

Foreword

The substance of this book is a kind of summation of twenty-five years of anthroposophical work. The larger part of this was carried out under conditions where the question of one's existential connection to Anthroposophy was an ever-present reality. For under the regime in Russia at that time—which one may hope now belongs firmly to the past—any free cultural life not under government supervision was associated with dangers that were thoroughly real.

The constant awareness of these dangers, not only for myself but also for my friends and their families, led me again and again to ask myself the question: What is the meaning of Anthroposophy for your life and what is your individual, inner relationship to it?

Many years of living with this question in connection with an intensive study of Anthroposophy and a constant practice of meditation on the basis of Rudolf Steiner's writings and lectures led gradually to a wholly new experience of Anthroposophy. It revealed itself as not only a contemporary spiritual-scientific teaching issuing from the sources of esoteric Christianity but also as a living being of the spiritual world, as Anthroposophia, who brings to human beings of the twentieth century the new revelation of the heavenly Sophia, the divine wisdom.

In the present age of human freedom, this revelation consists in the lifting of the veil from the deepest mysteries of man (anthropos), mysteries which lead through true self-knowledge to world-knowledge, to a conscious grasping of the whole multiplicity of relationships between man and the spiritual cosmos, between the individual ego and the world of the higher divine-spiritual hierarchies.

Thus even before it was possible to become acquainted with the corresponding places in Rudolf Steiner's lectures, there developed to begin with an intuition and—subsequently—a real experience of Anthroposophy as a living, supersensible being who works in the higher worlds for the good of earthly evolution.

Hence the first part of the book contains a description of the path which led to such a living experience of Anthroposophy. The substance of this first part was originally developed in the form of lectures given in various European cities. The style of the spoken word has therefore been preserved to a certain extent, notwithstanding the thorough revisions which have been made. In this sense this first section differs from the rest of the book, which was from the outset drafted in written form. Its purpose is to find an answer to the question which had again and again been addressed to me after lectures: What is the place of the living being Anthroposophia in the hierarchic cosmos, and what is her relationship to the Christ, the heavenly Sophia and the Spirit of our Time, the Archangel Michael?

I am aware of the great difficulties that are associated with arriving at any real clarity regarding this question. For the unfolding of the mysteries of the Sophia belongs not to our fifth but to the following, sixth, cultural epoch. That is probably why Rudolf Steiner was careful to speak about this subject only with great reserve.

Nevertheless I hope to show in the second and third parts of this book that even the relatively little that Rudolf Steiner said about this theme can, when taken as a whole, serve as a foundation for real progress towards understanding the nature and significance

both of the heavenly Sophia and other emissary for present-day humanity, the supersensible being Anthroposophia, in our cosmos.

Generally speaking, however, I regard this book merely as a means of stimulating readers to carry out further independent work of their own along these lines. For the more consciously and existentially his relationship to Anthroposophy is formed as a result of such work, the closer will he come to its living being in the supersensible worlds.

This is, moreover, the purpose of studying it, in accordance with the first stage of the path of modern Christian initiation. (See *Occult Science—An Outline* by Rudolf Steiner.)

Thus the living being Anthroposophia can become a true guide on the path which leads us as people of today to a conscious fulfilment of our true task on the Earth.

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PART I

The Study of Spiritual Science as a Meeting with the Living Being Anthroposophia

On 16 August 1902, at the beginning of his activity as a spiritual teacher of humanity, Rudolf Steiner wrote in a letter: 'I shall trust in and build on the strength which will enable me to bring "pupils of the spirit" along the road of their development. This is the sole significance of my deed of inauguration.'¹

These words form the beginning of a new epoch in the history of spiritual streams. If we look back to the old mysteries, we find a total dependency of the pupil on the master. He was for them more than a father, he was their absolute authority, not only in spiritual questions but also in all other areas of life.

This attitude changed radically with the beginning of the fifth post-Atlantean epoch, the epoch of human freedom. And in accordance with this, Anthroposophy seeks today to establish a new and wholly different connection. From now on a true pupil of the spirit can be a fully independent personality, whose actions do not rest on belief in an outer authority but on insight and understanding. Consequently, everything that the modern spiritual teacher gives to his pupils has the sole intention of leading them to the point where they are capable of taking their destiny into their own hands or bearing full responsibility for their own spiritual development. This fundamental principle of modern spiritual science makes the personal guidance of the pupil by a physically present master no longer necessary. The role of the latter can also be fulfilled by a book in which the path of initiation is precisely described, especially if the study of the book maintains the quality of conversation with the spiritual teacher, as Rudolf Steiner says in the postscript to his book, *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds: How is it achieved?*²

In his book *Occult Science—An Outline*, Rudolf Steiner enumerates seven steps which the pupil has to take on the path of initiation. The first step is described as 'the study of spiritual science, where one makes use of the power of judgment which one has won in the world of the senses'.³

Study as the first stage of initiation is something wholly new in the development of occultism. Of course "we have a great deal to study in our modern civilisation. First we learn at school, then during the training for our profession and so forth; but study as the first stage of initiation we find nowhere except in Anthroposophy. And it is precisely here that we may easily encounter a characteristic misunderstanding. One says: 'Yes, the second, third and fourth stages of modern initiation, they are particularly important'—what is meant are the stages of Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition, which can only be attained through concentration, meditation and other spiritual exercises that Rudolf Steiner has given—'but the first stage, that of study, is not so important'. And so many people begin at once with these exercises without having gone thoroughly through the stage of study.

