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**Rudolf Steiner's 'Philosophie der Freiheit' as
the Foundation of Logic of Beholding
Thinking.**

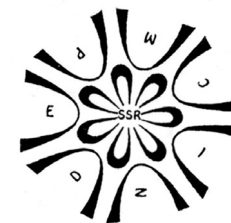
**Religion of the Thinking Will.
Organon of the New Cultural Epoch.**

An Introduction to Anthroposophical Methodology

Volume I

“That the ideas of human beings should not just remain
‘thinking’, but that they should become ‘seeing in
thinking’, an infinitely great deal depends upon this fact.”

Rudolf Steiner



English translation of the German edition, 'Die 'Philosophie der Freiheit'
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Foreword

Another name was given by Rudolf Steiner to his teaching, Anthroposophy: namely, spiritual science, and he regarded the two terms as synonymous. In using the name spiritual science he was fully aware of the responsibility that this implies, stemming from the fact that any branch of knowledge only has the right to call itself a science if it can be brought in a convincing and comprehensive way into harmony with the criteria of scientific truth that obtain at a given stage of scientific thinking, and if it formulates and systematically describes its methodological foundations. For, there is no science without methodology. This holds true also – and, indeed, to a special degree – of the science of the spirit. We reach the core of the matter when we recognize that Rudolf Steiner, throughout the course of his scientific activity, and from its very first beginnings, gave very special attention to what in German philosophy was given the name 'Wissenschaftslehre' (literally: the doctrine of science). While he was active in the fields of epistemological research (theory of knowledge), research into the philosophy of science and a wide range of natural-scientific studies he was continually building up the methodological foundation of his scientific system; this then served as a support also for purely spiritual research, which acquired thereby a spiritual-scientific character.

Initially, Rudolf Steiner developed his epistemological ideas on the basis of his research into the world-view of Goethe. But he soon formulated his own basic principles, too, which were completely new for traditional science. After he had illumined the blind alleys into which it had moved towards the close of the 19th century, he made clear the reasons for the crisis of knowledge (or cognition) which was destroying the spiritual and social life of Europe, and showed that there is a way out of this crisis if science begins to resolve the problems of the spirit which it had been brought face-to-face with as a result of the entire preceding development of human thinking.

Rudolf Steiner devoted much attention to working out the principles of evolutionism in knowledge. As his starting-point he chose Goethe's doctrine of metamorphosis. Thanks to the new methodology, this was extended to include the spheres of soul-spiritual processes, of meta-history and the entire process of cosmic development. On a strict, systematic basis Rudolf Steiner introduced into his science and its methodology an element that has tremendously enriching value for knowledge, namely, esotericism, by which is meant the experience of knowledge of the laws of the existence of supersensible

worlds. Here the first thing he did was – thanks to his discovery of the ontological nature of thinking, of thinking consciousness and its genesis, and his discovery also of the continuous connection of logic and dialectics with the contemplative (beholding) form of thinking – to create the foundation for a virtually unlimited widening of the bounds of *knowledge* on the basis of a widening of the bounds of *consciousness*.

Anthroposophy came into the world at the time when a broad popularizing of occultism was under way, and this was penetrating ever new spheres of culture and threatening to undermine the prevailing principles of scientific truth. This was happening at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. At that time profound qualitative changes in the cultural-historical process were making themselves felt, the nature of which has so far been grasped nowhere outside Anthroposophy. It was due ultimately to these changes that this first appearance of occultism in public life occurred, whose main features proved unfortunately to be the inability to begin a real dialogue with science in a language understandable to science, and its own essentially non-scientific character. This stood in full contradiction to the spirit of the new epoch and for this reason brought it mostly into a state of chaos. It also exposed occultism to ridicule, making it accessible to superficial people, all kinds of ‘mystics’ and ‘miracle-workers’ who had no feeling for the true tasks of the age. And this situation persists to the present day where people, taking refuge in occultism, wish to share nothing in common with *spiritual science*. Everything new that has arisen in this field in the last few decades attempts nothing more than to interpret certain experiences in the supersensible as an alleged extension of the limits of our understanding of matter. In other cases, where the wish is to have nothing to do with materialism and a radical effort is made to alter consciousness by means of occult practices, it often happens that a type of personality that has reached a certain development is utterly destroyed, with nothing positive offered in return. Then lapses into group-consciousness follow, even phenomena of personality-substitution. The easily-graspable structure of some kind of ‘belief-system’ which one clings to in such cases proves, if thought through to its logical conclusion, to be only a disguised form of one and the same materialism.

It is crucial to refer to this right at the beginning, because under the conditions of the occult “Renaissance” into which our civilization is sinking, it is even more difficult to speak about the true concerns and tasks of the spirit than it was during the epoch of materialism and atheism.

The fundamentally new feature of the esotericism which has entered the civilized world of today in the form of Anthroposophy consists in the fact that

it begins with the theory of knowledge. It thereby places itself in a continuous connection with the entire cultural heritage of mankind, whose most central factor proves to be the development of the individual ‘I’-consciousness.

In the course of the last few centuries a crisis has arisen in this development. Its causes lie in the impoverishment of the knowledge of man, which was narrowed down one-sidedly in the direction of sense-reality, this in its turn being due to the inability of the human being to understand his own nature under the conditions of the ever more rapid changes taking place within himself and within the entire cultural and social sphere around him. Anthroposophy helps to make good these deficiencies in development by showing the human being in what way, and why, he must strive in every respect to take as his starting-point his own self-conscious ‘I’. Of special significance is all that Rudolf Steiner says about this in the ‘Philosophy of Freedom’ (Spiritual Activity).

