sphere as the normal nation-spirits, and yet to some extent with the degree of creative power pertaining to Spirits of Form, which is the rank they could have reached, but for their sacrifice in evolution. The Spirits of Form, we shall remember, the Exusiai or Elohim, are the creators of our physical body as it is on Earth; not in its first beginnings (that was the work of the Thrones on ancient Saturn), but of this body inasmuch as in its present form — the upright carriage for example, the over-arching brow and so on — it is the foundation for the conscious ‘I’ of man on Earth. Into this forming of the human body the abnormal Archangels — Spirits of Form who ‘might have been’ — also work, helping to form the larynx and other organs of speech according to the different nations. “Clairvoyant consciousness,” says Rudolf Steiner, “discerns mysterious Beings in addition to the Archangel-beings whom we described before: Beings in one way akin to the Archangels, yet in another way utterly different from them, notably inasmuch as they are able to apply far greater forces than can these nation-spirits ...”

Another kind of Beings is then described. Archangels once again in stage of evolution on the ancient Sun, they did indeed advance to the rank of Archai on old Moon; thenceforth, however, they too remained behind. Instead of working as Spirits of Form to-day, which is what they should have done in the normal course, they work as abnormal Archai-beings beside the normal Archai, who are the true ‘Spirits of the Times,’ as we saw in the last lecture.

It is most interesting how Dr. Steiner characterizes the working of these Beings. In the first place, we shall remember that the Time-Spirit (Archai) works throughout all the nations in an historic epoch, inspiring — or rather ‘intuiting’ as Dr. Steiner calls it — what is the common experience of all humanity during the Time in question. Now of our inner life it is the life of Thought, above all, which we experience in common with mankind. Feeling, like language — to which in origin it is so nearly akin — is differentiated according to clime and clan, nation and continent. Will is the individual and private force of every one. It is in Thought-life therefore that we shall look to find the Intuitions — or the ‘intuitings,’ to use the more active word — of the Time-Spirits. But these intuitings, kindling in human personalities the characteristic and creative thoughts of a civilization-epoch, can be of two different kinds: the one more gentle and more subtle leaving the human being in a way more free; the other stronger and more forceful, proceeding more out of the inner configuration of the bodily thought-organ, especially the brain. Once more, it is the abnormal or ‘backward’ Spirits — abnormal Time-Spirits or Archai, Spirits of Form who might have been — who work in this latter way. They are responsible for certain forces, which, working from within the body, tend even physically to give the thinking of an age a certain character and thought-form, — just as the languages of nations are a physical reality. It is not, of course, suggested that these dominant thought-forms exercise absolute compulsion. They work more strongly in some men than in others; more strongly too, as it appears, in certain nations.

What then of the normal Archai or Spirits of Personality — the *true* Time-Spirits, as Dr. Steiner expressly calls them? In what way do they ‘intuit’ human thought? What Dr. Steiner says at this point is of far-reaching importance, and if we understand it well it may give us the key to many a characteristic feature in the true and free spiritual guidance of the present Time, which is contained in the whole method of Anthroposophy.

It is in fact by outer circumstances — the incidence, if I may use this word, and the coincidence of things (often apparently and yet not really fortuitous) in the world around us — that the normal Time-Spirits in their more gentle, not so forceful way give men the impulse, as it were the start, the ‘cue,’ for the creative thoughts of the age. So were the pioneers, inventors and discoverers often put on to the track of their great deeds by their *attentiveness* to some apparently trifling circumstance in the outer world. The spark is kindled as between the inner life of man and the world around him! Hundreds of examples might be given, says Dr. Steiner. The story of Watt and the steaming kettle comes to our mind; Dr. Steiner instances Galileo and the swinging lamp in the Cathedral, or again the children playing with pieces of glass, leading to the discovery of the telescope.

In different peoples, we are told, these different Spirits — normal and abnormal Archangels, normal and abnormal Archai; in all, therefore, no less than four distinct ranks of Beings — work in conjunction or in contrast to one another, in diverse ways. No wonder therefore if historians, sociologists, philosophers, seeing only what appears in the world of Maya and being more impressed with the external outcome now of the one, now of the other kind of spiritual influence, will give so many apparently conflicting definitions of what a ‘nation’ is.

One very beautiful example is given of how a special harmony was brought about, in the first post-Atlantean epoch, between the normal Archangel of the Indian people, the abnormal Time-Spirit — intuitor of certain inner tendencies of thought — who was working in that epoch, and the abnormal Archangel to whom the ancient Indians owed their language. To this peculiar concert of spiritual Beings Dr. Steiner attributes the unique blending of the old Indian temperament and mood of soul with the holy Sanscrit tongue, and with the spiritual philosophy in which the Time-Spirit of the first epoch found expression. This harmony, he says, lasted until historic times and is still evident in the far later, still extant documents of Indian tradition.

* * *

It may be well before proceeding, to say a word or two more on the great theme, *Beings who have remained behind in evolution*, which has been introduced in this second lecture. The difficulties students find in this *Leitmotif* of Spiritual Science are of two kinds: one superficial and one profound. The former is easily disposed of; it simply lies in the fact that as there are so many ranks of Beings — the nine Hierarchies — and so many epochs of evolution, in each of which members of any one of these may have remained behind, the possible multiplication of Beings would seem to be very great. This sometimes needlessly alarms the student. Spiritual Science does not put forward endless systems; individual instances alone are introduced, and these are always related to real life and livingly described, out of immediate spiritual investigation. All that is needful is to have a certain care, to avoid mental confusion. One possible source of confusion lies in the fact that such Beings may be named on either of two principles, *i.e.* according to the rank which would have been their due had they evolved in the normal course, or else according to the rank at which — having remained behind — they actually are. Dr. Steiner does not always adhere to the same principle. In the present lecture, speaking of ‘abnormal Archangels and Archai,’ he has obviously used the latter method; he names the Beings according to the rank which is actually theirs. In the next lecture on the other hand, speaking of ‘abnormal Spirits of Movement’ — Beings who *would have been* Spirits of Movement but have remained behind and are still acting as Spirits of Form — he adopts most frequently, though not exclusively, the former method: calls them, that is to say,

‘abnormal Spirits of Movement.’ Context will always make it clear what is intended, and it suffices to have drawn attention, to this slight difficulty.

These are but technicalities of understanding; the inner difficulty is of a very different measure, indeed it goes down to the deepest roots of spiritual teaching. Rudolf Steiner often pointed out that in this science of the normally evolved and backward Beings we have again the essence of the old Zoroastrian teaching. The very contrast of ‘Light and Darkness’ is indeed brought about by this dramatic interplay of Times. Beings of a more ancient Time working on side by side with those of normal Time bring about Darkness over against the Light, nay, even evil over against the good. Evil indeed is none other than a former good transposed — out of true Time. Behind the contrast of Light and Darkness, Ormuzd and Ahriman, is ‘Zeruane Akarene,’ the undivided, self-consuming Time. Thus Dr. Steiner, in [Christ and the Spiritual World \(lecture 4\)](#) calls the whole of the old Zoroastrian world-conception — that of the second post Atlantean epoch — ‘Chronology’: the spiritual science of Time and of Times!

The more one knows of Dr. Steiner's own teaching, the more one realizes how deeply it is identified with this conception of Light and Darkness, of Time, and of the ultimate reconciliation, the overcoming of Evil. Looking towards the past, it relates as we have seen to the ancient holy teaching of Zarathustra, who prophesied the coming of the Christ, ‘Light of the World’ who came into the Darkness. Looking towards the future, it emerges *in* the Christian counterpart of Zoroastrianism: true Manicheism, which will come to fruition only in a future epoch and for which the Rose-Cross teaching is preparing.

Because this theme of the ‘backward’ Beings plays so great a part in the ‘Folk-Souls’ lectures, students may like to be referred to certain other passages in which Dr. Steiner — about the same period of his teaching — tried to explain this greatest mystery of evolution. Such passages occur for instance in the following:

St. Matthew (Sept. 1910), beginning of the second lecture.

[Spiritual Beings](#) (Helsingfors, April 1912, Cycle XXI), end of the sixth lecture.

Most eloquent of all, however, is the fifth lecture of the [Genesis](#) cycle, August 1910, given therefore very shortly after the [Folk-Souls](#) course. The whole of this lecture is upon the theme of Light and Darkness and would most beneficially be read in this connection.

It may also be helpful if we here refer to a far later work of our teacher, where he was writing again explicitly on the differentiation of mankind into races and nations and its attendant difficulties. The most immediate expression of Darkness within our ken is, after all, the material world itself. Matter is nothing but Darkness condensed and realized, Darkness made lasting as it were, even as Light on the other hand is the shining forth, the glory of the Spirit. [See Rudolf Steiner's lectures of December, 1920, in Part II of the recently published volume, entitled [Colour](#).] The material world itself is therefore an expression of the fact that Beings have remained behind in Time. (The above-mentioned lecture on [Genesis](#), speaking of Saturn and Sun evolutions, makes this fairly clear; the Helsingfors lectures even more so.) This truth, the understanding of which will have an immense effect on the whole future of Natural Science, has a particular bearing also on our present subject. Influences, differentiations and the like, which would otherwise have remained purely spiritual, are — by the Beings remaining behind in evolution-driven more deeply down into _ the material world than ‘should’ have been the

case. Now this refers above all to human nature, and in particular to the differentiations of race and nation. The source of these is always cosmic — in the spiritual world, the world of stars. Had it not been for the Beings ‘out of Time’ — more especially, the Luciferic and Ahrimanic Beings — these differentiations would have lived and worked in mankind purely in soul and spirit (in the ‘I’ and astral body). Actually, they were driven more deeply down into the physical and etheric bodies — that is to say, relatively speaking, into the realm of Darkness, there to become a source of more lasting diversities, even of misunderstandings and conflicts. Therefore the differentiations of race and nation as we know them are quite inseparable from this reality of backward Beings; and there is deep reason why this subject plays so great a part in our lecture-cycle. Had it not been for the backward Archangels, ‘Babel,’ the multitude of languages on Earth, would not have been. All mankind would have spoken — though in a more spiritual way — the original, universal language of mankind, which the Luke Jesus-child spoke from His birth, who was indeed conceived under the Holy Spirit — *i.e.* the uniting Spirit of all mankind.

At the beginning of 1925, in that last winter when Dr. Steiner wrote to us week by week from his sick-bed, a series of three letters appeared in the Weekly News, *Anthroposophical Movement*. [Vol. II, Nos. 3, 4 and 5.] The first is entitled: ‘What is revealed when we look back into repeated Earth-lives?’; the second and third: ‘What is revealed when we look back into repeated Lives between Death and Re-birth?’ The three belong together. (They are reprinted in a different translation, as numbers XVI to XVIII in the volume *The Michael Mystery*.)

Now in the third of these letters Dr. Steiner speaks of a very early, though not the earliest period of human earthly evolution (late Lemuria, early Atlantis). Man then already existed, it is true, ‘with individuality of being, but he was not yet loosed from the thinking and willing and being of the Divine-spiritual World.’ Now in this period he came especially within the care of the Archangels. He was united still with the Divine-spiritual world, yet not so deeply but that the Luciferic and Ahrimanic influences could now have access to him. The Archangels worked especially into his etheric body, wherein, as we know, by its very nature, the Universe of Stars is somehow reproduced and reflected, even as the forces of the Earth are in the physical. In the etheric body, therefore, celestial differentiations — according to the starry forces working more on one or other region of the Earth — came to expression. But as an outcome of the Luciferic and Ahrimanic powers, these differentiations were driven deeper down than should have been and were thus made more permanent and more material.

“All that the different Hierarchies, from the Seraphim down to the Archangels, had brought about in Man, was driven deeper down into the physical and etheric body than could have happened without the Luciferic and Ahrimanic influence. Without this influence, the working of the Hierarchies would have remained more in the astral body and the Ego. What came about as a result was no longer the more spiritual grouping of mankind over the Earth which the Archangels had intended. Pressed down into the physical, the spiritual forces are transformed into their opposite. Instead of the more spiritual differentiation, that into races and nations came about.

“But for the Luciferic and Ahrimanic influence, men upon Earth would see themselves and one another differentiated by the Heavens above them. The different groups would live and be to one another like beings gladly, willingly, in love, giving to one-another and in turn receiving. In races and nations the heavy weight of Earth is made manifest through man’s body; in this more spiritual grouping there would have been made manifest a picture, a reflected image of the Divine-spiritual World.”

This letter, then, contains the deepest key to our whole subject.

Now we must bear in mind two things. One is, that the ‘remaining behind’ of Beings — and, what is in some way related to this, the intervention of Lucifer and Ahriman — was after all within the wise intention of the Divine evolutionary plan. Therefore, as Dr. Steiner often told, to compensate for this the Divine World sent Christ to Earth to help man rise again. This brings us to the other thing which we must bear in mind. Christ comes to us from the world of our normal evolution — from the realm of pure Light and not of Darkness. Christ is not out of Time; He brings to us the true, the healing life of Time. He is the Light who comes into the Darkness to lead it back again into the Light. Therefore, if it be true that the backward Beings — even the fallen Beings — are ultimately beneficial to our evolution, it is also true on the other hand that the Christ-impulse brings to us once again the full Power of the Beings of our normal evolution, whereby we may transmute all other influences into a good direction. We shall therefore find that for the healing and progress of mankind in the immediate future Dr. Steiner turns, not to those forces which would continue to draw us more deeply into matter, into the physical world, but on the contrary to what would lift us out of the narrow bondage of matter and renew those purely spiritual forces in the formation of mankind which have been lost awhile and must be found again. This applies also to what pertains to the underlying spiritual forces of race, nation, language and the like. Why, for example, did Dr. Steiner emphasize, during and after the War (in contrast to Woodrow Wilsonism) that the insisting on national language-groups as a foundation for re-creating communities was a backward, not a forward step?

In this lecture too, the second of the ‘Folk-Souls’ course, Christ's intimate relation with the Beings of normal evolution is emphasized (page. 21 of our edition): “The Beings who give us language are of great power, for they are properly Spirits of Form. They work upon the Earth because in fact they have remained on Earth, whereas their colleagues (*i.e.* the normal Spirits of Form) work in the ‘I’ — work from the Sun into the cosmic spaces. Before the coming of Christ Jesus men worshipped the Jahve or Jehovah being; thereafter they worshipped the Being of Christ, even as the One who came from universal spaces. As to the Spirits of language we must say, man cherishes precisely that which has remained on Earth. ...”

THIRD LECTURE

At the beginning of this lecture there is a characterization more of the inner life and consciousness of the Archangels, *i.e.* the nation-spirits. It may be helpful once again if we recall what Dr. Steiner gave in his more special lectures on the Hierarchies. In the third lecture of the [*Spiritual Beings*](#) course (Helsingfors, 1912) he gives a fuller description of the ‘inner life’ of the third Hierarchy: Angels, Archangels and Archai. Compared to man, there is a kind of inversion in the relation of inner and outer. For what to man is the perception of the outer world, is to these Beings the revealing of their own nature. They perceive even as they reveal themselves; therefore also they cannot lie. Again, what to man is his own inner life — the brooding as it were in his own thoughts and memories and feelings — is to these Beings the being filled with Inspirations from a higher World, *i.e.* in a sense from outside themselves.

In the present lecture Dr. Steiner introduces us once more to the three members of the human soul (Sentient, Intellectual and Spiritual Soul) and says — though, as it seems to me, without explaining it in detail — that, corresponding to this, Archangels have three members, three modifications, as it were, of their etheric body. He does however now go on to explain

more fully what the lives of human beings — human Egos — mean to the archangels as nation-spirits; how much of the inner life of man is of direct significance to them, within their ken. Man's outer sensations and perceptions of the physical world mean nothing to them, nor do his cravings and passions or his more narrow personal thoughts and pre-occupations. Therefore the sentient soul and the lower part of the intellectual soul-life of men are beyond the Archangels' immediate perception; they only begin to take note of man's inner life where he rises to pure thought and moral feeling — in the spiritual soul and in the higher functions of the intellectual or mind-soul, where in a fuller sense the spiritual being of the Ego finds expression. For this reason too, the mediation of the Angels is necessary between the Archangels and man; the Angels are far nearer to man's personal feelings, his joys and pains. They after all are still engaged in completing their transmutation of astral body into Manas or Spirit-Self, upon which task man too, now in the second half of earthly evolution, is at least beginning. This makes a closer bond between Man and Angel. Yet on the other hand the Angel also reaches up to higher worlds.