In order to show how far the stage of study can lead us on the path of initiation, it is necessary to consider the following and—to take a simple example—to begin with an experience which most anthroposophists will remember, since it is connected with their

first contact with Anthroposophy! One day a book of Rudolf Steiner's came into our hands, and we began to read, one page, two pages or even twenty, until we came to a place which contained a thought or a picture which touched us so strongly that we were moved to the depths of our soul.

What does such an experience signify? If we ponder this question, it will emerge that in a deeper sense we already know what we have read here. In other words: at the moment of this experience •we have the feeling that we already know what Anthroposophy is saying to us here, only that we have forgotten it for a while and are now beginning to recall it again.

This experience was also well known to Plato, who said that all knowledge is really a kind of remembering (amnesia).

That is the moment when the study of Anthroposophy begins to contain that quality which makes it the first stage of initiation. For we have now begun to realise that everything that one can find in Anthroposophy, the picture of man and of the cosmos, their evolution, human life on the Earth and after death in connection with the hierarchies, the laws of karma and reincarnation and much more, all belongs to us. We already know these things, but through Anthroposophy we raise them to consciousness. This is an experience which can be compared with the kindling of an inner flame which suddenly illumines what already lies in the depths of our soul, albeit in an unconscious and forgotten form.

But what does study as the first stage of initiation signify from an esoteric point of view? Every true modern initiation has the task of leading the human individual into the spiritual world in full consciousness. And in the spiritual world there are no objects, no abstract forces or energies, but exclusively the spiritual beings of the ascending hierarchies. In this sense Rudolf Steiner spoke of how the second stage of initiation, that of Imagination, can lead to knowledge of, or a meeting with, the Third Hierarchy; the third, that of Inspiration, to a meeting with the Second; and the fourth, that of Initiation, to a meeting with the First or highest Hierarchy.⁴

Here the question arises: If the study of spiritual science is to be the first stage of modern initiation, it should surely also lead to a meeting with an actual spiritual being. But who is this being whom one can meet through such study? The answer to this question may be sought in what follows.

The fundamental experience described above of Anthroposophy as a kind of remembering sometimes stands in contrast to the difficulty that—as the modern science of the spirit of humanity—it was initially given in a rigorously intellectual form. However, we come with time to realise that we should be deeply grateful to Rudolf Steiner for having given this knowledge in the objective form of pure thought, for only in this way can we remain wholly free as regards higher knowledge: thoughts do not compel.

This absolute spiritual freedom as the underlying principle of modern initiation was carefully prepared from the middle of the fourteenth century onwards in the principal stream of esoteric Christianity, that of Rosicrucianism.⁵ Anthroposophy, where we find the same total respect for the freedom of the individual, is the successor to this stream in our century.

In this connection, three characteristic features of anthroposophical initiation should be mentioned in particular.

1. It is possible for every human being to tread the path of initiation without neglecting or even abandoning the tasks that karma has assigned to him in this world. He can follow the spiritual path amidst modern civilisation.

2. As already mentioned, there is no authority in spiritual science; as in other scientific disciplines, the totality of its wisdom is given in a form which is wholly in accordance with the free judgment of the individual 'ego'.

3. The sole foundation for this path of inner development is the free 'ego' of the individual, and no step can be taken on this path which has not been grasped by it with full clarity. For the 'ego' must follow its path of knowledge in full consciousness.

These are the three principles which guarantee our freedom in relation to all anthroposophical knowledge.

However, in addition to this more outward or exoteric aspect of the principle of freedom there is also an inner or esoteric aspect, to which we now wish to turn. We should first consider the fact that the spiritual substance of Anthroposophy is freely accessible to all people, for Rudolf Steiner's books can be obtained in any bookshop. This opens up two possibilities as to what one may do with this knowledge. One can approach it seriously and responsibly in the mood of a true quest for knowledge, as described at the beginning of the book. Knowledge of the Higher Worlds, in order to place this wisdom at the service of mankind. But it is also possible to adopt a contrary attitude to this knowledge, above all if it is acquired out of curiosity, comfortableness or egotism. In such a case this is to be regarded as a kind of misuse of the higher knowledge of spiritual science.

If we take the all-embracing law of karma seriously, we must say: in the spiritual world whence this wisdom has come, a being will henceforth have to bear the consequences of such misuse until all those human beings who have entered into a connection with this spiritual substance have taken upon themselves complete responsibility for it in a fully conscious way; that is, a being must until this time bear the whole negative karma which arises through the misuse of higher knowledge. That is the other, esoteric side of human freedom, which is expressed in the words of St Paul: 'You are bought with a great price.'⁶

That individuality who more than any other bears the spiritual consequences of the negative karma of human freedom is Christian Rosenkreutz, the founder of Rosicrucianism. As a direct disciple of Christ Jesus and His greatest human follower, he founded in the middle of the thirteenth century the occult stream which rests wholly upon human freedom.⁷

Rudolf Steiner speaks of this in the following words: 'Those who have any knowledge of this individuality know, too, that Christian Rosenkreutz will be the greatest martyr among human beings -apart from the Christ who suffered as a God. The sorrows that will lead him to become a great martyr will be caused by the fact that so few make the resolve to look into their own soul in order there to seek the evolving individuality, and to submit to the uncomfortable fact that truth will not be offered to one ready-made on a plate, but has to be acquired by intense struggle and effort—nothing else can be asked for in the name of him who is known as Christian Rosenkreutz.'⁸ It should be added here that the same must be said of Rudolf Steiner. For he is the greatest colleague and friend of Christian Rosenkreutz, especially since the Christmas Conference.⁹ This fact explains—among other things—that image which Rudolf Steiner gave to Ita Wegman in