To the Archangels the human Egos — those, in particular, belonging to their several nations — are what the outer world of his perceptions is to man. Only the difference is that they perceive this — to them — outer world lighting up, as it were, from within themselves, yet are all the time aware that it is not their own being, but something else, objective to them, committed to their care. And as man feels the differentiation of outer objects — now rough, now smooth; now warm, now cold — so do they feel the difference of human Egos. The active ones with a rich inner life are 'warm' to them; empty, lethargic ones are 'cold'; and so on. So too the Archangel perceives the youth and age, the rise and fall of peoples: the springing life as something that impels Him to 'incarnate' in such a people; the ageing of a people, their lessening of productivity as the occasion for His receding from them, retiring therefore into what for Him would correspond to our life between death and new birth in higher worlds, until the time arrives for Him to seek renewed embodiment in some other people.

In the latter part of the lecture we are told further of the relations of Archai (Time-Spirits), Archangels (nation-souls), Angels (the guardians of individual men on their way from life to life) and mankind. In the normal course the Spirit of the Time will give His behests to the Archangels of the different nations and these in turn will give them to the Angels, who transmit them to the souls of men. This can however be modified by the working-in of the abnormal Spirits or for other reasons. If the abnormal Archai (those who 'intuit' the thoughts of men in the way ascribed to them in the last lecture) intervene more strongly, the intentions of the nation-spirit will be partly cut across; groups will arise within the nation, feeling the urge of special tasks. Many such abnormal Spirits of Personality, says Rudolf Steiner for example, have worked for centuries within the German nation. "In the breaking-up of the one German nation into so many smaller parts and peoples, you see the interplay of the abnormal Spirits of Personality with the Archangel. Nations like this are little centralized — look more to the development of individuality. In some ways this is good, for a variety of shades within the national character can thus come to expression."

But the normal Time-Spirit too many find it necessary to intervene more directly. Then it may happen that from the field of an Archangel — *i.e.* from out of a given nation — a portion is more or less suddenly cut off and in the course of History we see a new and distinct nation arise. Such outer reasons as are alleged are often quite inadequate to account for this. Two deeply interesting examples are given; they have, I think, more often been referred to and are to that extent better known than many other contents of this lecture-cycle. One is the

detachment-of the Dutch from the German people about the beginning of modern time. Holland had a special task to perform, 'for the over-seas mission of the Time-Spirit.' The other is the severance of Portugal from Spain.

In such a case the Time-Spirit Himself creates a nation. After a time a normal and an abnormal Archangel-being will find the opportunity to incarnate in the people thus detached; language and national character become distinct.

At the conclusion of the lecture Dr. Steiner brings in a fresh theme, leading up to the important subject of races. Proceeding in the hierarchical order beyond the Spirits of Form (Exusiai), we come to the Spirits of Movement (Dynamis); beyond these again there are the Spirits of Wisdom (Kyriotetes), highest of the second Hierarchy. Now of the Spirits of Movement also, certain ones resigned their further evolution and from the old Moon-epoch onward remained behind at the stage of Spirits of Form, so that in some respects they are Spirits of Movement whereas in others, with regard to which they made this sacrifice, they are yet only Spirits of Form. These 'abnormal Spirits of Movement,' as Dr. Steiner generally names them, bring about — in their interplay with the normal Spirits of Form — the human races. We must not confuse race and nation. "A nation is not a race. The concept of nation has really nothing to do with that of race. A race may divide into the most varied nations. We rightly speak of a German, a Dutch, and a Norwegian nation, and yet withal of a Germanic race. ..."

We need this background too — the spiritual understanding of the races — so as to know more fully what a nation is. Racial differentiations obviously go more deeply into the physical; therefore too, after the well-known principle, the spiritual source of them takes us far higher up among the Hierarchies.

By virtue of the normal Spirits of Form there would be — and indeed there is — one common Humanity over the whole Earth's round. By virtue of these abnormal Spirits (Spirits of Form or of Movement, whichever we may choose to call them), mankind is differentiated into races. With this thought the third lecture closes.

FOURTH LECTURE

This lecture enters very deeply into the theme we dwelt on in the last chapter but one — namely that through the abnormal Spirits man and the cosmic forces that create him were driven down more deeply into the physical-material world than would otherwise have happened. Moreover it is indicated very clearly that the time has now come when in the further course of evolution — with respect to race especially — we must begin to liberate ourselves again from this dependence on the physical. The lecture is unusually rich in content and is indeed in some respects the key to the entire course.

We have to understand the races of mankind, says Dr. Steiner at the beginning, for it is out of these that the nations and folk-communities arise. Now we recall how mankind is created by the working of all the Hierarchies. And we remember in this connection the seven-year periods of human life. To summarize: —

1. In old Saturn the Thrones created the physical body of Man.

The first seven-year period of our life is devoted mainly to the physical body's development.

2. In old Sun the Spirits of Wisdom created our etheric body.

In the second seven-year period of our life the etheric body — 'born,' as we know, at the age of 7 — is especially developed.

3. In old Moon the Spirits of Movement created our astral body.

The third seven-year period of our life (14–21) is especially the time of development of the astral body.

4. In the present Earth-epoch the Spirits of Form gave birth to the human 'I.'

And it is in the middle period of life (not only seven years this time, but 3 times 7, from about 21 to 42) that the 'I,' in the three soul-members, comes into its own.

We may conclude from this that the main interest of the Spirits of Form — begetters of our inmost 'I' or Ego — centres upon this middle period of human life. The first three septads are really a kind of recapitulation of what was undergone on Saturn, Sun and Moon. Properly speaking therefore, in the first seven years of his life man should again have the consciousness pertaining to the physical body only, that is the old Saturn or trance-consciousness — the degree of consciousness of the mineral kingdom. In the second seven years he should have the sleep-consciousness of a plant-like being; in the third, the dream-like consciousness of old Moon evolution. *Not till the age of 20 or 21 would he awaken to Ego-consciousness.* Thus Dr. Steiner leads us up to this all-important piece of knowledge: the fact that it is otherwise — that man begins to express the consciousness of 'I' long, long before he comes to the 'age of discretion' — is due to the intervention of the abnormal Spirits, and above all to those described at the end of the last lecture, who would have been Spirits of Movement in the normal course but are actually Spirits of Form and as such create the different races.

The lecture-cycles of Rudolf Steiner abound with these communications as to what man — his form, his life, his consciousness and modes of cognition — would have been, but for the 'Fall.' Vastly important as they are for true Self-knowledge, we must of course beware of taking them in a too crude or fragmentary way. We cannot, for example, imagine little children of one to seven in their present form going about in trance-consciousness! In effect, man would not have been down on the physical Earth at all until his 21st year, if things had taken their 'normal' course. In a kind of cosmic embryo-life, in the surrounding spiritual spheres of Earth, he would have spent the first three seven-year periods, recapitulating the Saturn, Sun and Moon creations of his three bodies. Then — at the age of 21, according to our present notions — he would have been born on to the Earth straightway equipped with full and true I-consciousness. That it is not so, is due once more to the 'backward' Spirits.

The knowledge of these occult facts cannot but be of deep significance for all the task of human education in childhood and youth, and it will be of special interest to turn here to the work of one of Dr. Steiner's most mature pupils, who has but lately been taken from us. In a series of articles in the *Korrespondenz der Anthroposophischen Arbeitsgemeinschaft* (Stuttgart) some years ago, Dr. Caroline von Heydebrand worked out this very point, bringing

the [*Folk-Souls*](#) lectures into connection with Rudolf Steiner's educational methods, in which she, with her great love of childhood, had lived so intimately.

To compensate for coming on to Earth too soon, Dr. Steiner goes on to say, man also has to spend the last decades of his life in gradual decline and disintegration so far as his bodily nature is concerned. In effect, his life is roughly divided into three thirds, and it is only in the middle third — 20 to 40, or 21 to 42 — that he belongs in the fullest sense, as to the outwardly given conditions of his existence, to the normal Spirits. He would, had this not been the case, have come on to the Earth at about 20 and have left it again at about 41. Childhood and youth, old age and decline, would have been replaced by more spiritual forms of being.

But the middle period itself — indeed, man's whole existence — has in this way been rendered more material than it would have been. He has been made more earth-bound. This knowledge now will help us understand how races came to be, and also why they are so obstinate a heritage.

We have already seen that starry, planetary forces work on different portions of the Earth's surface, and men are subject to them. This would have been so (see the 1925 letter already quoted) even in the normal course, but the influences would then have been more spiritual; they would not have been permanently branded — driven down, as Dr. Steiner puts it, into the heaviness of Earth.

This was what happened: — In the very distant time already mentioned — latest Lemuria, early Atlantis — when the human form was as yet far more pliable than it is to-day, races began to be formed according to the influences working in different regions of the Earth which men inhabited, or into which they migrated from time to time. The racial types, thus formed originally under cosmic geographical influences, then became fixed and transmitted by heredity. Since the age of puberty, when man grows capable of reproduction, is within the first third of life — the period when the abnormal Spirits, as we saw, are still predominant — we can well understand that racial differentiation, itself the work of the abnormal Spirits, should be hereditary. After the early Atlantean time heredity itself, not the locality of birth, became the dominant factor. Dr. Steiner turns aside to criticise the popular theosophical way of using the word 'race' for all the rounds and epochs. Race, in the proper meaning of the term, was only of significance from Lemuria onward, and its significance grows less again in post-Atlantean time.

Now Dr. Steiner enters more in detail into the cosmic, spiritual geography of the Earth. The Earth, no mere indifferent ball of matter, is in its diverse regions diversely receptive to cosmic influences. Of great importance therefore were the wanderings and habitations of men precisely in that time — during Atlantis — when the great races were formed. Dr. Steiner (page 49 in our edition) draws a line, shaped roughly like a horseshoe opening westward, connecting three or four important points, foci of cosmic influence in the configuration of our planet. These centres, as he indicates, are still existent, though we are no longer subject to them in the same intense degree. The first is in the interior of Africa; there work the forces which influence the human being most of all in early childhood. The race there formed impresses characteristics of early childhood upon the human being for his entire life. It is the black, the Ethiopian or Negro race.

From thence the line goes eastward and bends northward to a second centre in the interior of Asia. Here work the influences which impress the human being with characteristics of later youth or adolescence; broadly speaking, the brown and yellow races of our time are the outcome.

Then the line, going northward still, turns back again in a westerly direction, till as we cross from Asia into Europe a third essential point is reached. Here work the forces forming the human being in his mature or adult life. The European racial type is the outcome.

Still farther West another region is indicated, though not included in the diagram. It is in America, where the forces of old age — the last third of life — work in the forming of the races. The dying-out of the American Indians is due to an inner necessity, not only to their persecution by Europeans. Here Dr. Steiner introduces the great occult truth: *races go westward to die, eastward to seek rejuvenating forces*. Those of the old Atlanteans who became most subject to the dying or ageing forces were the ones who migrated westward, the forefathers of the Red Indians.

We shall return to the actual forming of races in the sixth lecture, where it is gone into in greater detail. Here Dr. Steiner leads us on to another most important aspect. What happened in Lemuria-Atlantis in the creation of races, more in the physical body, was destined to be repeated on a higher level — in the forming of civilizations, coming more into the sphere of man's own activity and freedom in post-Atlantean times. In modern Spiritual Science it is pointed out that as against the seven *races* of Atlantis we should rather speak of seven *civilization-epochs*, not races, in post-Atlantis. Race still lives on for a long time, it is true, but is no longer the dominant and progressive factor.

Now for this new beginning, this renewal on a higher level, it was first necessary for a fresh migration eastward to take place. Such in effect was the rejuvenation of mankind after Atlantis, when Manu led his chosen people far away eastward into central Asia, to found the post-Atlantean epochs. Then — in a sequence of *civilizations* this time — the westward evolution was repeated: first India, then Persia, then Egypt and Chaldea, Greece and Rome, the present European epoch — ever westward. And with the westward course two things go hand in hand: the gradual ageing of civilizations, the lessening of childlike, youthful productivity on the one hand (witness the contrast of ancient Greece and the more westward Rome); and on the other hand the narrowing of geographical area to smaller and smaller lands (Europe the smallest of the Continents!) until at last the most essential Western civilizations are founded on tiny peninsulas or even islands. Characteristic of Asia is the expansion of mankind over immense stretches of country. The westward journey is an ageing and a shrinking process.

Of ancient India — first of the post-Atlantean epochs — Dr. Steiner says that by coming again into the region where the humanity-creating forces had begun to work in old Lemurian time, they experienced a kind of childlikeness, a renewal of fresh youthful forces, though now more on the level of the soul.

The Persians felt — corresponding to a rather later time in life, the transition from youth to maturity — the interplay and contrast of the abnormal and the normal Spirits. This also led them to their dominant conception: the polarity of Light and Darkness, Ormuzd and Ahriman.

The European civilization, formed in that region of the Earth where the forces of maturity (time of the normal Spirits of Form) are mainly working, is thereby destined to lead on towards a certain liberation from the bonds of race. At the same time, the farther westward we go, the more we come into the realms of old age and death. Dr. Steiner warns his hearers once again: these truths can only be received in an objective spirit. He here brings in an illustration (page 53) which throws a flood of light on many things. Western humanity — precisely because it lives in the realm of ageing, rather hardening forces — has an inherent longing to receive something from the East. What it receives from the East, works with renewing, kindling and rejuvenating power. The individual soul, needless to say, is neither East, Middle nor West, but if you live in a western body you carry deep in your soul an *inner* longing for the East. [See also Rudolf Steiner's *Lectures to Teachers* in the chapter "After the Fourteenth Year."] Now Dr. Steiner indicates how in the Theosophical Movement in its earlier phases, when it was largely English and American, spiritual substance was received from the East (through Mme. Blavatsky, herself an Eastern person — a teaching mainly Indian or at least Oriental in character). When on the other hand — through Rudolf Steiner himself, as we know — the same spiritual movement grew to significance more in the heart of Europe, *i.e.* between the East and West, it had to find its resources more within itself, within the soul- and spiritual life of these, mid-European regions. Read Rudolf Steiner's own [Theosophy](#) with this in view, written as it is quite in the spirit and manner of the great German thinkers and mystics. Contrast it with the best English expositions of Theosophy before his time. [It seems to me a pity that Dr. Steiner's occasional references to 'Theosophy' or 'the Theosophical Movement' in these lectures should have been rendered in translation 'Anthroposophy,' etc. The lectures were given in 1910 and Dr. Steiner spoke the words he spoke. In the original (issued as late as 1922) they have not been altered.]

The West looks eastward; the man of middle regions has to draw — to begin with, at any rate — out of the deep resources of his own soul-life. The one is as natural and right as the other is, nor does the one exclude the other; for, as the spiritual movement of the Michael-time is on its way and we ourselves upon this way, as individuals we become all-human — with many diverse leanings, each as his destiny may guide him. Therefore for Western people not only the mid-European, deeply delving, philosophic way — from which indeed we learn so much — is right, but also the receiving from the East. I have noticed this, to my joy, when Eastern lecturers have been among us.

Touching upon this fundamental theme, the ageing forces of the West and the rejuvenating of the East, we may be allowed to turn to the middle verse of our [The Foundation Stone Meditation](#). In the human body the ageing forces are represented more by the nerves and bony system, and in a word by all that tends towards clear-cut and lasting form. The ever-youthful forces, on the other hand, are represented by the blood with all its warmth and fire. The same polarity may therefore be expressed in more poetic language as that of *Form and Fire*. The concepts Form and Fire are in fact applied to West and East in the middle verse of the meditation, which culminates in the saying: *In Christo morimur*.

"Spirits of Light!
May there be kindled from the East
The flame that is moulded by the West,
Saying:
In Christ, Death becomes Life!"

That which is fired from the East is formed or moulded by the West. "Lasset vom Osten *befeuern* was durch den Westen sich *formet*" are the corresponding words in the original.

In Christo morimur is then the real answer of the Spirit to this occult truth which may seem tragic to us: that as the races and civilizations go westward they come into the realm of hardening and dying forces. Moreover this answer lives in the rhythmic realm of life where the true intercourse of soul as between East and West is brought about in humanity by the Christ-impulse.