1924 as an answer to her question about his relationship with Christian Rosenkretz: 'There is an altar in the spiritual world, on the one side of which stands Christian Rosenkretz with a blue stole and on the other Rudolf Steiner with a red stole.'¹⁰ What is this altar, and where have we found it mentioned? In the book *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds*, in the chapter 'Life and Death. The Great Guardian of the Threshold'—which is concerned with the pupil's meeting with the Christ in the higher worlds, an encounter which represents the culmination of the whole path of his initiation and transforms him from pupil into a true Christian master—Rudolf Steiner writes: 'If he resolves to fulfil the demands of the higher Being of Light, he will be able to contribute to the liberation of the human race. He will be able to bring his gifts to the altar of humanity.'^{*} Before this 'altar of humanity' in the supersensible world stand Christian Rosenkretz and Rudolf Steiner as his spiritual protectors.

^{*} GA 10. In his book *Occult Science* (GA 13), in the chapter entitled 'Knowledge of Higher Worlds', Rudolf Steiner writes that it is Christ Himself Who is revealed to the spirit-pupil at this stage of his inner development in the sublime figure of the Great Guardian.

This deeply compelling image, together with Rudolf Steiner's words about the great martyrdom of the founder of the Rosicrucian stream, can make us conscious of our great responsibility for Anthroposophy, because we recognise that it is our task to help these two masters—through a serious, intensive study of spiritual science—to bear and transform the negative karma of human freedom, above all through our efforts to work together with them and with one another instead of increasing their burdens and suffering for mankind.

If we study spiritual science in the sense characterised above, we gradually learn to think in a wholly new way, not only with our physical but with the etheric brain. For all anthroposophical concepts are connected not with physical but with supersensible realities. In this realm we are, to be sure, not as yet clairvoyant; but we are nevertheless already in the spiritual world if we no more than actively think Anthroposophy. In other words: if we use our ordinary thinking to understand not physical but spiritual realities, the possibility arises for the first time to leave our physical body in a fully conscious way. For by this means we attain what may be called sense-free thinking; and that is the surest and safest beginning of a modern path of initiation leading into the spiritual world, which we otherwise embark upon only after our death or unconsciously in sleep.

Nevertheless, even though the study of Anthroposophy has become an essential part of our life, giving us answers as to the deeper meaning of life and our destiny, answers without which we could no longer exist, we may still feel that our anthroposophical thoughts are of a somewhat abstract nature.

For Anthroposophy is on this level comparable to a new language which we endeavour to learn with all its difficulties. We first have to master the individual letters, then the words, grammatical rules and so on, before we are able to read the whole text which opens for us the gate into a completely new world. Thus one may say: in Anthroposophy we learn a language whose words are hidden in all things of the world; they are the spirit sleeping in everything, which waits to be deciphered, understood and liberated by man's newly won knowledge. But in order to achieve this, we must at this stage as a first step take up Anthroposophy in a conceptual form before we can make the next step.

Then we must learn in a second step to experience Anthroposophy in an inwardly artistic way, that is, transform its thoughts out of our own strength into pictures and imaginations. In this way spiritual science becomes for us a great work of art, a mighty drama which embraces the whole world, which is far more magnificent than for example Goethe's Faust or Dante's Divine Comedy and which above all has the quality that we do not merely observe it on the stage as spectators in comfortable seats but ourselves fully participate in it and are, moreover, the principal actors. By experiencing Anthroposophy in this way, we become capable of passing through the entire fullness of feelings from joy and bliss to grief and despair. And if we have come so far along this path that each time that—in our devotion to the study of Anthroposophy—we are capable of transforming through our own soul-forces the thoughts of spiritual science into living pictures or imaginations which truly take hold of all our feelings and sensations, we shall gradually observe that a wholly new faculty is unfolding within us: the faculty of living in feelings which have developed in complete independence from our physical body.

Generally speaking, people are convinced that—in contrast to feeling—thinking is difficult, for example, if one tries to work through Hegel's Logic or Aristotle's writings on logic. Feeling, it is supposed, is as easy as breathing. That is true; but only in so far as we confine our observations to feelings -which we know from our ordinary lives and are almost exclusively called forth by outer perceptions or inner egoistic wishes. Of course, if we stand before a beautiful landscape we can do no other than sense its beauty; and if we do not like someone, antipathy involuntarily rises up in us every time we merely call this person to mind. Whereas if we try to summon forth a strong, deep feeling in our soul without being stimulated from without or from within, we will immediately experience this as something of extraordinary difficulty. So our feelings are actually very weak if they are not supported either by our wishes or sense-perceptions.

In the Middle Ages it was quite different. A monk in his cell was capable of having powerful feelings when he beheld something altogether insignificant, for example a small stone or a plant. For in these contemplations he was able through his inner strength to experience within himself the whole majesty of God and the glory of His Creation. Later, in the fourteenth century, it was still possible for Dante to write a poem about a lady of great beauty, so intimately and full of feeling as though it were about his beloved, whereas it was actually about the lady Philosophy.¹¹ This strength of feeling has long since waned. If today we try to develop the same intensity of feeling for the philosophy of Hegel or Leibnitz as for a loved one, we shall immediately discover how weak our feeling really is. Thus one can ask oneself how many people still know what true spiritual love is—love -which is wholly free from all sensuality.