Dr. Steiner brings the fourth lecture to a beautiful ending with the example of Plato — an individual man “who grew up in the lineage of Solon, belonged to the Ionian tribe, to the Greek nation and to the whole Caucasian race.” How had the different Hierarchies, the normal and abnormal Spirits from the Dynamis down to the Angels and Archangels to work together to achieve this!

FIFTH LECTURE

This lecture is a kind of inclusion in the whole course, since it tells more of the great forces of Nature — of how the Earth within the Universe is formed by all the Hierarchies together — than in much detail of the folk-souls, Time-spirits and so on. It is of course a preparation for what follows. It happens to be, of all Dr. Steiner's lectures, one of the most dear to the present writer. For in my special line of work, in my attempted contributions to the new Natural Science which is arising on the ground of Spiritual Science, this was among the lectures that most helped and guided me. And it will help all those who look for clear and fundamental understanding of Anthroposophy in its more cosmic aspects.

Dr. Steiner begins once more, after what was said in the last lecture, with the reminder that what is here being told about the peoples, races and so on can only rightly be received in the mood of Spiritual Science. A counter-balancing force as against any narrower feelings or prejudices that might arise lies in the basic teachings of Karma and Reincarnation. “We may be sure that in our inmost being we do receive in turn and in due course the bounties of all races and all peoples, being incarnated now here, now there. ...”

Proceeding now to the main subject of this lecture, Dr. Steiner enumerates the spiritual Hierarchies. Beyond the Angels, Archangels and Archai, we have in their due order: the second Hierarchy:

Spirits of Form — Powers (Exusiai),
Spirits of Movement — Might (Dynamis),
Spirits of Wisdom — Dominions (Kyriotetes);

and then the first or highest Hierarchy:

Spirits of Will — Thrones,
Cherubim,
Seraphim.

In this enumeration the highest Spirits have of course been written last. Indeed it happens that as he comes to them last in order, having already spoken much about the lower ranks of Beings: Angels, Archangels and Archai, in preceding lectures, Dr. Steiner in this lecture calls the highest Hierarchy (Thrones, Cherubim and Seraphim) ‘the third’; the Angels, Archangels and Archai on the other hand ‘the first.’ This may be a source of difficulty if we do not notice it at once, since Dr. Steiner almost invariably in later years named the highest Hierarchy ‘the

first,' the lowest of the three 'the third.' We are therefore accustomed to this latter, in any case more natural way of speaking, and I shall retain it here, though I be thereby at variance with the actual text of this lecture.

How do these higher Beings work in the outer world? Where, in the realm of Maya or illusion, is their working manifested? In answer Dr. Steiner speaks, to begin with, of the apparently solid, material surface of the Earth — the granite rocks of Norway for example. This is the outer Maya. The underlying reality is that two kinds of spiritual forces are at work and are meeting here. From below, from within the Earth, are spiritual forces raying outward. These are the forces of the Thrones — 'Spirits of Will.' Forces of spiritual Will, we may truly call them. The other kind are inward raying, in-streaming forces from the Universe. These latter forces proceed from the Dynamis, Spirits of Movement (*i.e.* from out of the second Hierarchy). Now where the forces of the second Hierarchy, coming inward from the Universe, meet with the forces of the first Hierarchy raying outward from within the Earth, there arises the apparent surface of the material Earth upon which we tread. This indeed is the reality underlying the outer Maya.

But now not only the Thrones and the Spirits of Movement are involved. For in the first place the surface of the Earth is not in constant movement. It would be so if the Spirits of Movement alone were encountering the Thrones, and so it was to some extent in pristine ages, when the Earth-planet was still in a fluctuating, semi-fluid state. Dr. Steiner illustrates it by referring to the Alps — geologically speaking, a comparatively young formation, far younger for example than the less lofty eminences of the Bohemian plateau. These Alpine mountains are like waves dammed up, breaking against a shore, and then solidified.

It was the Spirits of Form — 'dancing upon the waves,' as Dr. Steiner puts it — who brought the ever-moving forms to rest. Hence they deserve their name, as the creators of more lasting form. They too, like the Spirits of Movement, work primarily inward from the cosmic sphere, yet they unfold their forces in both realms — that of the Thrones as well as that of the Spirits of Movement. Where these two realms of forces meet, the Spirits of Form, since a certain period of Earth-evolution, have brought the ever-moving forms to rest.

Behind the Spirits of Form and those of Movement, also the Spirits of Wisdom — third and highest rank among the second Hierarchy — are working in from the surrounding Cosmos. Likewise the Thrones, as they work upward from below, are in their turn assisted by the Cherubim and Seraphim. Now Dr. Steiner characterizes more precisely the physical and ethereal elements in which these different Beings work. Namely, to summarize: —

the Thrones work in the Water-element (though by this 'Water' we should understand rather the primal, semi-fluid magma of the planet as a whole than the very liquid, mobile water we see about us on the surface of the Earth to-day);

the Cherubim work in the Air-element;

the Seraphim in Fire.

These are the more material, physical elements — 'Fire' or warmth being at the borderline between the material and immaterial. The Beings of the second Hierarchy on the other hand work in the more ethereal, imponderable elements — in the three Ethers. To summarize once more: —

the Spirits of Form work in the Light-ether;

the Spirits of Movement in the Sound-ether (or chemical ether — the Pythagorean ‘music of the spheres’ — formative sound of the great Universe);

the Spirits of Wisdom in the Life-ether — or, as Dr. Steiner here describes it, “the Life of the universal Ether, raying in on to the Earth. For Life is pouring in on to the Earth from cosmic spaces and is received by living creatures here. It comes from the Spirits of Wisdom.”

It is in the Sun that, to begin with, these threefold forces of the second Hierarchy — “in-pouring Life, weaving Sound, formative Light” — are concentrated for our spiritual vision. Yet they are working in reality from the whole sphere of the celestial Universe, while from beneath — forth from the centre of the Earth — come the out-pouring forces of the first Hierarchy: Thrones, Cherubim and Seraphim. We must imagine the ‘surface of the Earth,’ the meeting-place of the two sets of forces, to be not only on the watery and solid Earth beneath our feet but also in the outer regions of the atmosphere — there where the air- and warmth- or fire-mantle of the Earth, wherein the Cherubim and Seraphim are working, meet the surrounding cosmic spheres of light and spiritual sound and life.

Finally, when the manifold surface of the Earth has been thus brought about by this great cosmic encounter of the two highest Hierarchies, the third — Angels, Archangels and Principalities or Archai — work in the intermediate realm thus engendered: the horizon in effect, the meeting ground of forces from the heights and depths, which is the scene of human life, civilization-epochs, nations, destinies of men. In the first Hierarchy, says Dr. Steiner, summing up, “we therefore have those forces of Nature which we must call the strongest — the Nature-forces of the deep, belonging to the fastnesses of Earth beneath us. In the second Hierarchy we have the cosmic forces which live and weave around us and about us, in the ethereal element.” And in the third, in that we call the Angels, Archangels and Archai, we have “what works more intimately into human souls, ... what lives and moves more gently throughout our own being.”

The whole of the lecture down to here is a remarkable expansion of what the reader will find again condensed into the [*Leading Thoughts \(No. XXIV, page 64, in our edition\)*](#). The third Hierarchy, says Dr. Steiner there, “lives and moves in all that man experiences in the soul, in his inner life.” The second “works in the etheric ... does not reveal itself directly in the physical; its power extends only to etheric processes.” Lastly, “the first and strongest Hierarchy reveals itself to be the spiritually active principle within the physical. ...”

The lecture now leads on to another, again a most beautiful aspect. The spiritual Beings worked already in ancient Saturn, Sun and Moon, and in a specific way in each of these planetary epochs. Each of the epochs had its special mission. Man now consists, as to his outer sheaths or vehicles, of the physical, etheric and astral bodies; as to his inner life, of the powers of Thinking, Feeling and Willing. He owes his physical body and his life of Will to Saturn; his ether-body and his Feeling-life to Sun; his astral body and his life of Thought to Moon. This saying must however be understood in a deeper way. The physical body is nothing else than Will — Will that is seen from without. The very stuff of it is Will, created as it was, we shall remember, by the Thrones, who are the Spirits of Will. The Saturn universe was necessary to achieve “that skilful interweaving of outer Will — namely our physical body — and of inner Will” which is thus given to us. Moreover the old Saturn element works on whenever we express ourselves in Will, to this day. Likewise old Sun, Spirits of Wisdom

being then the chief creators, was necessary to endow us outwardly with the ether-body and inwardly with Feeling — “the inner element of Wisdom,” as Dr. Steiner calls it here. And a third universe, the old Moon had to be, for our endowment with the astral body and the inner life of Thought.

Such were the missions of the three former cosmic epochs. What then of the mission of the fourth, the Earth? It is to bring about the harmony of the three from within! Our inmost, individual being — our ‘I’ or Ego, given to us by the Spirits of Form in Earth-evolution — voices itself in the three modes of thinking, feeling and willing. To create harmony between these three out of the very core and centre of our being: this is the mission of the ‘I’ and therewith of all Earth-evolution. The harmony we thus achieve from within is no mere adjustment; it is creation. A fourth is added to the three. It is the element of Love. To make the Three into the Four is therefore an occult formula for the Earth's secret. Rudolf Steiner here brings in the geometrical symbol of the equilateral triangle with its centre.

The inmost being of Man “becomes the substance of Love.” That Love should be thus described as the outcome of balance or harmony between the Three, will give us deeply to think; it will shed light above all on ever so much that has been given to us for the esoteric path.

The Spirits of Form — creators of the ‘I’ of Man — may therefore also rightly be named, Spirits of Love. We may here mention in passing: there are two other Hierarchies to whom at one time or another Rudolf Steiner has assigned this latter name. One are the Seraphim, the highest; the other is the hierarchy of Man himself, when he achieves what is predestined for him.

The end of the lecture takes a sudden turn, to speak of Maya or illusion not only on the physical plane but on higher planes also, reached by clairvoyant experience. The warning here expressed is, I am sure, of very actual importance with regard to what is happening in the world in our own time, and every word must be weighed so as to read it with the right inner balance, with all the background of what has gone before to help us. Rudolf Steiner speaks of a very network, or web and woof of Love, that is being woven through and through Earth-evolution. The normal Spirits of Form spin the main threads. The abnormal Spirits then weave in what makes the different races. The Time-Spirits and Archangels both normal and abnormal, the Angels too, weave in their several contributions; “so is the mighty tapestry of Love being woven.” Yet of this only the Maya, only the outer reflection is visible on Earth. To see the spiritual Beings we must raise our consciousness to higher planes. The next higher is the Astral; then come the planes of lower and higher ‘Devachan.’ Upon the astral plane the Beings normally working from the depths — Seraphim, Cherubim and Thrones — are not yet visible. Yet there is one rank of Beings who are there visible, who indeed — especially for those who rise into clairvoyant vision by irregular or mistaken methods — make their appearance with their attendant spirits even before the Angels, etc., who should normally appear on the astral plane. They are the abnormal Spirits of Movement working as Spirits of Form, to whom the races are due. Whereas the second Hierarchy in the normal course work inward from the celestial spheres, not outward from within the Earth, these Beings — belonging as they do, in a certain sense, to the necessary sphere of Darkness — have transposed their sphere. They work now in the nether sphere, from within the Earth. And, being quickly visible on the astral plane, they have an immense power of attraction for all that in man which is earth-bound, which belongs to the propagation of race and the like. “Many a one who has entered into the occult realm prematurely or in wrong ways has had to pay for it

dearly by his encounter with this throng of spiritual Beings, without the harmonizing presence of the other Beings.”

This is the end of the lecture. While speaking of the retinue, the attendant spirits of these Beings, Dr. Steiner mentions in passing who are the attendant Nature-spirits of the normal Beings of the first Hierarchy. They are:

for the Thrones, the Undines;
for the Cherubim, the Sylphs;
for the Seraphim, the Salamanders (Fire-spirits).

Somehow the reader will feel that the abnormal Spirits of Movement are spoken of in a very different aspect here from what they were before. In a former lecture we were told we must be thankful for their sacrifice, for that they remained behind; here they are said to appear “like a kind of ugly spiritual Beings on the astral plane”; moreover, for the first time in this lecture-course the epithet ‘fallen’ is applied to them. In bringing these two aspects together we may get some conception of how deep a subject Occultism is, and how the understanding of it calls for reticence and inner silence. The Spirit takes its leave of trivial, ready-made formulations thrown about in the surface-mind.

We may note that in the one place Dr. Steiner was speaking of what these Beings are in their own essence, in their eternal, cosmic destination. Here on the other hand he is describing what appears of them — also a kind of Maya — in the astral world. At this point it will help us to recall a very fundamental passage in the [Spiritual Hierarchies](#) lectures of 1909 (Cycle VII). What I refer to occupies almost the whole of the [last lecture in this cycle](#); two or three pages about the Spirits of Movement in old Moon evolution at the end of the fifth lecture may be referred to if the last lecture does not explain itself. It is here that Dr. Steiner speaks of future humanity as of the tenth Hierarchy, Beings of spiritual Freedom, Spirits of Love. This too is one of the memorable passages where he explains, as he did from so many points of view at different times, the picture of St. Michael and the Dragon.

Dr. Steiner tells in effect how in old Moon evolution those of the Spirits of Movement who, so to speak, took the lower path, could do no other. They acted in obedience to the Divine behest. For the Divine, plan needed a stronger force of resistance — a bigger load, as it were, for Gods and men to pull. “These Spirits of Movement (Dynamis, Might) did not in the first place become evil; we need not think of them as evil powers, nay we are even justified in saying that they made a sacrifice in putting hindrances in the way of evolution. ... Once more: they were not evil in themselves; on the contrary, by dint of opposition they were great benefactors of evolution. And yet again they were begetters of evil, for through their opposition evil by and by came about.” Then we are told of how some of the Angels — *i.e.* the human beings, in a sense, of old Moon evolution — of their own free choice followed these Spirits of Movement on to the lower way; and how these Angels in their turn, known as the ‘Luciferic’ Angels, influenced man in his astral body during the early periods of Earth-evolution. Evil, says Dr. Steiner at this place, that is deliberate opposition to the Gods, could not begin among the Hierarchies at any higher level than the Angels, who were at their human stage in old Moon evolution when the ‘war in Heaven’ first began. Evil appears among the children of men, and at the very earliest among the Angels who are next above man.

It is most helpful, I think, to recall this passage, because precisely the fallen Spirits of Movement play so great a part in the [Folk-Souls](#) lectures. How much, indeed, of present

conflicts in our spiritual history takes place upon this level, where man must find his way between the normal Spirits of Form — those who would give man freedom; who work purely in the 'I'; who are to us one aspect of the Being of Christ Himself — and the abnormal, the determiners of race and racial heredity: forces that bind us and divide, yet also not to be cast away without respect!

SIXTH LECTURE

Referring again to the last lecture, Dr. Steiner points out how very deep and intricate the truths of cosmic evolution are, so that we cannot rest content with isolated aspects; we must put together what is contained in the different lecture-cycles to obtain a fuller picture. Here he himself refers to the [Spiritual Hierarchies](#) lectures of the year before. The first Hierarchy — Thrones, Cherubim and Seraphim — had there been spoken of *as* working inward from the Universe towards the centre of the Earth, whilst here their forces are described as raying outward from the Earth. Both aspects are true, says Dr. Steiner. Primarily, these Beings work inward from the Universe, but their activity is then reflected, so that it works outward again from the depths, from the Earth's centre. It is the latter aspect we become aware of most directly when considering, as in this lecture-cycle, the mission of the Earth.

In the opening verse of our ['Foundation Stone'](#) the first Hierarchy ('Spirits of Strength,' that is the Seraphim, Cherubim and Thrones) are thus addressed: "May there ring forth from the Heights the call that is re-echoed in the Depths." Such then is their activity.

Now in this lecture the creation of human races by the abnormal and normal Spirits of Form — touched on already in lecture four — is gone into in greater detail. First, Dr. Steiner reminds us of how the normal Spirits of Form, the Elohim of the Old Testament, by virtue of whom all humanity are one, are in their number seven. Six of them work from the Sun; in the Sun's light we have the outward garb of their activity. The seventh, Jahveh or Jehovah, took up His abode on the present Moon; He it was who by His power severed the Moon out of the body of the Earth, as described in [Occult Science](#). It was indeed, says Dr. Steiner, to counteract the potent forces of the backward Spirits of Movement that Jahveh had to detach Himself from His six colleagues and go with the Moon instead of with the Sun.

Now by co-operation — or by polarity and antithesis — between the normal Spirits of Form, including Jahveh, and the abnormal (Spirits of Movement working as Spirits of Form), the different races of mankind are brought about. Moreover, even as the normal Elohim and Jahveh work from Sun and Moon, so do the abnormal Spirits work from the five planets: Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn. Their forces ray down from these planets to the Earth; thence reflected, in their reflection from the Earth-centre they bring about the five fundamental races of mankind. It was already indicated in the last lecture (pp. 71, 72) that the forces of these abnormal Spirits have been transplanted, so that they work upon us from beneath, from within the Earth — no longer directly from the surrounding cosmic sphere as is the case with the normal Being of this Hierarchy.

Five special centres are there on the Earth's surface, where these reflected planetary forces severally become concentrated, modifying the formative powers of the normal Spirits of Form. They are the centres, three or four of which were mentioned in connection with the diagram in the fourth lecture.

In the interior of Africa is the point where the abnormal Spirits belonging to the planet Mercury concentrate their forces. The outcome of them is the Negro or Ethiopian race. Eastward, in Asia, is the formative centre for the Venus-forces, the Malayan race — the type we find in Southern Asia and the Malayan archipelago. Northward from thence — more in the great expanse of Asia — the Mongolian race is formed by the Mars forces. In Europe then, we come to the Jupiter humanity, the Caucasian race. Finally, in America, dark Saturn's race: the Red Indians.

The forming of the races in these regions of the Earth mainly took place, however, during a certain period of time — in Atlantis. It was the time when the planetary Oracles were flourishing as described in [*Occult Science*](#) — and in connection with them all, the Christ- or Sun-Oracle. The several Oracles, Dr. Steiner now tells us, seeking the right moment and constellation between the planet in question and the Sun and Moon, guided the peoples to and from the centres where these cosmic forces worked. Thus were the races of mankind formed out of spiritual wisdom. It was indeed, on a grand scale, a piece of practical astrology and spiritual geography at the same time. We shall remember, this was the time when the souls of men, the great majority of whom could not have suffered the conditions on the Earth between the severance of Sun and Moon, came down again on to the Earth from the several planets where they had lived during this interval.

It is made evident that this, perhaps the greatest colonizing deed in the whole history of mankind, was guided after all from one great centre in Atlantis, where the true Spirits of Form — those who prevailed in the Christ Oracle — were the inspirers. Thus were the workings of the abnormal planetary Spirits wisely guided, brought under control.

To understand the forming of the races we have however not only the macrocosmic and terrestrial, planetary and geographical, but above all the human microcosmic aspect to consider. Therefore the different members or organic systems in the human body are now named, wherein these planetary, race-creating forces found expression. The planetary forces work neither in the physical body pure and simple, nor in the higher vehicles, but in the reflection or impress of these latter in the physical. We recall this from the elementary 'human science' of Anthroposophy: —

the Ego finds its impress in the blood,
the astral body in the nervous system,
the etheric body in the glandular system.

This would give only three possibilities, but inasmuch as each of these can work in either of two ways, which will now be described, the number is doubled; six racial types are accounted for. We have in fact, in enumerating five races, omitted one important type — the Semitic.

Briefly to sum up what Dr. Steiner indicates: — we begin with the Ego and its expression in the blood. Here work the forces of the planet Mars — in one or other of two ways. Where the abnormal Spirits of Movement belonging to Mars work in a kind of agreement with the normal Sun and Moon beings and under the control especially of Jahveh, the Semitic race — the chosen of Jehovah — is the outcome. Where on the other hand they work in polarity or opposition to the Sun- and Moon-forces, the yellow or Mongolian race is produced, whose relation to the Mars forces was already mentioned.

Mars therefore, unlike the four remaining planets, accounts for two distinct racial types. Dr. Steiner refers to the Mongolian and Semitic races as one of the deepest and most important polarities in the whole structure of mankind.

We may here call to mind that Mars of all the planets has an unique relation to the Earth in its past history. Long, long ago in more ethereal conditions, the Earth passed through the planet Mars and became thoroughly impregnated with the Martian metal iron, the metal which we also find in our own blood. How much this iron means for the Ego working in the blood will be remembered, for example, from Dr. Steiner's [Michaelmas lecture](#) in the *Seasons and Archangels* course (October 1923), ending with the meditation upon this metal.

That the Elohim, and among them Jahveh the Moon spirit, should be so much concerned with the Mars-beings, is intelligible. For the Mars-sphere itself is in a way a cosmic relic of old Moon evolution, even as Jupiter is of the old Sun and Saturn of old Saturn.

We come now to those races which are especially due to the planetary forces working in the nervous system, physical impress of the astral body. The planets here concerned are two: Venus and Jupiter.

The nervous system, says Dr. Steiner, can be worked upon in either of two ways: via the breathing or the senses. The former way will rather work into the sympathetic system (solar plexus), the latter more into the 'higher' nervous centres — into the brain. In the former way the Venus forces work, producing the Malayan racial type; in the latter, the Jupiter forces, producing the Caucasian race — the European type of humanity.

In later years Dr. Steiner often spoke of how the life of the senses — all the senses, not only the eye — is a kind of refined breathing; a breathing in the light, or Light-ether. This is of course deeply, organically connected with our more palpable breathing — our breathing in and out of the air-element. The latter, coarser kind of breathing works down into the formation of the body as a whole; the finer breathing on the other hand — the breathing-in-the-light — works up into the cognitive life of the senses and of thought, into the head-nature.

Two types of spiritual or occult development are connected with this. The one is the Eastern, Yoga method in which rhythmic breathing exercises play so great a part. The other is the more Western, Rosicrucian method which relies largely on an awakened interest in the surrounding world: *the spiritualization of the life of the senses*. Long afterwards, in his important Michael-lectures of autumn 1919, Dr. Steiner actually referred to this latter method as a kind of 'Yoga in the Light.' All that he says in this connection will greatly help us understand the entire method of Anthroposophy, not only in meditation proper, but in the forming of daily life and in all manner of æsthetic and scientific, cultural pursuits along which we are guided in this modern way of knowledge.

Once more then we are initiated into an important secret of practical Occultism, which will have its part to play in the intelligent guidance of mankind in the future as in the past. "These two centres," says Dr. Steiner, referring evidently once again to the geographical centres, "were always there in human evolution: the one presided over, as it were, more by the Spirits of Venus, the other by those of Jupiter." And of the Western or Jupiter-centre, namely the one from which the Caucasian race took its origin, he tells us: it was here that the great spiritual conference took place, a few centuries after Christ, between the three Initiates, Zarathustra, Buddha and Skythianos, under the leadership of a still greater one, which led to

the founding of the Rose-Cross Mysteries, the esoteric guidance of European humanity for a long time to come. This is a reference to what he had already spoken of in an earlier lecture-cycle, in Munich the previous summer — the founding of the Rose-Cross Mysteries under the inspiration of Mani. [[The East in the Light of the West](#), concluding lecture. See also *The Mysteries of the Rose-Cross* by the present author, in *Anthroposophy Quarterly*, Vol. III (1928), No. 1.]

Mention is also made of the ancient Greeks, originators of our European culture. For a deep reason they made Zeus or Jupiter their God. They also were a people who sought to beautify and idealize the outer life of the senses.

Another most illuminating point is this. Inasmuch as there are many senses — twelve, as we now know — the Caucasian or Jupiter race is pre-disposed to find expression in a great variety of peoples, according as the cosmic forces, working in one or other of the senses, become predominant. We are thus led to understand why in the history of Europe manifold independent nations play so great a part. ‘Nation,’ once more, is something altogether different from ‘race.’ Indeed, in another lecture Dr. Steiner indicates that the development of nations — by intermingling as well as differentiation of races — is among the factors by means of which in course of time the racial principle itself is overcome.

Two of the five planets still remain — Mercury and Saturn. Both of these, though in profoundly different ways, work in the glandular system, in which the ether-body finds expression. The glandular system is connected on the one hand with all that is liquid and pliable — above all, with the growth-forces of the body; therefore it is in some ways predominant in childhood. This is the aspect with which the planet Mercury has to do. Yet on the other hand the potent forming forces — by the very vigour with which they work — will in the course of time as it were outdo themselves and bring about a general hardening of the body. This is the Saturn aspect, wherein all things are brought to a certain finish and thereby to the point of death. Dr. Steiner says that in this type of humanity “the Saturn influence works via all the other systems into the glandular system. This then secretes the hardest parts of man.” There comes about that boniness of feature with which we are familiar in the far Western race.

The secret of Saturn — planet of death in popular tradition — is not so easily fathomed. In [Occult Physiology](#), lectures given in Prague a year later, Dr. Steiner goes into it more fully. Saturn, in spite of Uranus and Neptune still in a certain sense the outermost planetary sphere in the essential organism of our Solar System — Saturn with its orbit in a way encloses and completes this system, draws as it were a ring around it and makes it self-contained. Now what is closed within itself is to that extent cut off from the greater Universe and *ipso facto* doomed to ultimate extinction. Saturn makes whole, yet thereby sows the seed of death. A like function is fulfilled by the Saturn forces in the microcosm of the human body. The different systems — the planetary forces in this microcosm — are by Saturn rounded off and fitted into one another so completely that the body is cut off from universal life; hardens, and dies. (Needless to say we also owe to this forces of consciousness and of self-finding.) This then is Saturn's work and finds its ultimate expression via all the other systems in the glands; for in the glands with their mysterious chemistry we have a physical expression of the most potent forming forces of the Universe.

So then it comes about that the most childlike and the most aged racial types — the Negro and Red Indian — are both of them, though in such different ways, the result of planetary forces working into the glandular system.

The lecture ends with a dialogue which Rudolf Steiner was fond of quoting, between a Red Indian chieftain and a European colonist. He indicates that in their worship of 'the great Spirit' the Red Indians treasured a memory of a time in Atlantis almost before the separation of races, when — though he might not see the outer Sun, Atlantis being bathed in mist — man was clairvoyantly aware of the great harmony of normal Spirits, the seven Spirits of Form in their unison.

SEVENTH LECTURE

With this lecture Dr. Steiner leads us all at once into the very heart of the spiritual history of Europe and of our own time — the fifth post-Atlantean epoch or what led up to this in the preceding ages. What he here tells of the different nation-souls, Time-Spirits and other Beings — of their advancements, their resignations and so on — is not a little intricate. In one way we may feel this natural, for he is dealing with times and places in the midst of which we are — which we must therefore see in greater detail. Moreover with the growing individualization and Ego-development of mankind between the fourth and fifth civilization-epochs, there cannot but be many differentiations. Manifold streams of spiritual impulse will be running side by side, now merging, now dividing, as a great river-bed may do in fertile plains; now again steeped in the common atmosphere of a more lasting impulse.

Even in the original report, often the student will desire to re-read a single sentence, an all-important phrase, revising first impressions, trying to 'get' the exact shade of meaning. That Dr. Steiner, as he himself says, was speaking carefully, even refraining from putting certain things more explicitly, this too affects the style. Goodwill was necessary for an unbiased hearing then; active goodwill for an enlightened reading now. ...

The difficulties, I need hardly say, are not lessened for those readers who depend on a translation. The English version of this course is, as translations go, a careful and conscientious piece of work for which we must be very thankful. I imagine it to have been most difficult in this particular lecture. Where, so to speak, a knot is left untied, the translator can hardly help either tightening it, or, in translation, changing the thoughtful balanced openness of the original into something vague if not confused, which leaves the reader 'neither here nor there.' In this dilemma — the more so as from German into English he is translating westward and in the West we do not like unfinished forms — he will often choose the first alternative, tighten the knot and make the sense more binding, maybe in a way it was not meant to be.

The same applies when one is trying to summarize or to bring out the salient points. Let me now say at once that I shall do this boldly, for I prefer to help the reader towards some definite understanding, which he himself will then correct or amplify from the full text, rather than leave him under the impression that it is all too difficult for a clear mental grasp. This means however that more than ever before we shall rely on the summary being used as an aid, not as a substitute for study. It may well be that other more competent students will not quite agree with my interpretation or emphasis.

The Spiritual Beings, Dr. Steiner says at the beginning of the lecture, rise in their evolution to higher ranks among the Hierarchies. This also happens — indeed, as he has said elsewhere, it happens quite essentially — about the middle of a cosmic epoch. It is in the middle of the cosmic epochs (Saturn, Sun, Moon, etc.) rather than in the intervening 'pralaya'

that the spiritual Beings advance from stage to stage, though the advancement may not be fully in evidence till the next epoch is drawing near.

So then it comes about that in our own, post-Atlantean times one after another of the Archangels has advanced and they are still advancing to the rank of Time-Spirits or Archai. Indeed it seems, from Dr. Steiner's words, that the ruling Spirits of the Age in the successive culture-epochs are generally thus promoted from among the Archangeloi. Even more striking is the communication that in some instances these Beings, at the close of an epoch, in some respects rise to be Spirits of Form. They become at least 'candidates' for this, or Spirits of Form in the initial stages. This is not made as a general statement; yet several instances are given, of which presently.

It may help us understand this surprising quickness if we remember that with the coming of the Christ-Impulse human earthly life itself becomes a creative power in the Universe. We may recall Rudolf Steiner's explanation of this passage from the Gospel: 'For He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.' In Greek, the word 'authority' is *Exousia*; that is the name of a Hierarchy — Power, or 'Spirit of Form.' Now all that is received into the stream of Christ will presently partake in this elemental power. Therefore the Beings who at first work only in the soul and spirit of mankind — the guides of nations, the fashioners of earthly Times and historic cultures — begin to be the Formers of a future World. That which is done out of the 'Spirit of Personality' becomes world-creative. ('Spirit of Form' is the lowest among the hierarchical ranks to which the attribute 'creative' in the cosmic sense applies. Time-Spirits rising to be World-creators means then that in a certain sense they do attain this rank. [The greatest light is thrown on this in a lecture Dr. Steiner gave on the 20th December, 1918, 'The New Revelation of the Spirit.' It is contained in the lecture-cycle entitled: *The Fundamental Social Demand of our Age* (Cycle LII).])

This remarkable advancement of Archangeloi, says Dr. Steiner, has especially to do with all that happened in late Atlantis and in the early transition to post-Atlantean time, leading on from the old principle of race to that of nation and culture-epoch. The distribution of races, described in the last lecture, took place in very early Atlantean time. In late Atlantis and for some time after, there was a second great migration; it was the one guided by Manu when he took his little band far eastward into central Asia. For this was only the main focus of a far wider, deeply guided movement. The nuclei of future peoples were left behind at different points of Asia, Africa and Europe. Archangels became their guiding Spirits, so that this second movement in the wise colonizing of the Earth had in a way especially to do with the Archangel hierarchy. Now some of these Archangels were nearer than others to the next higher rank in evolution. This also has to do with the naming of the culture-epochs. The epochs, broadly speaking, bear the names of those peoples whose Archangels became the leading Time-Spirits.

First among these was the ancient Indian Archangel. He became the Archai, the Time-Spirit of the first post-Atlantean epoch. Risen thereafter to some extent into the rank of a Spirit of Form, "having fulfilled His mission He was promoted," says Dr. Steiner, "to lead the entire evolution of post-Atlantean humanity."

In the second epoch the Persian Archangel became the Time-Spirit from whom the original Zarathustra received his inspirations.

In the Egypto-Chaldean time, it was the Archangel of the Egyptian people who became the ruling Time-Spirit. Both of the last-named Spirits, the Persian and the Egyptian, then evolved to some extent into the order of Spirits of Form — Spirits of Form in their inception.

Side by side with the Egyptian Time-Spirit (and the Chaldean Archangel) there was however also another leading Spirit in the third post-Atlantean epoch. Jehovah derived His chosen people, the children of Israel, from the Semitic race. The unique connection of this race with Jehovah was mentioned in its more cosmic aspect in the preceding lecture. To guide this chosen people — as it were, Jehovah's viceroy — there was a kind of Archangel who in a very direct and constant way received His inspiration. This Archangel “afterwards grew to be Himself a Time-Spirit.” Indeed from the importance of His working, side by side with the Egyptian Time-Spirit, Dr. Steiner even calls Him “a Time-Spirit who in some sense appears in the mission of a Nation-Spirit” (page 83).