In general one may say that people today are not fully conscious of their feelings. They live in them rather as in their dreams, which are in most cases merely the reflections of outer circumstances or subjective states of soul. But if we try to transform the anthroposophical thoughts within us into living pictures or imaginations, we gradually begin to awake in our feelings, for these pictures are not subjective and arbitrary but correspond to real events and processes in the spiritual world. In this way—although not as yet clairvoyantly in the literal sense—we are already living in the -world of imaginations. And these imaginations are as real and as alive as those -which we will

later perceive in the spiritual world.

Like the first, so can this second step likewise be taken only through our own free inner efforts. No one can do this for us, for if that were to happen -we -would no longer be free.

And the most important fruit of this stage -will be the awakening of an ever more intense and intimate love for Anthroposophy, so that gradually all the forces of our heart and our soul will flow towards it in -warm gratitude.

This capacity of sense-free feeling enables us henceforth to use it as a new organ of perception which is no less objective than the thinking that -we referred to earlier.

Goethe describes this new capacity as an art which makes it possible to investigate and discover deeper laws and forces of nature with the exactness of science.¹² His theories of colour and plant metamorphosis are merely the beginnings of this new method of coming closer to the phenomena of nature, a method -which was taken further by Rudolf Steiner in Goetheanism. Novalis was the first who completely understood Goethe in this realm and who indicated how to use this capacity of feeling as an organ of perception in its further development as a 'magical idea'.

This new organ, consciously developed, can also help us to enter into the spiritual causes underlying the confusing events and processes of our time. Then these events will gradually reveal themselves to be manifestations of a spiritual reality which stands behind them and lead us to an understanding of the hidden forces working in the world today. This is a new way of approaching history, which Rudolf Steiner calls a 'symptomatological study'. It will enable us to address one of the greatest problems of our time, that of distinguishing between good and evil in our modern civilisation. This is in fact not so easy as it was in earlier times, for example in the Middle Ages. For today many things appear as good and positive and yet are actually often thoroughly evil, as subsequent events show, and vice versa.

If we investigate this fact more closely, -we may observe that a real capacity to distinguish is particularly vital in this sphere. Otherwise, more and more people will be spiritually exploited and made use of, without their knowledge, for wholly evil purposes, as frequently happens nowadays. If, however, we have taken the second step in the process of development that has been described, feeling becomes a new, exact instrument of perception for the deeper and often hidden realities of existence. Then sooner or later the central imagination of our time, the imagination of the Time-Spirit Michael fighting the dragon, will appear before us in its full spiritual significance. And we shall learn to perceive this mighty imagination in all its many aspects behind a great variety of contemporary events and thereby create the cognitive foundation which can enable us to become true servants of Michael on the Earth, his helpers in the battle against the -workings of the dragon-like, ahrimanic powers in human evolution in the sense in -which Anthroposophy speaks in our time.

Thus at this second stage of study the thoughts of Anthroposophy take hold not only of our thinking but also of our objectivised feeling. Then we learn to 'think' with the heart, where the spiritual thoughts of the heart are transformed into living imaginations, born out of the pure enthusiasm of human feeling for spiritual truths—yes, for the being of Michael himself.

Rudolf Steiner describes this inner state as one of receiving the being of Michael directly into our hearts and souls. He said: 'He [Michael] frees thoughts from the region of the head; he clears the way for them to the heart; he awakens a spiritual fire within the soul in such a way that man can surrender his whole soul to what he is able to experience in the light of thought. The age of Michael has dawned. Hearts begin to have thoughts; inspiration no longer streams from a mystic twilight but from a thought-illuminated clarity of soul. To understand this is to receive Michael into one's soul-life. Thoughts which strive to grasp the spiritual in our time must proceed from hearts that beat for Michael as the fiery Prince of the World Thoughts.'^{14*}

We may now go further and consider a third step of the process of development in question, the stage where the process of study takes hold of the human will.

Philosophers have for centuries discussed the question –whether man is free or not. Rudolf Steiner deals with this problem in his central pre-anthroposophical book, *The Philosophy of Freedom*,¹⁵ and shows that its solution does not lie in theoretical speculation but is a path which leads to the sphere where the will strips away all dependency on the sense-world and thereby becomes the pure revelation of man's innermost spiritual being. Only in this way can true freedom be attained by the individuality.

Even in daily life -we can make the sobering observation that most of our deeds are actually unfree. If we look more closely, we nearly always find this or that reason lying outside of us why we carried out this or that action. This will continue to be the case for as long as the motives of our actions spring from the physical world of the senses, where cause and effect are connected with iron necessity.

Only in one sphere can we act freely today, the sphere where our will can remain uninfluenced equally from our external surroundings and from our own physical nature. This is the sphere of morality, of ethics. When we act out of our moral impulses which derive from a true self-knowledge and a knowledge of the world, we create something which did not exist in the world before. In this way we participate in the coming into being of a new cosmos, in which morality and its root—love—will work as an all-embracing law as do the laws of nature in the modern world.

*In the lecture of 29 March 1910 (GA 119), Rudolf Steiner speaks of how the capacity of being able to think with the heart, with the feelings' is a very important precondition of the imaginative stage of higher knowledge.

Rudolf Steiner wrote about this mystery in the last chapter of his book *Occult Science*, where he describes the transformation of our present cosmos into a new world of the future. And just as the old cosmos was permeated by the events on Old Moon of wisdom and necessity, so will the future cosmos of Jupiter arise out of freedom and love; and it is the task of man and humanity to work to bring this about.

In the last lecture in the First Goetheanum, on 31 December 1922,¹⁶ Rudolf Steiner spoke of how the whole visible cosmos in its sublimity and beauty—from the smallest plant at our feet to the most distant stars of the past—belongs to world evolution and how the only possibility of forming the foundation for a new cosmos lies in our individual ego—with its capacity for self-knowledge—and the purified astral body associated with it. Thus through an earnest and inwardly active study of Anthroposophy

we will develop an ever greater sense of responsibility above all for our deeds, for we will recognise their significance not merely -with regard to our own lives but ultimately also for the -whole future cosmos. In this way Anthroposophy can lead us to a growing and more conscious collaboration with spiritual beings, with the Gods who are connected with the aims of the evolution of humanity and the world. Only those actions which have not been called forth by outward circumstances or personal wishes but purely by the three stages of our work in deepening our knowledge of spiritual science are free human deeds springing from a will that is not bound by the senses. In his book *The Philosophy of Freedom*, Rudolf Steiner calls this inner activity 'moral imagination'; and he characterises it as follows: 'What the free spirit needs, therefore, in order to bring its ideas to realisation, to implement them, is moral imagination. It is the source of the activity of the free spirit.'¹⁷

Thus the study of spiritual science leads the individual to the independent cultivation of a world of ideas in his soul that is free from all sensuality and personal egoism and out of which the impulses of moral imagination can then be summoned forth. 'The free human being acts morally because he has a *moral idea* and human individuals, with the moral ideas belonging to their essential being, are the precondition for a moral world-order' If the study of spiritual science reaches this third stage, every spiritual-scientific thought in our soul becomes a 'moral idea', a true life's ideal which inspires our will. So we can now out of our own experience recognise the truth of Rudolf Steiner's dictum: 'Every idea which becomes an ideal engenders life-forces within you.'¹⁸

Moreover, at this third stage of study—where increasingly the powers of our will are engaged—we shall sooner or later also experience that the soul-realm whence we derive all moral impulses for our deeds is akin to the cosmic sphere which since the Mystery of Golgotha has become the place where the Christ Being can be found. In the course of study our will begins increasingly to awake out of its natural and unfree state of dreamless sleep until finally the Christ Being Himself appears as the *cosmic archetype* of true human freedom. Then we may understand the full significance of Rudolf Steiner's words: 'Through the Deed of Golgotha alone did human freedom, *human dignity in all its fullness*, first become possible That we *are all able to be free beings* we owe to a divine act of love. As people we may feel ourselves to be free beings, but we should never forget that we owe this freedom to the loving deed of God Human beings would be unable to grasp the idea of freedom without the idea of Redemption through Christ; for only then is the idea of freedom justified. If we want to be free, we must bring to Christ the offering of thanks for our freedom! Only then can we have a real perception of it.'¹⁹

Thus in the Christ man finds the 'exalted paragon of earthly humanity';²⁰ for 'we cannot think the concept of man through to its conclusion without arriving at the free spirit as the purest manifestation of human nature'. This highest 'concept of man' as the free spirit' corresponds in one's inner experience to what can also be characterised as that 'real and true humanity' of which Rudolf Steiner writes at the end of his life: 'And in this feeling there will grow together in man, in inner warmth of soul, the experience in and with Christ and the experience of *real and true humanity* "Christ gives me my humanity"—that will be the fundamental feeling which will well up in the soul and pervade it.'²² And a further statement of Rudolf Steiner's is closely connected with this: 'The right interpretation of the word "Anthroposophy" is not "wisdom of man" but rather

"the consciousness of one's humanity".²³

Thus the Christ and Anthroposophy belong very intimately together: the former gives man his 'real and true humanity' and the latter awakens 'the consciousness' of it in the human soul.

In other words: the highest ideal of man as a 'free spirit', which entered into human evolution through Christ's deed on Golgotha, cannot be grasped consciously and brought to fulfilment by human beings without Anthroposophy. For only Anthroposophy can enable man fully to experience what 'the event of Golgotha signifies as a free cosmic deed, which springs from the universal love and can be understood only by the love in man'.²⁴

Thus in the Mystery of Golgotha the highest archetypal picture may be seen of what human beings must gradually develop on the Earth as the capacity to act in freedom, that is, out of pure love for the deed, out of selfless love for the cause: 'Only when I follow my love for my objective is it I myself who act ... I acknowledge no external principle for my action, because I have found in myself the ground for my action, namely, my love of the action. I do not examine intellectually whether my action is good or bad; I carry it out because I love it.'²⁵

The more the individual himself out of his own strength rises in his development towards the ideal of a free spirit, the more he inwardly feels himself intrinsically related to the Christ Being. For with and out of this experience, the highest goal of human evolution will gradually appear as a direct experience before the soul: mankind as the Tenth Hierarchy, the hierarchy of freedom and love,²⁶ which can be attained only by virtue of Christ's deed on Golgotha.

Thus the goals of the evolution of the world and humanity of which we become aware through Anthroposophy in the form of 'moral ideas' and out of which we endeavour to act, at the same time show themselves to be intrinsically related to the aims of Christ. We shall then not only be able to act out of freedom but at the same time also to experience how our free will becomes ever more and more imbued with the universal will of Christ, and we shall discover the truth of the words 'For the Christ-will in the encircling round [of the Earth] holds sway',²⁷ words which in their deeper significance are not incompatible with human freedom.