There was therefore something unique and special about the little Hebrew people. Here Dr. Steiner gives a very clear and helpful explanation, of how it lay and still lies in the mission of the Semitic race to represent the One (monotheism in religion, monism in philosophy, the power of synthetic thought), whereas all other peoples and religions tend to see the aspect of the Many (polytheism, or in philosophy pluralism, monadology, [Monadology: the doctrine that the World consists of a multitude of single beings or ‘Monads’; in contrast, therefore, to Monism, the doctrine of one all-prevailing principle or being.] — imaginative thinking). Both of these aspects are necessary; in the history of mankind they have to balance one-another.

We now turn more to Europe. During the first three epochs the peoples of this Continent were still being led by their Archangels. Not till the fourth post-Atlantean epoch was one of the European Archangels — to wit, the Archangel of ancient Greece — lifted into the rank of a Time-Spirit. The Greek Archangel became the Time-Spirit of the Greco-Latin epoch, whose influence extended far and wide, with the Hellenic culture, through Asia, Africa and Europe.

Now Dr. Steiner comes to speak of two great *deeds of resignation* on the part of Beings of the Hierarchies. The Greek Archangel, having fulfilled His mission as a Time-Spirit, might also, like the Time-Spirits of the three preceding epochs, have advanced in evolution towards the hierarchy of the Spirits of Form. But He foregoes this possibility and remains as a Time-Spirit, an Archai-being, to take on a special task, namely to be the guiding and intuiting Spirit in the expansion of exoteric Christianity. In this capacity the Greek Time-Spirit worked on thenceforth through the successive times, as we shall see. His deed of resignation took place about the time of Christ's coming to Earth, which explains why ancient Greece fell away so soon after the founding of Christianity.

The second instance of this kind concerns the Celtic nation-spirit, who in olden time, and even at the time of the founding of Christianity, worked in the peoples not only of Western Europe but of a far larger area, extending into Southern Germany, the Alpine countries and Hungary and also far into the North-East of Europe. The Celtic nation as such afterwards died away, fragments of it being absorbed into other, newer nations. It died because its Archangel, who could have risen to be a Time-Spirit, resigned this possibility and resolved to work on as an Archangel, serving the different Time-Spirits, the inspirer to this day of the great stream of esoteric Christianity — the mysteries of the Holy Grail and then of Rosicrucianism. Esoteric Christianity was thus enabled to work on, a continuous and living stream, under so many different times and conditions to this day, guarded by the Archangel of the ancient Celts who made this great sacrifice. “The Time-Spirits may work as they will; this esoteric Christianity

will remain a living source, able to be renewed and metamorphosed ever and again under the influence of different epochs.”

Proceeding now with his account of European times and peoples, Dr. Steiner warns his hearers once again how difficult it is to tell these things without embarrassment — not to arouse prejudiced feelings, jealous emotions.

The Germanic peoples of Europe, originally led by one Archangel-being, presently differentiated. Manifold Archangels became their leaders; so many individualized nations grew out of them. From among these Archangels one was to be the leading Time-Spirit of our own fifth post-Atlantean epoch. For a long time, as an Archangel He had been prepared for this mission by the Christian Time-Spirit (or Christ-Time-Spirit, *Christus-Zeitgeist*, as Dr. Steiner also names the Spirit who had been the nation-soul of ancient Greece), and by the Archangel of the ancient Romans who in later Roman times had also risen to be a kind of Time-Spirit. Yet it was only from the 12th and, in a fuller sense, from the 16th and 17th centuries onward that He gradually rose to be among the leading Time-Spirits, successor to those of the preceding epochs. [The actual date of the beginning of the fifth epoch is the year 1413 A.D. Its end, if we assign to it the normal period of 2160 years, would be about 3600 A.D. Only about a quarter of it has elapsed till now.]

Rudolf Steiner, leading up to this, seems to be touching on a deep and rather intimate secret of European culture. He says it was not easy for a new Time-Spirit to be developed from among these European folk-spirits, because they were so free, so manifold and varied. The peoples of Europe had to be individualized, mingled and from their mingling individualized, time and again. “Whereas in Asia and Africa the Archangels had long ago advanced to be Time-Spirits, Europe was still led by the Archangels themselves. The peoples, guided by their several folk-souls, let the Time-Spirits be; they were quite given up to the impulses of the folk-spirits.” Thus there were many folk-spirits, “filled with a spirit of liberty,” going their several ways. Archangels came and went as former peoples passed away and new nations arose out of the mingled fragments — the French, for instance, out of Celts and Franks and Latins. These manifold Archangels were however, increasingly as time went on, under the uniting influence of the Christian Time-Spirit — derived, once more, from ancient Greece. They served the Christ-Time-Spirit.

This European picture leads us on from pre-Christian times into the Middle Ages. Coming now into our own, fifth post-Atlantean age, we have to take account in a peculiar way of three Time-Spirits; once Dr. Steiner even speaks of a *trifolium* — a ‘trefoil’. For the Time-Spirit proper of this epoch, of whose preparation we spoke just now, assisted as He was upon the one hand by the Christian Time-Spirit, was on the other hand obliged to enter into ‘a kind of compromise’ with the Time-Spirit of ancient Egypt — a Being who already works to some extent, as we have heard, with the rank and power of a Spirit of Form.

Dr. Steiner suggests, if he does not actually say, that this infusion of impulses from ancient Egypt — to which the present Time-Spirit must to some extent submit — has much to do with the materialistic tendency of our time. To get a fuller picture we should read [*The Spiritual Guidance of Mankind*](#) (1911 lectures given at Copenhagen, issued in book-form by Dr. Steiner himself, as mentioned in our introduction). It is indeed in the normal course of things, and was already mentioned in the first lecture, that the Time-Spirits of the pre-Christian epochs should afterwards return; the third in the fifth, the second in the sixth, the first in the seventh. Therefore the Time-Spirits were alternatively called, ‘Spirits of *Cyclic*

Periods.' That there is also spiritual conflict here, at least in our own time, is evident; the progressive forces, those united with the Christ-impulse, must wrestle their way through and become strong in doing so. To the working together of several Spirits Dr. Steiner attributes the manifold cleavages, divisions and cross-currents of our time. The different nation-souls incline more to the one or to the other impulse; so are the nations diversely inclined, more towards materialism or idealism. It remains true that the essential task of the fifth epoch itself is towards the Spiritual.

The end of the lecture turns our thoughts more northward, to the Scandinavian peoples in whose country the course was being held. Here for the first time Dr. Steiner speaks of the Northern mythology as indicated in the title. Long, long ago, he says, "in the time before the Celtic Archangel had established a new centre in the 'High Castle of the Grail'" there was a spiritual centre, not actually on the Earth but hovering above the Earth and in a certain district of the heart of Europe — about the region of Detmold and Paderborn in Westphalia is the place indicated. Legend tells of 'Asgard,' home of the Northern Gods, having been at this place on Earth. Out of this centre of spiritual inspiration the different Archangels of Europe, the Scandinavian among them, were sent upon their several missions. (The 'Castle of the Grail,' successor to this ancient holy place as the great centre of inspiration, was farther to the West. "In the West of Europe," says Dr. Steiner, "was the mysterious centre, accessible to those initiated in such secrets," where inspiration flowed from Him who had been the Archangel of the Celts, who by His sacrifice had grown to be the great inspirer of esoteric Christianity.)

The Scandinavian Archangel took with Him impulses which are preserved in a very pure and childlike form in Norse mythology. This Archangel also has the potentiality to become a Time-Spirit, an Archai. Yet to this end He must outgrow the overshadowing influence of the Time-Spirit of exoteric Christianity — derived from ancient Greece — who in a certain sense has been His educator. The native impulses of the Northern being must be developed in a maturer form. Here Dr. Steiner speaks of the Northern in comparison and contrast to the Greek mythology. In its peculiar structure, he avers, "there is no other mythology on Earth which gives a deeper or a clearer picture of cosmic evolution than does this Northern mythology. ... Thus the Germanic mythology, from the whole way it was developed out of the native powers of the Archangel, is in its pictures deeply akin to the theosophical conception, such as it shall grow to be, in course of time, for all mankind."

EIGHTH LECTURE

This lecture and the ninth especially bring in the mythological aspect announced in the title. In introducing the well-known figures of Germanic myth and legend, Dr. Steiner not only explains them from his clairvoyant spiritual investigation. He tries to awaken in us a feeling of the background in consciousness out of which these mythologies arose; thus he appeals to our artistic and dramatic sense and unfolds again the great perspectives of history and pre-historic time. The mythological aspect is therefore truly welded with the other, dominant aspect of this lecture-cycle: knowledge of nation-souls. The Celtic and Germanic stream to which we belong, which is to come into its own in this fifth culture-epoch, shall also with the help of these, its ancient pictures, be awakened to self-knowledge of its tasks and shake off deadening habits clinging to it from the outworn, Græco-Latin age.

Whatever differences there may be, says Dr. Steiner in introduction, between the different versions — the Scandinavian for example or the Germanic of more Southern regions —

Northern mythology as a whole is one in kind. The differences are slight compared with the immense change in character as between this mythology and the ancient Greek, not to speak of the Egyptian or others of the more distant East and South.

Turning aside for a moment to point out how superficial the much-reputed analogies of ‘comparative religion’ often are, Dr. Steiner goes on to characterize what this essential difference is, which everyone may feel who really comes into the atmosphere of the Germanic and Scandinavian mythology. He bids us first reflect again on the succession of civilization-epochs since Atlantis. The difference in character between these epochs concerns not only the human beings but also the higher beings — Angels, Archangels and Time-Spirits — who partook in them. In old Atlantis man, as it were, had had to leave behind the old clairvoyant gifts. The transition to post-Atlantis was a gigantic work in education of mankind, deeply conceived by the Initiates and lasting in effect through many thousands of years. However long a people had to wait till the main focus in the development of cultures should come their way — the Celtic and Germanic peoples to whom we belong waited until the fifth epoch, nine thousand years! — a golden thread connected them with old Atlantis and with the plans laid down by Manu, the Christ-Initiate, when he went eastward with his chosen ones. Yet there was naturally an overwhelming difference in the quality of spiritual experience according to whether a people came early, as did the ancient Indians, or late in turn, as we are doing.

This spiritual guidance of mankind, although it led away from old clairvoyance to the experience of the physical plane through the senses, was yet an education leading from the very outset towards a higher and fuller experience of what is spiritual. (Details are given in the first two chapters, notably the second, of [Atlantis and Lemuria](#).) Now in a way the peoples of the earliest culture-epochs — especially the Indian — received this spiritual education more serenely, as it were more unconsciously. At a time when the Ego was not yet so developed, they already rose to high spiritual levels in their religious philosophy, in their conception of the spiritual Beings and so on. They had all this without conscious Ego-consciousness, if I may use this pleonasm. Hence the serenely impersonal character of the sacred literature of India, which, though incomparably later, still reflects the inner character of the first epoch.

Thenceforth, through the religions and mythologies of Persia, Egypt-and-Chaldea, ancient Greece, there is a gradual yet overwhelming change to the more Ego-filled, more humanly and personally experienced character of the Germanic myths. This also helps explain the mysterious divergence of East and West to this day and the great difficulty bearers of Eastern culture have in overcoming a certain superior attitude (*Zugeknöpftheit*, ‘buttoned-up-ness’ is Dr. Steiner’s word) towards the spiritual life of the West. They will not really be able to appreciate it until it comes to them through the growing life of Anthroposophy.

This is the theme of the first half of the lecture. The European, notably the Germanic peoples awakened to the Ego while still at an elementary stage in soul-development. Thus, Ego-consciously they underwent stages in spiritual experience which, as we said; those of more ancient cultures received in a far less awake condition.

This difference, however, has to do in a quite definite way with man’s relation to the spiritual Hierarchies. There is, as Walter Johannes Stein has often said in lectures on the Holy Grail, a *gradatim*, step-by-step descent of the ‘I Am’ into mankind, beginning in the high realm of the Kyriotetes — Spirits of Wisdom — and coming downwards through the Archangels and Angels into man. Nearest to human consciousness we find the Beings of the

third Hierarchy — Angels, Archangels and Archai; ‘Spirits of Soul,’ for so they are addressed in the third verse of our [*The Foundation Stone Meditation*](#). Rising to higher levels, we become aware of the creative, cosmic and in-forming greatness of the second Hierarchy — Exusiai, Dynamis and Kyriotetes; Powers, Might and Dominions. It is from these, Creators of the Worlds, that we received the ‘I,’ which in its turn — rising through all the levels where it must find itself in human soul-life, through all the drama of individual destinies, nations, historic times — returns at last to the pure Spirit, there to behold the Divine Beings who gave it birth.

In old Atlantis man had been dimly, clairvoyantly aware of these high Beings of the Sun — the spiritual reality underlying all the forms of the world around him. Thereafter, the most advanced of the early Indians, willingly taught as they had been to let go the remnants of old clairvoyance — to lose, that they might find in a new way — rose by comparatively easy stages to behold again the highest of these realms:

<i>Mula- Prakriti:</i>	the sum-total of the Spirits of Movement; (Dynamis)
<i>Maha- Purusha:</i>	the sum-total of the Spirits of Wisdom (Kyriotetes), in Their unison;

— so Dr. Steiner interprets the Sanskrit terms. Impersonal and in a certain sense not very Ego-conscious, they ‘slept through’ the intervening stages where Angels and Folk-spirits work more in the realm of human souls, of psychic strife and turmoil; so did they found their philosophies directly on this sublime and cosmic region. They therefore only awakened to the ‘I’ at a comparatively high stage of development.

The ancient Persians, a stage lower, looked to the Spirits of Form, to whom relates, says Dr. Steiner, their conception of the *Amshaspands*. The third, the Chaldean peoples were already more aware of the Archai or Time-Spirits, Spirits of Personality. So also in the fourth epoch were the Greeks and Romans, but in addition they had a memory of the working in the human soul of Archangels and Angels, both normal and abnormal. This above all found its expression in Greek mythology. We recall what Dr. Steiner so often told, of how the figures of Greek mythology are memories of the Angelic and. semi-Divine beings (*e.g.*, the Luciferian Angels) who had so much to do with human life, both inwardly and outwardly, in old Atlantis.

What we remember takes on a sharper outline than. What we suffer and enjoy in the living present. Hence the plasticity, the classical perfection in the characters of Greek mythology. The Gods of the Norsemen on the other hand are in a way more vital, more directly present. For the Germanic and Northern peoples not only remembered; they were aware directly of all the surging and striving of Archangels and Angels in and about the human ‘I.’ In them the ‘I’ awakened at a still more elementary level than in the Greeks and Romans.

All this explains why the Western peoples — Celtic, Germanic, Greek and Roman, in their several ways — were more able to receive the glad tidings of Jesus Christ at His coming than the inheritors of the more ancient and highly developed far-Eastern culture. It was indeed a case of ‘Blessed are the poor in spirit.’ To apprehend the coming of Christ Jesus, says Rudolf Steiner, “one needed faculties belonging to a less lofty station of the ‘I’ — a dwelling of the ‘I’ still in more humble forces of the human soul” (page 98 in our edition).

In a mysterious way, Northern mythology tells of two races of Gods, the *Wanen* and the *Asen*. [It seems preferable to retain the Germanic — also Anglo-Saxon — plural *n*, as after all we still have it in *children* and in other words.] The former, Dr. Steiner now explains, represent the old Germanic peoples' clairvoyant memory of the higher Gods known to the old Atlanteans, who had been 'seen' through the dim mists of Atlantis long, long before man felt the 'I' within himself. Such were the *Wanen*. The *Asen* on the other hand were Angels and Archangels more immediately concerned with the soul-life of man, the 'I' at its awakening, after Atlantis. Therefore the *Asen* were more nearly present to them.