Thus through Anthroposophy we shall gain an ever better understanding of the nature of Christ's sacrificial deeds on Earth and shall be able to express this plea in full freedom and out of a pure *love for Christ* in our hearts:

Light Divine,
Sun of Christ!
Warm Thou
Our Hearts;
Enlighten Thou
Our Heads.²⁸

In this way a process unfolds in our soul which can be compared with the rising of an inner Sun, filling our deeds with its warmth and light.

Rudolf Steiner describes this inner process as follows: 'When a human being faces the physical Sun and receives from it warmth and light he knows that he is living in a reality. In the same way must he live in the presence of Christ, the spiritual Sun, Who

has united His life with that of the Earth, and receive in a living way from Him into his soul that which in the spiritual world corresponds to warmth and light."²⁹

And so at this third stage of study we find that if we let our deeds be increasingly imbued with this 'warmth' and this 'light' of Christ, with love of the cause and with a spiritual understanding of it, we will—without being initiated—be able to act in our lives like initiates.

We will also now gain a new understanding of the two previous stages of study: the first, where anthroposophical knowledge is experienced as light in the realm of thoughts, and the second, where one learns to feel a true warmth of heart for Anthroposophy.

Step by step the spirit-pupil becomes aware of what has been working esoterically from the beginning through the light of knowledge and the warmth of love as the first two stages: the soft radiance of the light and warmth of the inner Christ-Sun, its gentle dawning. These stages may be compared with those of the rising of the Sun in nature: first the light imbues the vault of heaven with its radiance, proclaiming the dawn, then the Sun's warmth gradually spreads until finally the Sun itself appears.

The most important result of this third stage for the spirit-pupil is the growing feeling that his deeds are becoming increasingly permeated by the Christ-Sun, a feeling which is connected with the knowledge that only such deeds can make a real contribution to the achieving of the aims of earthly evolution. They are a true fulfilment of the words:

That good may become
What we from our hearts would found,
What we from our heads would direct
In conscious
Willing.³⁰

Now we may also recognise Who through His free deed of love has implanted the living seeds of the new cosmos in our souls, in our individual ego. It was the Christ Who, through the Mystery of Golgotha, has given us this *possibility* of creating a new cosmos.

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To summarise what has been said: On this path of study, which enables us by degrees to free our thinking, feeling and will from being conditioned by the physical body, we shall first be led to *Christian Rosenkreutz*, the greatest human initiator of esoteric hristianity, from him to *Michael*, the ruling Time-Spirit of the present, and finally to *the Christ*, the central Being of the Cosmos.

They represent in the spiritual world the forces which on the Earth human beings are increasingly to develop and which are described in *The Philosophy of Freedom* as the three stages of 'moral technique', 'moral imagination' and 'moral intuition'. Thus Christian Rosenkreutz and the other leading masters of esoteric Christianity are also the great teachers of 'moral technique', that is, of how impulses taken up in the spiritual domain can become manifest in the earthly sphere. In this way they stand as inspirers behind the founding of the *science of the spirit* in the twentieth century.³¹

At a far higher level, Michael—'as the spiritual hero of freedom'- represents in the cosmos the principle of 'moral imagination', which as a kingly *art* develops imagination out of the higher realms of spirit as impulses for free deeds. And finally we can see in the Christ Himself a primal source of moral intuitions of a cosmic nature, which also form the foundation for the *religious* element. For true cosmic intuition is always associated with the deepest religious experiences. This illuminates the esoteric meaning of Steiner's words: 'So we may say that Anthroposophy begins in every case with science, enlivens it concept through art and ends in a religious deepening'.³² In the sense of what has been said, we may see the cosmic archetype of the path which in the human individual on the earth leads from moral technique in the working together of Christ, Michael and the 'Masters of wisdom and of the harmony of Feelings',³³ amongst whom Christian Rosenkretz occupies the leading place.

We also find the corresponding three basic elements in the Foundation Stone of the Christmas Conference of 1923/24: the light of thoughts, the creative, formative power of imagination and the substance of all-encompassing love,³⁴ which form the essential nature of science, art and religion as they have always been cultivated in Rosicrucian circles.

* * *

As we now survey the threefold path of study, we may ask ourselves the question: Who is it who has led us on this path and accompanied us? Who is it who stood invisibly beside us when for the first time when an anthroposophical book came into our hands and we began to read it? Who is it who has given us the possibility of following this path from Christina Rosenkretz to Michael and from him to Christ in full freedom?

This being is Anthroposophy itself, though no longer as a teaching but as a living being of the spiritual worlds, as *Anthroposophia*. Rudolf Steiner used this name for this being on two occasions. The first was in a lecture that he gave at the first General Meeting of the Anthroposophical Society. This lecture of 3 February 1913 bears the title *The Essence of Anthroposophy*³⁵ and considers the evolution of Western civilisation as the developmental process of a being who has appeared on Earth under the name of Sophia, Philosophia and now *Anthroposophia* and who would wish to lead man to true self-knowledge.

Rudolf Steiner used this name for the second time at the founding of the General Anthroposophical Society in Domach on 25 December 1923, the most important day of the Christmas Conference. At the beginning of his address he pointed out that it is necessary for every anthroposophist that 'his heart is enlivened through and through by Anthroposophia'.³⁶ And then at the end of his address he mentions this being again, speaking about the need to found 'a true community of human beings for Anthroposophia'.

If one takes Rudolf Steiner's two references to Anthroposophia at the Christmas Conference together, one may see in the first the most important condition for the second. From the lecture of 1913 and from the address of 1923 it follows with full clarity that this being is connected with the individual anthroposophist's path of

development and also with the entire biography of the Anthroposophical Society from its beginnings.

But what does it mean, esoterically speaking, that one's 'heart is enlivened through and through' by a being of the spiritual world? This means none other than finding a real approach to this being in the spiritual world, having a kind of supersensible *encounter* with it.

We must now attempt to describe the path which can lead to such a direct experience of the supersensible being Anthroposophia. Here too we may begin with a simple example. Someone has intensively studied a certain aspect of spiritual science one evening in the three stages as have been described: he has penetrated it with his thoughts, transformed it into pictures and derived from it impulses for his moral conduct and actions. Having done this he goes to sleep. It may then happen that the following morning he wakes up with the feeling, which is akin to a resolve: from this day forth I want to change all my habits, my character and my whole life so as to bring it into harmony with what I have received through the study of spiritual science. I want to begin an entirely new life, which I want to lead in harmony with Anthroposophy, or—as Rudolf Steiner has formulated it—'to become a true representative of the anthroposophical cause'.³⁷ For Anthroposophy has enabled me to recognise the true image of man and, through this, the image of my own being; and I want to make every effort I can to resemble this archetypal picture.

What is so wonderful about this is that we experience this resolve as wholly our own, that is, as entirely free. Indeed, of all the resolves that we have ever made it is the freest. To be sure, we shall not bring this ideal to realisation in a day; on the contrary, it is most probable that with all our various duties we shall at first forget about it during the day. But it may happen that on the next or some subsequent morning after intensive study in the evening we again have this experience, perhaps a third time and so on.

Finally, under the inspiration of these experiences, we shall arrive at the question: What actually happened during the night, between the intensive study in the evening and the resolve of the following morning? For we shall come to feel ever more strongly that while we were asleep something of extraordinary importance has happened—called forth by our intensive study—which we can only compare with an *encounter* with a spiritual being. And then, if we try to strengthen this experience through the conscious effort to implement our resolve, we shall sooner or later receive an answer to our question which may be formulated in earthly words as follows. What brought you during the night in the spiritual world to the resolve referred to above was *the encounter with the living being Anthroposophia*. In beholding this sublime and lofty being, my whole soul was filled with the longing and desire to become like her. This longing, this will-imbued aspiration, appears within me the following morning as the resolve to change my whole life, so that I want henceforth with all my inner strength to become a true representative other spiritual being in the modern world.

The encounter with the living being Anthroposophia in the spiritual world stands in the most intimate inner connection to the threefold path of study that has been described. For on this path we tried to develop faculties of thinking, feeling and will that are not bound to the senses and which we can take with us into the spiritual world into which we enter every night. By this means we were enabled to awaken in this world and perceive the

living being Anthroposophia. Thus these two things belong together- what manifests itself exoterically as study has its esoteric counterpart in one's gradual approach in the spiritual world to the being Anthroposophia and to one's direct encounter with her. In this way, study becomes the first stage of initiation. For, like all subsequent stages, it leads to a supersensible encounter with a spiritual being.

The next step will be that we try to open up -what has been experienced in the night to the light of day, so as to raise this spiritual encounter to our waking consciousness. This can, however, be achieved only by dint of extensive meditation.³⁸ Nevertheless, the study of spiritual science remains the foundation also of our meditative efforts. In particular, the endeavour to become a *true representative of the supersensible being Anthroposophia* on the Earth must always be felt to be an important condition for such an encounter. Thus we may be sure that sooner or later we shall also experience this being with full consciousness, and this will be for us like a real meeting -with a spiritual teacher here on Earth. From this moment onwards the being Anthroposophia will herself be our guide in the spiritual world; and in every question pertaining to our life and actions we shall be able to seek her advice. In the following words Rudolf Steiner describes this direct and personal relationship which then becomes possible with this being who stands so close to man: 'Anthroposophia is in herself an *invisible human being* who goes amongst visible human beings and *towards whom we have the greatest conceivable responsibility....*, -who must indeed be regarded as an invisible human being, as someone with a real existence, who should be consulted in all life's individual actions, ... to whom we are responsible in every moment of our lives.... It is absolutely necessary that everything that happens is to be viewed in consultation with the human being Anthroposophia ... as a living being... So that is what is necessary: true seriousness in our following of that invisible human being of whom I have just spoken.'³⁹

If we have established such a relationship to the living being Anthroposophia, we shall soon notice that our whole life changes, because we have found our *spiritual teacher*. The -wonderful thing is that the being Anthroposophia leaves us absolutely free in everything. But if it is our will to follow this being, she leads us on the path described above to the knowledge of esoteric Christianity. For her most important task today is to lead human beings in the sense of the Time-Spirit to becoming conscious of the great cosmic-earthly mysteries of the living Christ.

This path can also be characterised from another standpoint. In several of his lectures Rudolf Steiner emphasises that in the Christian era the soul encounters the Christ with every incarnation shortly before its union with the physical body and that since the beginning of the age of Michael in the year 1879 Michael has appeared at His side in the spiritual sphere bordering directly onto the Earth.⁴⁰ Here the soul perceives the love of Christ and the light of Michael, that light which makes the world-imaginings, 'world-pictures', in which 'the mysteries of Golgotha' live, visible for it.⁴¹ Thus the human soul receives the impulses to seek the revelations of Michael-Christ on the Earth so as then to contribute to the fulfilment of their purposes.