So did the man of old Germanic times, says Dr. Steiner, "perceive the Divine Beings working directly upon his soul; he saw the human soul wresting its way forth from the Cosmos. This was direct experience to him. Not just in memory did he look back on how the souls of men had been in-formed into their bodies; he saw all this as an immediate and present happening. With his own Ego he was there — a witness, a partaker in it. Even until the 8th, 9th and 10th centuries A.D., he retained this feeling, this understanding of how the forces of the soul are gradually formed and crystallized into the body." Accordingly, in this mythology there is a genius to understand the occult truth of how the Microcosm issues from the Macrocosm and corresponds to it. In its great pictures it contains the spiritual cosmology and genesis of man which we to-day are learning more in the way of conscious thought.

Towards the end of the lecture we are introduced more individually to the Germanic Gods. *Wotan* or *Odin*, the giver of speech, is among the greatest of the Archangels: one of those, in effect, who long ago resigned their evolution to higher stages, to give the gift of language to the incarnating soul of man. The magic draught *Wotan* received at his initiation at the springs of *Mimir* is His endowment with that wisdom which lives directly in the spoken sounds (vowels and consonants) of speech. We shall remember how in later years, through Dr. Steiner himself (*Eurhythmy* and *Speech-formation*), this wisdom in the sounds of speech began to be taught again to our own time. Dr. Steiner always spoke of this as a beginning; it was to play an ever-increasing part in the future.

Archangels too were *Hönnir* who gave the power of thought, and *Lodur* who gave blood and colour, — "that which lies nearest to race." These two were Archangels more in the normal line; *Will* and *We* on the other hand, like their brother *Wotan*, were among those of abnormal development. Yet in a people who had themselves quite literally 'remained behind' (namely in Europe, nearest Atlantis, the while their brethren went eastward to advance more quickly and found the earlier culture-epochs), the human Ego felt most akin to these Archangels who had resigned their further evolution for man's sake. They worshipped *Wotan* above all.

Thor is an Angel-being, yet again one who could have risen to far higher rank but remained an Angel, to be with the 'I' of man at his incarnation. He is akin to every human 'I'; He helps the individual 'I' in these Northern regions at its awakening, transmitting to it spiritual powers of the Archangel and higher worlds. He is the son of *Odin*; the gift of speech precedes, and must precede, the birth of the 'I' in man.

Even as speech lives in our breathing, so is the 'I' or Ego incarnated in the pulsing of our blood. This is the hammer of *Thor*, returning ever and again into his hand — as the pulsing blood returns to the same place. The wind and cloud formations in the Macrocosm are related to the breathing; thunder and lightning to the strong heart-beat in the human Microcosm. These things the Norsemen knew not theoretically but directly: they felt the hammer of the 'I'

in their own pulse-beat, the kinship of the inner fire of the blood and of the outer lightning-fire. So did they recognize Wotan and Thor, deeply akin to their own being, in the powers of surrounding Nature. So too did they distinguish in the human microcosm *Niflheim*, the microcosmic North, “cool realm where human *thoughts* are woven and whence the body is supplied with the twelve cranial nerves,” and on the other hand the microcosmic South — *Muspelheim* — forces that issue from the human heart.

Ginnungagap, the Germanic chaos, corresponds to the beginning of the Earth, when after Saturn, Sun and Moon the dawning world, still without form and void, undifferentiated, came forth again out of pralaya.

NINTH LECTURE

At the beginning of this lecture Dr. Steiner answers a possible objection, a genuine difficulty that might occur to thoughtful minds. Directed as it was to the development of thought and conscious knowledge, the spiritual education of mankind, especially the most advanced peoples, after Atlantis surely involved *ipso facto* the awakening of the human Ego. How then can it be said that the ancient Indian culture attained so high a level along these lines without Ego-awakening?

Answer is given in philosophic form. Cognition of the Ego differs from all other kinds of cognition. The Ego knowing any other object — tree or stone or other human being — the knower and the known are different entities. But when the Ego knows itself, the knower and the known are one. Subject and object of cognition are the same.

For conscious and objective knowledge, the Ego as a subject, as the knower, must of course be there, and active — the more highly so, the higher is the form of knowledge. But this need not imply that the Ego is also there as an object of knowledge — that it beholds itself as an objective Being. Finely developed though it is, it may in this respect still be serenely unconscious of itself, and so indeed it was in the old Indians. Not so the ancient European peoples. Comparatively undeveloped, still with the old clairvoyance, they saw the ‘I’ objectively. “Amidst all other things in their clairvoyant field of vision they saw the ‘I,’ a being among beings. ... In an imaginative picture they saw the dawning light of their own Ego, — even before they felt the Ego-impulse very inwardly.” (Page 106.)

Hence too the tendency, so evident in their mythology, to feel the human Ego closely, intimately in relation to the higher Beings — Angels and Archangels. With these beginnings, European humanity was fore-ordained to experience and work out the human Ego's relation to the surrounding Universe, to other Egos, to the world of Gods and spiritual Beings.

Among these latter are also Lucifer and Ahriman. In the Germanic mythology, says Dr. Steiner, there is a greater tendency to understand how the human Ego must find its way between *two* adversaries, than in the spiritual teachings of other peoples. The Old Testament for example, the Semitic tradition generally, is in the main only aware of Lucifer — the ‘serpent.’ Only from esoteric teachings did the Gospel writers also know of Satan — Ahriman. The Indians again, during a certain period at least, — intent on a more inner path of the soul's development, — look up to the Divine beings whom they name the ‘Devas,’ while they eschew, under the name of ‘Asuras,’ beings of darkness prevailing in the outer world. (Lucifer is the antagonist along the inner, Ahriman along the outer path.) The Persians on the other hand have to look more outward. They feel a danger in the inward path, and where the

Luciferic powers are lurking, they do not let themselves become aware even of the good powers who are also there, Hence the root 'deva' in the Persian language is applied to an evil kind of being. Where they feel strong however, in wrestling with the outer world, they face Ahriman the dark antagonist, and as against the evil Asuras of Indian tradition they see the good Asuras, beings of light, — Ahura Mazdao. In etymology, Ahura is the same word as Asura.

Turning again to the Germanic myths, we have the figure of *Loki* with his threefold offspring: *the Midgard snake, the Fenris wolf, and Hel*. And then again we have blind Hödur, who with the mistletoe given by Loki slays the gentle, light-filled Baldur.

Loki is Lucifer, who brought selfishness into man's astral body. Yet because this, which led man down into the possibility of evil, also endowed him with free choice, with power to rise to liberty of spirit, therefore the Norsemen also felt Lucifer in the aspect of a benefactor — bringer of selfhood, independence, freedom. "They felt the Luciferic element even in the power who in these Norse and Germanic regions partook in the creation of the races, in that he gave to man his outward form and colour, — made him an independent, active being in the world." (This, we presume, is again a reference to Lodur — see the preceding lecture — though Dr. Steiner does not here repeat the name.)

Now we remember out of [Occult Science](#) that it was Lucifer who approached man first — in old Lemuria — and thereby opened out the way for Ahriman to follow him in Atlantean time. Lucifer's influence works more within the human self; Ahriman on the other hand mars man's relation to the outer world, involving him in error, darkness and deception. Falsehood with regard to outer things — even deliberate falsehood or lying, — inasmuch as it has to do not with the inner life alone but with the inner in relation to the outer, takes root in a vehicle more outward than the astral, namely the etheric body. So then the Luciferic influence begets a threefold consequence: selfish desires in the astral body, falsehood and lying in the etheric, and, as the necessary Karma of all this, sickness and death in the physical. This is the occult meaning of Loki's threefold offspring, and Dr. Steiner gives this correspondence:

Astral body — selfishness — the Midgard snake
Ether body — falsehood — the Fenris wolf
Physical body — sickness and death — Hel

Speaking of sickness and death — the Karma of the Luciferic influence — Dr. Steiner refers again to the lectures he was giving a few weeks previously, [Manifestations of Karma](#), where this whole subject is treated more fully. In an aside, the logical fallacy of concluding that the same outward appearance — death in the human being or in the animal or plant — must therefore be assignable to the same cause, is stigmatized by an example.

The darkening of the light of truth appears to the old Norsemen under the image of the wolf. The Fenris wolf is, then, an Ahrimanic figure, coming in consequence of Lucifer. The Fenris wolf in pursuit of the Sun and overtaking it at an eclipse, says Dr. Steiner, is in the astral world more true, less subject to superstition, than is the current, purely physical explanation of the eclipses. What the clairvoyant sees are real Beings; no mere allegories.

The death of Baldur is the next theme we come to. When the old dream-like clairvoyance still lived on, men alternated between a consciousness turned to the outer material world and a dream-consciousness in which they looked into the spiritual world. The seeing Baldur stood

for this latter, more blissful state; blind Hödur, again a more Ahrimanic figure, for the former. In the slaying of Baldur they experienced the tragical extinction of the erstwhile clairvoyance. Lucifer-Loki with the mistletoe gave dark Hödur his opportunity; so the myth truly represents how it is Lucifer who brings man into the realm of Ahrimanic powers.

Towards the end of the lecture Dr. Steiner touches on a most important theme: the different feeling towards Christianity of the Germanic and Northern peoples as against those of the Mediterranean regions and Asia Minor. When the Christ-impulse came to Earth and for some time after, clairvoyant experience still lived on among the Northern peoples. The death of Baldur was not a mere memory for them; it was a present experience. Not so the Eastern and more Southern peoples. In the far Eastern tradition, for example, Kali Yuga, the dark age, had already lasted for 3,000 years. The old clairvoyance — the golden age of the past — was a far-off memory.

Therefore the Northern and Germanic peoples could not receive the comfort of Christianity quite in the same way as could the people, for example, of Asia Minor. To those who had long lost the perception of higher worlds, the words of John the Baptist signified indeed: the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand! The Divine Being has come down on to the physical plane, so that the children of men “who can only perceive on the physical plane, may also be allowed to rise to a consciousness of God.” Such was for them the Gospel message. Through Christ who appeared in Palestine, in whom God is, “you too will be able to find your connection with the Divine, even though you cannot lift yourselves above the physical plane.”

The Northern peoples, once again, could not receive this comfort quite in the same way. To them the loss of sight, the death of Baldur, was a too immediate reality. They could not rest content in this way. But there arose in them a far-reaching thought: the darkening of spiritual sight, the limitation to the outer physical plane, can only be an intermediate time, an interval of training and probation for mankind. If he goes through it well, the spiritual world will at long last be given back to man.

The Initiates, the leaders of their esoteric School, had indeed taught these ancient Norsemen that it was so. Moreover in the future, when they saw the spiritual world again, they should find it changed. Lucifer who had temporarily overcome the Gods of man's true progress would in his turn have been overcome. This is the vision of *Ragnarök*, the twilight of the Gods; Dr. Steiner will return to it in the last lecture and show more fully its relation to the Christ-impulse.

Man in the intervening time shall feel himself a faithful son of Odin; so in the future will it be given him to fight the good fight at the side of Widar — Odin's avenger. This, Rudolf Steiner tells us, had been the esoteric teaching Northern man received, preparing him for the Christ-impulse. “The role of Odin's avenger in the Twilight of the Gods, ... when we understand it, we shall perceive the wonderful connection between the inmost talents of the Germanic and Scandinavian humanity and what we too are seeing in our time: the vision of the future.” Herewith the lecture closes.

Very significantly in this passage, Dr. Steiner speaks of a difference in the way of receiving the Christ-impulse as between the Northern, Germanic peoples — those, in effect, who were preparing for the fifth post-Atlantean epoch — and the more Southern or near-Eastern peoples, the bearers of the fourth epoch.

It happens that in one of his last letters (March, 1925) Rudolf Steiner dwelt again on this same theme, and, though he speaks in rather different language, the inner connection is so evident that it will surely be helpful to take the two passages together.

The letter is entitled: *Historic Cataclysms at the Dawn of the Spiritual Soul* [*Anthroposophical Movement*, Vol. II, No. 14.] and leads up among other things to the great conflict between Arian and Athanasian Christianity. The former had more influence among the Gothic and Germanic tribes; the latter — since the Council of Nicæa — became predominant through the official, Græco-Roman church.

Dr. Steiner in this letter speaks in terms of the soul-members — the Intellectual and the Spiritual Soul. The Greeks and Romans, with all their genius for developing the Intellectual Soul, had felt an access of strength and human independence as they did so. In early Christian centuries however, with the first dawning of the Spiritual Soul for which they had not the same native talent, they felt rather a decline of their own inner force. The teaching of Christianity, which in a way calls for the forces of the Spiritual Soul, came to them rather as a thing vouchsafed by spiritual worlds outside them; they did not feel so much that they “could grow together with it by their own faculties of knowledge.” Theirs was the Athanasian mood of soul.

The Northern peoples on the other hand, peoples destined above all for the next epoch, that of the Spiritual Soul, felt a glad access of inner strength when with the Christian beginnings the forces of the Spiritual Soul were dawning. These forces of the soul were more their own, — united with their humanity. Hence Christianity itself was felt by them more strongly “coming to life in their own soul, not given from outside.” They tended rather to the Arian than to the Athanasian outlook.

It was the latter creed, as we well know, which became dominant in outer history. The feeling of the Northern peoples — the Christ-impulse more deeply united with the soul's inmost powers of cognition — had to wait until the Spiritual Soul should ripen.

The time has come; its harbinger is Spiritual Science. The sense of impotence in the soul's powers of cognition for higher things, which hung over the Middle Ages and was inherited by the agnostic scientists of more recent time, will be transcended by those in whom a braver Christian faith, springing anew from deeply human sources, will declare: the path is open for mankind towards knowledge of the higher worlds!

This thought may be a fitting prelude to the next lecture, which deals more fully with the present — age of the Spiritual Soul — and with the tasks of different peoples in this age. Dr. Steiner in this letter seems to hint at a peculiarly deep connection of the Spiritual Soul with the Christ-impulse, almost as though the very coming of Christianity had to bring with it the first dawning of the Spiritual Soul itself. We may think of this: Christ was the bringer of the pure ‘I Am’ into mankind. Now of the three soul-members, it is in the Spiritual Soul that the true Ego comes into its own most fully. A very wonderful passage in the *St. Matthew* cycle, to which we presently refer, may also help us understand this.

TENTH LECTURE

This all-important lecture might easily become as long in the guide to study as in the text, and as we do not wish it so, we will point out at once what seems essential. For it is here that

we shall read of how specific times and peoples, — including some of the best-known nations of to-day, — are related to the different tasks and principles of human being, *e.g.* the evolution of the threefold soul: Sentient, Intellectual and Spiritual Soul. When Spiritual Science tells in this way of the immediate realities of our life — of nations and countries, the names, at least, of which are daily on our lips — it happens all too easily that the extended, carefully balanced statements of the occult teacher, context forgotten, are turned into mere formula in surface-memory. For the same reason that we received these explanations so very gratefully, we all too easily deprive them of their life and truth. Thus deadened, they become at last the very opposite of what they should be — mere skeletons of thought, bones of contention!

In studying this lecture above all, one will want to listen as one reads — to listen tenderly, noting exactly what is said and not said, and in what context the several statements occur, and how the whole is composed. This needs not cleverness or erudition but honesty of mind (desire to know *what* one knows, not resting in a mental fog) combined with reverence for the Initiate teacher. Nay more, one would even say, an inner sympathy with him; a reverence for the sphere out of which he spoke and a due weighing of the great difficulty of translating such truths at all out of the ‘choirs of the spheres of peace’ into our troubled world. We as disciples *can* lift our minds into the realm where these things ring true and where his words, brief as they often are, will be supplemented for us by the ever-present Spirit.

The subject is the history of European nation-souls, in the past, in present time and on into the future. In the next lecture this will lead up to the ‘Twilight of the Gods’ once more.

It was the task of Europe, both before and after Christ, to evolve and educate the ‘I’ in all its aspects, through all the members of the human being. All peoples and even fragments of peoples have contributions to make to this great task. The ‘I,’ says Dr. Steiner, had to be brought into ever new situations, and to this end the races and nations in Europe were mingled, separated, re-composed in the course of history in such diverse ways.

In olden time the Ego had been shown to Northern and Germanic man clairvoyantly, as we have seen, even before he had it in him in a subjective way. Therefore he felt with inner harmony and fitness the gradual emergence of individual Ego-experience out of the group-soul, in which, as Dr. Steiner reminds his hearers, Tacitus found the Germanic tribes immersed even a hundred years after Christ. This feeling found expression inasmuch as *Thor*, the giver of the ‘I,’ was wedded to *Sif*, Goddess of family and hearth and home. ‘Sif’ is related to the German *Sippe* meaning a family or clan. [We have no corresponding word in modern English, though the old English *sib*, ‘akin,’ still occurs in Spenser’s *Faery Queen*. Strangely enough, *gossip* is the only word remaining to us of this root. Before it sank into its now corrupted meaning, it was *godsib*=God-akin, kindred-in-God, meaning ‘a sponsor in baptism,’ as we now say Godfather or Godmother.]