In the present time not all souls can as yet experience this encounter with full consciousness. However, only a very small degree of consciousness at this moment is sufficient to enable Christian Rosenkretz so to guide the destiny of such human souls that the opportunity arises for them on Earth again to form a connection with this spiritual

experience before birth. And this makes it possible for such souls to remember it in full consciousness so as to find the revelation of Michael-Christ on Earth, in the way that it lives in the anthroposophical movement, and hence become pupils of the living being Anthroposophia.

In the lecture of 28 September 1911 Rudolf Steiner describes at some length how such a person can be summoned today by Christian Rosenkreutz out of the spiritual world to 'his community'. Rudolf Steiner concludes his description with the following words: 'That a person can have an experience of the kind described is due to his having met Christian Rosenkreutz in the spiritual world between his last death and his last birth. Christian Rosenkreutz chose us then, he endowed us with an impulse of will that now leads us to such experiences.'⁴²

From what has been said it transpires that the destiny of an anthroposophist before birth leads him from Christ to Michael and from Michael to Christian Rosenkreutz, whereas on the Earth his path has its origin in Christian Rosenkreutz, who calls him from beyond the threshold to seek the path in this earthly life which leads to Michael and from Michael to Christ.

We find this path—from Christian Rosenkreutz and from him to Christ—in archetypal form in the life of Rudolf Steiner, the greatest emissary and servant of the living being Anthroposophia in the twentieth century. From the meeting with the great Rosicrucian Master in Vienna he then comes during his time in Weimar to a supersensible experience of Michael and, at the end of the nineteenth century, to a spiritual experience of Christ.⁴³

In this way the three decisive seven-year periods which Rudolf Steiner spent in Vienna, Weimar and Berlin, and during which he attained the stage of spiritual teacher, or Master, stand esoterically speaking under the sign of three meetings: with the Rosicrucian Master, with the Time-Spirit Michael and with the Christ.

* * *

As the fruit of our study we have arrived at an experience of Anthroposophia as an actual living being, as our high spiritual teacher. She is for us the bestower of what is most important and most holy, since she gives us true self-knowledge which becomes knowledge of the world and thereby changes our whole life. Now we can ask ourselves, out of our love and gratitude for everything that she has given us: 'What can I do for the being Anthroposophia? Does she perhaps herself have certain wishes and aims -which I can help to fulfil?' Then we shall turn to her with this question in the hope of receiving an answer from her. This answer may follow in the morning as we awaken from sleep, or appear as a kind of memory from our soul's depths during our waking hours. From it we may gather that Anthroposophia indeed also has a longing, the wish to incarnate as a living being on Earth. She does not merely want to guide the pupils of spiritual science from the supersensible world; she has a deep wish to be spiritually present on the Earth in order to be able to work amongst mankind.

Of course, such an incarnation in our time cannot take place physically and indeed not even etherically; it is only possible as an inner presence in the souls (astral bodies) of human beings. And then—this is the second aspect of her answer—we begin to understand that this cosmic being cannot incarnate in a human soul, not even in that of

an initiate or in a group of souls belonging to a particular folk, but only *in a world society* which is in a position to be a representative of the whole of humanity. This is the General Anthroposophical Society, which Rudolf Steiner founded during the Christmas Conference and on 25 December 1923 placed directly under the guidance of the being Anthroposophia. In this way a wholly new connection with this being has arisen which even becomes manifest in the 'statutes'. Rudolf Steiner once characterised this as 'description' or 'representation'. It must in an esoteric sense be regarded as the 'description' or 'representation' of the conditions that are necessary for the incarnation of this being into the souls of all human beings who are working together on the Earth as her pupils.⁴⁴

Thus in the statutes (principles) of the General Anthroposophical Society, the first point runs as follows: 'The Anthroposophical Society is to be an association of people whose will it is to nurture the life of the soul, both in the individual and in human society, on the basis of a true knowledge of the spiritual world.' In other words, among people who have freely united in a common service of Anthroposophia a wholly new 'life of the soul'—with its foundation in what she has given by way of 'a true knowledge of the spiritual world'—is to arise; and this soul-life is able to form a soul-sheath for the incarnation of Anthroposophia.

* * *

It follows from what has been said in this chapter that only through the study of modern spiritual science are we able to come to a personal encounter with Anthroposophia as a living being, a being who really exists in the spiritual world, in order that we might learn directly from her mouth what are the esoteric significance and the principal aims of the General Anthroposophical Society.

Such soul-conversations with spiritual beings kindle within us an inwardly intimate and purely spiritual connection with the world society which is wholly independent of its (inevitable) earthly imperfections. We learn to understand its spiritual task, which consists in creating an all-embracing human sheath for the being Anthroposophia on the Earth through the free brotherly work of its true pupils on Earth.

Our efforts to fulfil this task then become a living testimony of the love, loyalty and gratitude that we feel for this spiritual being who is so important for us as anthroposophists.

There remains only to ask: Who is this being Anthroposophia whom we have come to know in this way, this being who inspires all Christian Masters, who works together with Michael and serves the Christ? How did this being come into existence? How does she relate to the rest of the hierarchic cosmos, and, above all, what is her relationship to the heavenly Sophia, the divine wisdom?

It is the aim of what follows to address these questions.