During this gradual awakening of the ‘I’ out of the group-soul-life of the Germanic tribes, the nation-spirit of the ancient Celts was their great educator. This was before the time when He took on His new mission as the inspirer of esoteric Christianity. It takes us back indeed into very olden times of the Druidic Mysteries. The Druid priests, says Rudolf Steiner, were in direct communication with high spiritual Beings; what they transmitted to the peoples was not their own, — it was instruction received from higher worlds. In later times, when more and more things had to be entrusted to the human Ego, these Mysteries withdrew as it were into more secret places. In outer history the Celtic element as such declined; the Celtic nation-spirit now assumed His other, esoteric Christian mission.

Proceeding to describe the transition from the Græco-Latin age to our own time, Dr. Steiner at this point inserts what has so often been set forth in anthroposophical teachings of History: the relation of the culture-epochs to the members of man's being. To summarize, it is as follows:

1. Ancient Indian epoch — Etheric Body
2. Persian epoch — Astral or Sentient Body
3. Egypto-Chaldean epoch — Sentient Soul
4. Græco-Roman epoch — Intellectual or Mind-Soul
5. Our own epoch — Spiritual Soul
6. Slavonic; Western Asia — Manas or Spirit-Self

This is of course a mere table; we have to fill it now with real content. We must enrich our conception of the nine members of man's being — the three soul-members for example, the etheric and the astral body. To learn that the ancient Persians perceived and knew through the forces of the astral body will not only tell us something about the Persian epoch; it will, precisely inasmuch as it does so, enlarge our idea of the astral body itself. We are in need of this. It is not enough to have defined the seven or the nine members of Man in one way or even in a few ways; to have in mind how they are introduced, for example, in the early chapters of [Theosophy](#) or [Occult Science](#). These sevenfold and ninefold, or other systems wherein Number rules, are a Divine reality — inherent in the structure of the world. Not only man; all entities must somehow have these members. Even the Godhead — we may recall from the Helsingfors [Spiritual Beings](#) lectures — has the nine members in the Beings of the Hierarchies, from the Spirits of Form upward through the Cherubim and Seraphim to the highest Trinity.

Therefore we should be ready, with the most manifold characterizations ever more to enlarge our conception of the nine members of man's being, all and severally. It is a formula out of the Mysteries when their connection with the civilization-epochs (beginning with the etheric body and stopping short, for the moment, of the seventh epoch) is written down as in the foregoing table. It signifies that in the several epochs the forces of the corresponding members of man's being have especially to be developed, and that these members in their turn determine the kind of knowledge or perception man enjoys in such an epoch. We shall observe that the more bodily vehicles belong to the earlier epochs, which were less conscious; the members of the soul — tending ever more towards consciousness — to the three middle epochs; the Spirit-Self to the future. This means that in the earlier epochs what was developed in human civilization was still rather given to mankind by Divine-spiritual powers, for it is from them — from the past epochs of cosmic evolution when the human 'I' was not yet there — that we receive our bodies. Then, as the focus of development rises into the soul and spirit, human beings themselves have to bring forth the works of civilization more consciously. This becomes ever more so as we ascend through the soul-members, from the third to the fifth epoch. The Sentient Soul still receives sustenance from the surrounding world; the Intellectual Soul already less so; the Spiritual Soul most of all must find its own resource within itself. We should not think of the earlier epochs as more 'bodily' with the kind of feeling which we attach to the bodily world to-day. We should remember that in those earlier times the Divine-spiritual world endowed man *through the body*; the bodily world was experienced far more spiritually than would seem possible to man to-day. The ancient Persians and Egyptians, to some extent even the ancient Greeks, still received something spiritual along with their sense-impressions of the outer world. We should bear this in mind when for example it is said that

the ancient Persian civilization developed out of the forces of the sentient body, or the Egyptian — the sentient soul.

Yet we should not conclude that in this sequence of civilizations man becomes more inward in the sense of withdrawing from the outer world. The very opposite is true. From being occupied more with the forces of his own being, with the creative powers that were placing him into existence, he turns increasingly towards the outer world, the planet Earth, the cosmic tasks that lie before him. Such is his tendency in the present epoch — that of the Spiritual Soul — more than it has ever been before. We therefore have to gain a rich and many-sided picture, to realize the truths of Spiritual Science which are summed up in the foregoing table. It will be helpful here to turn again to one of Rudolf Steiner's letters of the year 1925. It is the one entitled *Gnosis and Anthroposophy* [*Anthroposophical Movement*, Vol. II, No. 7.]; there we shall find a clear if concise characterization of the second, third, fourth and fifth epochs, — of what it signified for mankind to perceive and know through the forces of the sentient body and of the sentient, intellectual and spiritual soul in turn. This letter, incidentally, also throws light on the withdrawal of the Mysteries mentioned just now; the connection of esoteric Christianity with the Castle of the Grail.

Beginning now with ancient India, Dr. Steiner tells us that with their highly developed faculties of soul they were able to return again to the etheric body “and therein to develop those wondrously delicate forces the later reflection of which we can still see in the Vedas or in a still more refined form in the Vedanta philosophy.” They *saw* still with the forces of the etheric body.

To help us understand what this cognition through the etheric body means, we may recall that the more highly a man develops, the more deeply — into his bodily vehicles — this development will find expression. To reach the higher levels of clairvoyant wisdom, not only must the organs of cognition in the astral body be developed, but the outcome of such development must be impressed or stamped on the etheric body. The very vehicle of Life becomes the vehicle of Wisdom, — as indeed the Life-body was from the beginning a creation of the Spirits of Wisdom. Wisdom upon this level is not abstract knowledge but sustenance — the bread of life from Heaven.

The Persians could no longer go so far; their organ of perception was the sentient body or astral body. For the Egyptians and Chaldeans it was the Sentient Soul; for the Greeks and Romans — especially the Greeks — the Intellectual or Mind-Soul. Now we remember that the three souls are in themselves a kind of psychic counterpart of the three bodies, namely:

the sentient soul, of the astral body;
the intellectual soul, of the etheric body;
the spiritual soul, of the physical.

(This is the relationship suggested in the diagram on page 120.)

The ancient Greek form of cognition, by means of the Intellectual Soul, was therefore once again related to the etheric body, though more indirectly, — less vividly than with the ancient Indians. The Greeks experienced a memory of spiritual worlds and beings, as was said in the last lecture. In the mind-soul, the Ego uses the etheric body's forces in forming memories. Here man is living a comparatively inward life; he tends to form even his outer

experience so that it harmonizes with his inner life, — a tendency wherein the Greeks excelled.

With the approach of the Spiritual Soul however — the fifth epoch — the later peoples had to turn ever more outward, developing the forces of the Ego upon the physical plane. It was important for the Germanic and Scandinavian peoples that in the time when they first had to do this they still retained some of the old clairvoyant vision into spiritual worlds; thus they were able “to carry primeval spiritual experiences, which were still vital in their souls, into the very arrangements they were now to make upon the physical plane.” Not so the Romans. In them the Ego had to find its place quite suddenly and as it were unaided, out in the physical world. Therefore they came to be the founders of civil law and jurisprudence, to regulate and dignify the immediate relation of human ‘I’ to human ‘I’ in earthly life.

The Western peoples — those whose civilizations grew out of the Roman and Medieval and led on into the beginning of modern time — were in some way gifted by one or other of the three forces of the soul. We should distinguish the human ‘I’ purely as such and the three members of the soul — Sentient Soul, Mind-Soul and Spiritual Soul — which are in one way also cosmic powers, given to the human being. They are not only achievements of the human ‘I’ as it expands and grows; they are also gifts — gifts of Divine-spiritual Beings. We may compare them to those gifts in Fairy-Tales which become tests even as one receives them. Bestowed though they have been, they must be won; won though they are by our right hand, they are the gracious gifts of Gods to men. A higher chivalry here rules. This is also the reason why the three soul-members appear in the [*Mystery Plays*](#) in the distinct characters of Philia, Astrid and Luna — spiritual figures, Dr. Steiner told us, which are also not to be taken as mere allegories.

Thus to the peoples of the Italian and Pyrenean peninsulas the Sentient Soul was given; to those of France, the Intellectual or Mind-Soul; and to Great Britain the Spiritual Soul: each for development with the inner forces of the ‘I,’ as it were for blending with the ‘I.’ The development of the three soul-members by these nations is of course different and on a different level from what was spoken of before, when we connected whole civilization-epochs — the third, fourth and fifth respectively — with these three members of the soul. Nevertheless, for the nations endowed with the Sentient Soul — the Italians and Spaniards — it means that they are recapitulating, in a more Ego-filled way and in the finer aspects of culture, much that was characteristic of the Egypto-Chaldean epoch. So too the French culture of modern times has been in some respects a recapitulation on a different level of the Greek and Latin. The British on the other hand is no recapitulation. It is the fifth epoch itself — the very epoch in which we are living — which must develop forces of the Spiritual Soul; none of the preceding epochs did this.

The theme we are here touching on is one which Dr. Steiner subsequently developed in many other lectures, some of which are mentioned in our Bibliography. We shall not want to rest exclusively on the few brief characterizations given in this lecture.

As to the Spiritual Soul and its relation to England, Rudolf Steiner in this lecture lays especial emphasis on the more outward tasks of this Soul. The founding of constitutional rights and parliamentary forms of government, the world-wide achievements of this country, reveal the union of the Spiritual Soul with the human Ego in its more outward orientation.

The people of Mid-Europe are next mentioned, *i.e.* especially the Germans. Dr. Steiner — speaking as he is in Scandinavia, far in the North, — refers to them as ‘Southern Germanic peoples’ (page 123). In them, as in the Scandinavians, the memories of old clairvoyant insight into the spiritual world were somehow nearer than in the Western nations; they had more inwardness of nature. “It was their task to develop what is needed to prepare the Spiritual Soul more inwardly, imbuing it with spiritual substance of the old clairvoyance, transplanted now on to the physical plane.” In effect the most highly developed philosophies of Middle Europe, Dr. Steiner goes on to explain, Hegel and Fichte for example, are a kind of sublimation — a renewal, in the early stages of the Spiritual Soul, — of the clairvoyant insight and experience of the old Norse and Germanic peoples. There is in Fichte, strong-willed philosopher of the *Ich bin*, the gift of Thor, transmuted.

In later lectures Dr. Steiner nearly always characterized the development of the human ‘I’ as such — finding its balance between the three soul-members, each and all, as the essential mission of the German people. Here in this lecture he assigns to them especially the Spiritual Soul’s development, in its more inward, spiritual aspect.

The middle paragraphs of page 123 in our edition will be rather difficult to understand unless we bear in mind that the Græco-Latin and the preceding epoch, that of the Sentient Soul, concerned not only the peoples who were then in the forefront of civilization and whose names these epochs bear (the Greeks and Romans, the Chaldeans and Egyptians), but younger peoples also, who were preparing for their later missions. Dr. Steiner is evidently referring to what the Germanic peoples underwent during these earlier epochs. The word *premature* on the 12th line from below is a downright mistake in translation [*vorzeitig* with *vorzeitig*, — words of quite different meaning.]; as such, it is happily exceptional in this edition. The opening sentences of the paragraph should read, — translated somewhat freely: — “The Græco-Latin age had to develop the Intellectual or Mind-Soul; and yet not only so. It also had to include a very wonderful development, still working in from pre-historic times and imbued with clairvoyant insight. All this was then poured into the Spiritual Souls of the mid-European, Scandinavian and Germanic peoples.”

In the next passage Dr. Steiner speaks of China. While the old Indian spiritual development through the ether-body represented a very definite advance upon Atlantis, the age-old Chinese culture — “developing another side of the etheric body’s consciousness” — stood for a kind of static continuation of Atlantean wisdom. Hence India and China represent a great polarity in post-Atlantean time. In the Great Wall of China it was as though they had wanted to renew or to replace the protecting and encircling stream — Oceanus of Greek tradition — which flowed around the Atlantean isle and of which our present Gulf-stream is a relic; there is a valuable indication here (page 125) of its erstwhile locality.

Now turning to the future — the coming, sixth post-Atlantean age and its preparation — Rudolf Steiner speaks of “the peoples of Western Asia and their outposts in Eastern Europe, the Slavonic peoples.” Speaking of ‘outposts’ whose task is of a preparatory nature, he seems to have in mind also the Western Slavs. For the rest, when looking toward the sixth epoch, he dwells especially upon the Russians. This epoch will begin to develop Manas, the Spirit-Self. Manas pours in from higher spiritual worlds; the Spiritual Soul must be uplifted as a vessel to receive it. Hence the receptive, even devotional character of the Slavonic peoples, preparing for a future civilization-epoch which will be deeply receptive in character. We are reminded of the unlimited devotion with which Russians, for example, absorb what comes to them from

Western European culture, — yet rather passing over the details and looking forward as if to something greater.

We shall be greatly helped in this passage if we may turn for a moment to quite another lecture-course, that on St. Matthew, given a few months later. Read the first half of the eleventh lecture in this course, where Dr. Steiner explains the terms ‘Son of Man’ and ‘Son of the Living God’ in relation to the Spiritual Soul and Spirit-Self. There you will have, in a most beautiful form, the inner feeling of what is here referred to: the Spiritual Soul lifted up as a kind of open flower of the soul’s life and being, to receive what pours into it from a Divine and spiritual world.

The Spiritual Soul is many-sided, and that is partly what makes the understanding of our age so difficult, yet so enthralling. On the one hand it is the Ego achieving mastery over the physical body and as it does so coming into the closest touch with the outer physical world — to the point of materialism, Yet it is also the Ego rising above personal feelings and self-interested thoughts, to the perception of pure truth and goodness. It is the soul receptive to the intuitions from a purely spiritual world, just as the Sentient Soul is the soul receptive to impressions from the outer world. Why has the Spiritual Soul this dual aspect? Is it perhaps the ultimate and hard reality of the material world which now impels the human Ego to find itself, awake in its inmost depths, — to seek its real substance in the Spirit? Why in our epoch does the culmination of materialism coincide with the beginnings of man’s future spiritual pathway?

Towards the end of the lecture Dr. Steiner illustrates the future potentialities of the Russian soul by reference to the Christian philosophy of Solovioff (1853–1900). Solovioff, he says, has of all those who do not actually stand upon the ground of Spiritual Science the most advanced conception of the Christ. He understands Jesus Christ in His dual nature, human and Divine, and yet again the union of both. So too will man be dual when ‘the Son of Man’ in him receives ‘the Son of the living God’ — the Spiritual Soul the Spirit-Self. Most wonderfully, Dr. Steiner characterizes Solovioff’s conception of the Christian social state, utterly different from the Divine State of St. Augustine which was but the Roman State with Christ put in the centre of it. In Solovioff’s Christian State, Christ is the living substance, — a living spiritual entity permeating all the social life and social institutions.

Yet is all this only the seed, the germinal beginning of a future evolution. Accordingly, says Dr. Steiner, “the mind and feeling of this people, to whom is given the seed of the sixth culture-epoch, had from the very beginning to be not only educated but nursed and nurtured” by the Christian Time-Spirit — meaning again the Being who had been the Time-Spirit of ancient Greece. We shall remember how deeply Russian history has been connected with exoteric Christianity in its more Greek (Byzantine or Eastern) aspect.

In another passage the ‘mythology’ of the Slavonic peoples is spoken of; it is not, properly speaking, a mythology with individual deities like those we are familiar with in Western Europe. Yet on the other hand it develops something analogous to the theosophical or anthroposophical conception of successive planes or worlds and their relations to one-another. Five interpenetrating worlds are mentioned. It is a beautiful passage and one would like to hear it expounded by someone well-versed in the Slavonic lore.

ELEVENTH, CLOSING LECTURE

Dr. Steiner begins by saying, only the very, very least of what the subject of the course contains or calls for, has been able to be included in this short time; he hopes to come again and to continue, at any rate on kindred subjects. He then expresses about the Scandinavian folk-spirit what is repeatedly indicated in these last lectures. It is, that through the Scandinavian people especially, Spiritual Science might become *volkstümlich*. I am really at a loss to translate this word. It means ‘popular’ not in the superficial, rather trivial sense in which we mostly understand the term, but in the sense of being united with the life-forces of a ‘folk,’ — of an entire people, — permeating all its culture from the bottom upward, finding expression as it were in song and ballad, in laughter and in tears, in work and play.

The Norse mythology, says Dr. Steiner, reveals how their folk-spirit has retained in a childlike form deep wisdom which is one day destined to find expression in a maturer and more conscious form. And this in turn would tend to ‘popularize’ — in the best sense of the word — what is to-day finding expression in a more sublimated, philosophic form: our modern Spiritual Science.

Further examples are now given of how the pictures of Germanic and Norse mythology contain the truths of Occult Science. Dr. Steiner refers, for the first time explicitly, to what was certainly in the background of the great race-creating process outlined in the fourth and sixth lectures. It is described at some length, in [Occult Science](#) and in other lectures, how the great majority of human souls, about the time when the Sun had left the Earth, could not abide the hardening conditions but rose to other planets, Saturn, Jupiter and Mars, Venus and Mercury; and how these souls, in late Lemuria and afterwards all through Atlantis, — after the hardening forces of the Moon had left the Earth — came back again and entered human bodies, for the first time under the Earth-conditions now obtaining. Such, broadly speaking, was the ‘first incarnation’ of every one of us, for human life on Earth — or, should we say, about the Earth — before the severance of Sun and Moon was not yet incarnation in the proper sense. A very wonderful event it must have been, this virginal descent, when we were yet unburdened with earthly Karma. Now through the watery mists of Atlantis, says Rudolf Steiner, those on the Earth clairvoyantly beheld this descent of souls out of the Cosmos, their union with earthly bodies, which happened not at arbitrary times but sacredly, in cosmic time and season. Of this, the Northern worship of the Goddess Nerthus — Tacitus relates it — her carriage drawn into the waters, was a remembrance.

In a most wonderful Christmas lecture of the year 1916 — not yet published, but other lecturers, Dr. Wegman and Dr. Stein among them, have told of it — Dr. Steiner spoke of the Nerthus-mysteries in greater detail and of their deep relation to the Archangel of the Annunciation, the Gabriel of St. Luke's Gospel. Their centre was in Southern Jutland.

The special virtue of the Northern soul, and of the education it received from this Folk-spirit of the North, was to begin man's evolution down on the physical plane, very directly inspired by the preceding stage of clairvoyant wisdom. Northern peoples therefore feel their Gods — not only Odin and Thor but others too — as those who help them forge on Earth the magic tools, transplanting into earthly forms of skill erstwhile clairvoyant powers. Thus Freyer and his sister Freya, Angel-beings, of the Wanen. “Within the physical world, the world restricted to the outer senses, Freyer was the continuer of all that had hitherto been received in a clairvoyant form.” What springs out of the body of the Earth was to the Northern imagination *Jotunheim*, [*Jotunheim*: our edition here repeats the modern German, *Riesenheim*, as used by Dr. Steiner.] the home of giants. Therefore was Freyer wedded to the giant's daughter, *Gerd*. His horse was *Bluthuf*, for through the blood the Spirit comes to Earth. His magic ship, which

could be folded up into a tiny box and then again unfold its sails as wide as Heaven, pictures the alternation of the soul in day and night. Into the convolutions of the brain, into the tiny skull, the soul must fold its wings in the day-waking state.

Now Dr. Steiner goes on to speak, as he most often did at the conclusion of a lecture-course during those years, of Christ's second coming. Since the year 1899 A.D. the dark age, Kali Yuga, is at an end. Increasingly in the next centuries there will be people naturally gifted with a new kind of etheric clairvoyance, even though they have not undergone occult training. It will for instance take the form that at important moments in their life they will see before them in a kind of dream-vision scenes of a future time on Earth. The Karmic balance, the future Karmic counterpart of their own present deeds, will be made visible to them in the ether-world. This heightened sensitiveness to Karmic justice — an enhancement of what has hitherto only lived in man in the dim feeling of conscience — will also lead to the perception of the living Christ in the ether-world. For Christ is now the Lord of Karma. (Of all this, we may read more fully in the well-known lecture-cycle [*From Jesus to Christ*](#), given the following year, 1911.) During the next 3,000 years, these experiences in mankind will grow, and will become ever more frequent.

Dr. Steiner warns his hearers of a variety of dangers. What he reiterates at considerable length in the remainder of this lecture must be understood upon the background of the controversy which was then rising to a climax in the Theosophical Society. A 'second coming' of Christ in the more physical sense was being spoken of; at the same time Dr. Steiner was attacked for giving too much prominence to Western, specifically Christian doctrine. He emphasizes here that what is taught out of true Occultism must not proceed from sympathies or antipathies, or from a preference for East or West, or a desire to appease existing prejudices. All this he goes into most carefully, as it were out of a deep anxiety that he be rightly understood. He points out that there are no dogmatic premises — Christian or of any other kind — in Rosicrucian teaching. He pleads that it be not taken dogmatically on his or any other person's authority. It asks to be received freely and with open judgment, applied to life, tested by the facts of life itself. All that is given out of true sources can await this test. The Rose-Cross does not seek to perpetuate the Christianity of the past or to set up existing forms or dogmas as a standard; it seeks to bring about the Christianity of the future which will outgrow mistakes and limitations of the past.

There is a twofold danger. Whereas the old materialism of the West will simply dismiss the new Christ-experience as fantastic, another kind of materialism, not understanding that the Christ at His new coming must appear in a different form, will look for His return in a physical body as before. Dr. Steiner speaks of the tragedy of false Messiahs past and future — one Sabbatai Zewi of Smyrna, for example, who appeared in the 17th century.

Of yet another danger Dr. Steiner warns his hearers — which we may feel very immediately at this moment. He turns again to the Germanic vision of the future, Ragnarök, the 'Twilight of the Gods.' The forces of the old Gods alone will not avail. Thor and the Midgard snake destroy each other; Odin does not prevail against the Fenris wolf. Freyer is overcome by earth-born Surtur.

Dark and confusing relics of the old clairvoyance, says Dr. Steiner, will be the Fenris-wolf of the future, fraught with appalling dangers. New faculties however have arisen in mankind during the long intervening period of Kali Yuga; these, now maturing in a healthy way and giving birth to the new spiritual sight, will alone have power to recognise and overcome the

darkness. Germanic and Scandinavian mythology knows of these future forces and of the Divine Being who is to come. “It knows indeed that that ethereal Form is living, wherein shall be embodied what we are now to see again: ‘Christ in etheric form.’ He alone will succeed in driving out dark and impure clairvoyant powers which would confuse mankind. ... Widar who has been silent until now, — Widar will overcome the Fenris wolf. Whoever recognizes Widar's meaning, whoever feels Him in his soul, will find that in the 20th century the power to see the Christ can indeed be given to man again. ...” In Scandinavian and Mid-European Mysteries and occult schools of the past, says, Dr. Steiner, “Widar was held in secret, — the God who should await His future mission.”

In a significant way, towards the end of the lecture, Rudolf Steiner speaks once more of the approaching mission of the Scandinavian folk-soul, and, looking farther forward, of what must subsequently be achieved by Slavonic peoples. Only a part of what will have to be given for the development of all mankind during the fifth post-Atlantean epoch, has yet been able to be given. “The Germanic-Scandinavian Archangel ... has the inherent power to achieve this: that what was not yet able to be given in the first half of the fifth post-Atlantean epoch may be accomplished in the second half, namely that spiritual element which we were able to recognize in a germinal, prophetic form in the philosophy and in the feeling of the common folk among the Slavs.”

Let every one, says Rudolf Steiner in conclusion — each individual, each nation or even scattered fragment of a nation — develop what he has to give and give it candidly, sincerely, — individually. This will be truest tolerance. Then will the several tongues of flame mount up together into one great flame upon the altar, the united progress of mankind. So then he calls again for ‘self-knowledge of nations,’ in a sincere spirit wherein pettiness and envy melt away. Often the smallest peoples “have most important contributions to make, since it is given to them to preserve and nurture old or new motifs in the soul's life.” The spiritual movement in which we are is destined to unite mankind; yes, most assuredly, it will bring about an end of all divisions.

Towards the end of the long chapter, ‘Evolution of the World and Man,’ in the [*Outline of Occult Science*](#) there is a passage bearing upon this, impressive in its simplicity, and with it we may fitly close these pages. The feeling to which Dr. Steiner here appeals — the feeling for the *unity of all mankind* and for the power of *harmony through individuality* — is indeed living in the humanity of to-day. It is a deeply rooted faith and will withstand the terrific onslaughts that are now being made upon it, — though in the trial it will have to find itself anew. For it is rooted in the Christ-Impulse which has been working in mankind ever since the Mystery of Golgotha. This, Rudolf Steiner tells us, was the first phase in the Christ-ideal to be brought home to the inner understanding of mankind. For in effect, “all that was poured into human evolution through the coming of Christ, worked in it like a seed. Only by degrees can the seed ripen ... We are only at the beginning of Christian evolution. In the successive epochs that have elapsed since His appearance, it could unveil of its inner essence only so much as men and nations were able to receive, — to assimilate to their powers of understanding.”

In old Lemuria and Atlantis, after the separation of the Moon when Earth was being newly peopled from the planets, mankind became divided into racial and other spiritually founded groupings. Diversities celestial in origin (as Dr. Steiner said again in the letter quoted on page 30) became more deeply stamped in the material body; became the heavy load of Karma — not only individual but group-Karma — separating men. “While this was working itself out,

there could not be the ideal of 'universal humanity.' Mankind had gone forth from unity in the beginning, but Earth-evolution hitherto had led to separation.

"In the idea of Christ there is first given an ideal to counteract all separation; in the Man who bears the name of Christ the forces of the sublime Being of the Sun are living, and in these forces every human 'I' will find its source and its foundation. Even the Israelites still felt themselves a nation, — the human being a member of the nation. By grasping — to begin with, purely in the thought — that in Christ the ideal Man was living, beyond the reaches of all separation, Christianity grew to the ideal of a universal brotherhood. Beyond all separate interests and kinships there arose the feeling that, the inmost Self of man has the same origin in every one. Beside all *earthly* ancestors appears the common Father of all men. 'I and the Father are One.'"

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The Folk-Souls lecture-course of 1910, fundamental though it is, contains only a small proportion of all that Rudolf Steiner gave, bearing upon this subject. Some of the earlier lectures relating to it have been mentioned in our Introduction. In later years, during and after the tragedy of the World-War, Dr. Steiner in innumerable lectures tried to show how we can find in Spiritual Science the foundation for an unbiased, spiritually minded judgment of the impending questions — including these, the widest social questions of mankind.

These later lectures amplify what is given in the 'Folk-Souls' cycle — the relation, for example, of the threefold soul to the civilization-epochs and to the Western nations of to-day, or again, the character of the Slavonic peoples and their connection with the future. I mention for example the lecture-cycle *Thoughts for the Times* (1914–15), especially the first five lectures. Given about the same time, there is the valuable single lecture (27th November, 1914), the English version of which has been published, entitled *The Soul of the Nation*. These lectures were given in Berlin. About the same period, at Dornach in Switzerland, where his pupils — members of 17 nations — were quietly continuing the building of the first Goetheanum, Dr. Steiner, in explaining the progression of motifs in the capitals and architrave, described again the characters and tasks of European nations. The building was to express in an artistic form the life and evolution of all mankind. In the original, if not yet in English, these lectures have now been published: *Der Dornacher Bau als Wahrzeichen künstlerischer Entwicklungs-Impulse* (five lectures, Dornach, October, 1914).

Upon the history and psychology of nations, the lectures given by Dr. Steiner at the time of the 'Threefold Commonwealth' movement are very rich in content; their value also lies in the fact that Dr. Steiner often treats the subject, if I may put it so, from a more worldly aspect. These lectures abound in symptomatic instances, taken from history, literature and daily life. Not without irony and humour, Dr. Steiner characterizes the more every-day thoughts and feelings of people and of peoples — about themselves, and one-another. These things which *play* their part in outward life are then revealed in their relation to the deeper aspects known to Spiritual Science. Of the great number of such lectures, I will again mention only a very few, *e.g.*, those given at Dornach in November and December, 1918, *Foundations in History and Evolution for true Social Judgment*, and those immediately following: *In Altered Times and Conditions*, also *The Fundamental Social Demand of our Age*.

These later lectures, where they bear upon this theme, do not however only amplify what was laid down in the original lecture-cycle we have been studying. Dr. Steiner throughout his

life continued his research in Spiritual Worlds; so too with regard to the spiritual essence of mankind, country and nation, quite new aspects, new spiritual discoveries came into his later teaching. Even if these had been implicit in his earlier work, it still makes all the difference when they are given explicitly.

The most important among these newer elements in Spiritual Science is the discovery of Threefold Man — the head- or nerves-and-senses system, the middle or rhythmic system, and the digestive and limb-system — published by Rudolf Steiner for the first time in 1917, in his [*Riddles of the Soul*](#). He himself mentions in this book that he has been working at it for over thirty years and is only now in a position to bring it forward, in a form that will do justice both to the spiritual and natural-scientific aspects.

In terms of Threefold Man quite a new light is able to be thrown upon the diverse character of mankind in different regions of the Earth, — also in different nations. Here there comes in another *Leitmotif* of Dr. Steiner's later work, namely the differentiation — threefold once more — of 'East, Middle and West,' both within Europe and in the organism of the entire Earth (Asia, Europe and America). We mention for example the valuable single lecture, given at Stuttgart early in 1920: [*The Peoples of the Earth in the Light of Anthroposophy*](#). (The English version is in 'Anthroposophy' Quarterly, Vol. III, 1928, No. 2.) Then above all there are the lectures Dr. Steiner gave at the 'East and West' Congress in Vienna, 1922, the English edition of which has just been published, entitled *West and East: Contrasting Worlds*. In a more esoteric aspect Dr. Steiner deals with East, Middle and West in his Dornach lectures of October, 1923, relating them in imaginative pictures to the great spiritual archetypes known from of old as Eagle, Lion and Bull. ([*Man as Symphony of the Creative Word*](#), — the first three lectures.)

The configuration of the Earth — East, Middle and West — brings us again to another aspect, touched on but not elaborated in the 'Folk-Souls' lectures: namely the living body of the Earth itself, — how Hierarchies and Nature-Spirits fashion the countries, continents and islands, plains and mountain ranges and so on; and how the destinies and characters of peoples are connected with it. What Spiritual Science tells concerning this, amazing as it often is, appeals directly to our feeling of reality, and above all it has a healing influence as against the current point of view, which ascribes national character far too exclusively to physical heredity.

Upon this aspect, we may mention three invaluable lectures, which have not yet been published, though the original was duplicated some years ago for the use of students. Given at Dornach on the 9th, 14th and 15th November, 1914, they go into many details of the physical and elemental geography of Europe and the characters and tasks of nations inhabiting these regions. Another most essential lecture, 'The Souls of the Nations and the Mystery of Golgotha,' given in March, 1918, will be found in the lecture-cycle *Anthroposophical Life-Gifts*. Here Dr. Steiner describes the spiritual 'spectrum' of the Earth, the significance of the Holy Land, and — within Europe — how the Nation-Souls severally work in the elements of earth, water, air and fire.

Once more, then, for a fuller insight into the spiritual science of Nation-Souls and all the racial and other differentiations of mankind, the 'Folk-Souls' course of 1910 should be supplemented by some at least of these later lectures — or again others which we have not mentioned, for a quite different selection might have been made. We could not attempt anything like a complete bibliography; we could only indicate other important aspects which

Dr. Steiner brought in from time to time, and mention some of the lectures where they will be found. Most if not all the lectures we have named are readily accessible to students, — in the majority of cases also in an English version.

It should also be mentioned that Rudolf Steiner's pupils have since produced a great variety of works bearing more or less directly, from the side of history and literature, mythology, ethnology and other sciences, upon this subject. A more complete bibliography would however take us far beyond the scope of this booklet. In the bookshops and libraries of the anthroposophical movement, students will find the help and guidance they require.

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