To find access to this book in a way that is in keeping with its true nature is not easy, as the author has himself told us. There is no other book of Rudolf Steiner’s which he spoke about so often. In a lecture given towards the end of his life he recalls: “This ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’, I conceived it in the (eighteen)-eighties, and wrote it down in the (eighteen)-nineties, and I can say the following: I found, in all those people who would at that time actually have had the task of at least considering the central nerve of the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’, an inability to understand this ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’.... This can be explained in the following way: People, even the so-called thinking people of the present time, manage with their thinking to experience it (this thinking) as being only a mirror-image of the outer sense-world. And then they say: It could be that something of a supersensible world might also come to one in one’s thinking: but then it would have to be so, that just as the chair, the table are outside us and our presupposition with regard to thinking is that it is inside us, in a similar way this thinking which is inside would need somehow to be able to experience a supersensible world that is taken hold of outside the human being, in the same way that the table and chair are outside. This is how, roughly speaking, Eduard von Hartmann conceived the task of thinking.

Then he was confronted with this book ‘Die Philosophie der Freiheit’. Here, thinking is experienced in such a way that within the experience of thinking you reach the point where you can have no other idea than the following: When you are really living *within* thinking, you are living, even though in an indistinct way to begin with, in the universe. This sense of being connected in one’s innermost thinking experience with the mystery of the universe, this is the central nerve of the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’. And this is why in the ‘Phi-

losophie der Freiheit' we read the words: In thinking we take hold of the universal mystery by an outermost edge.... if you really experience thinking so that you no longer feel outside the Divine.... if you grasp hold of thinking within yourself, you grasp hold of the Divine within yourself. You stand in a world of which you know: it is not influenced from here or there in the physical world, it is influenced from the entire cosmic sphere. You stand within the etheric cosmic sphere. You can no longer doubt the laws that determine the cosmic ether sphere, once you have taken hold of thinking in the way it is taken hold of in the 'Philosophie der Freiheit'" (GA 232, 23.11.1923).

The mission of thinking is to unite the human being with the world of his origin, from which he was severed, indeed from which he was driven out in order to become an individual being. In the long evolutionary process through which he then passed, the last five thousand years were for him the most difficult and spiritually the darkest. In the eastern esoteric tradition this is exactly what this period is called: the Dark Age, Kali Yuga. The development of the human being within this period took place in such a way that, step by step, he forfeited his earlier, non-individualized perception of the supersensible worlds and acquired to an increasing degree an individual earthly experience of perception and thinking. This played a dominant part in the forming of the cultural-historical process, in the development of the sciences, the arts, the religions. "And in what," says Rudolf Steiner, "separates from the Divine-spiritual and becomes human-spiritual history, in this the human being can experience free intelligence and free will" (GA 26, p 172).

Experience of them, and not only this but individual mastery of them, is at present a goal of earthly human existence which is very difficult to attain. In the course of the cultural process a number of essential conditions for its attainment were created: the human being has developed in a series of incarnations an individual, triune soul – sentient soul, intellectual soul and consciousness-soul. Within this soul with its psychologically complex structure the human being is working at the development of the individual spirit, which possesses the qualities of selfhood (Ger. – 'self-being') and self-determination. And now the time has come where it is the task of the human being to move on from the stage of preparation to that of practical *realization*.

Right at the close of the 19th century, in the year 1899, the epoch of Kali Yuga came to an end, and a new 'light' epoch began, in which the laws of development which had contributed to the *severing* of man from the supersensible, were replaced by new laws which contribute to his *reuniting* with it. It thus became absolutely essential for the human being to fundamentally re-examine all that had constituted the driving forces of civilization and culture.

Even on its outer, exoteric level the dual, sensible-supersensible reality will demand recognition to an ever greater extent.

For several hundred years during the dark epoch human beings (not altogether without reason) shied away from acknowledging supersensible reality. As a result of this, material culture triumphed and brought about a strong one-sidedness in development. Now it is imperative that, despite its enormous inertia, it should be transformed. In this process much must die, but only *to be reborn* in a new form. And it will be reborn if human beings succeed in advancing on those paths on which a new ascent into the *real* spiritual world is possible.

* * *

The individual life of the human being rests on the experience of thinking, feeling and will-expression. These form in the soul an inseparable unity, but the dominant role is played, without question, by the thinking, thinking consciousness. No matter how a civilized contemporary has developed this within himself: in the conditions which had dramatically changed at the turn of the 20th century the principal task, nay the duty, of his existence was to come to an understanding of *those factors by which this consciousness is determined and moved*.

In intellectualism, which has grown to colossal proportions in the last four to five centuries, we have to do with a two-edged sword, and this task must, at all costs, be fulfilled in such a way that the wielding of this sword is of benefit to the human being; otherwise it is able, as the history of the 20th century showed, to drive all those who do not know how to use it into the servitude of group or collective consciousness. This is the reason why, in an entirely natural way (i.e. in accordance with the objective laws of development), the question regarding the limits of outer determination and the beginning of self-determination of thinking consciousness, which one cannot resolve without research into the sensible-supersensible origin of consciousness, proves to be the most fundamental in Anthroposophy – not, however, in the sense that such research would constitute an end in itself. No, the self-sufficient aim of Anthroposophy consists in helping the human being who knows the world in its dual nature – sensible and supersensible – to develop his individual 'I' as the centre of the self-cognizing personality, which reveals itself in the multiplicity of soul and spiritual characteristics. This is why Rudolf Steiner also called his spiritual science Anthroposophy. In it, methodologically grounded from many different angles, the right of science is upheld to subscribe to an objective anthropocentrism whose gnoseology (epistemology) ascends on the steps of consciousness that widens its boundaries to an unlimited extent. The human being

as a central point of two worlds – the phenomenal and the noumenal – represents as it were the subjectivized object of spiritual-scientific research in which cognition as a process and the individual development of the cognizing subject stand in mutual interdependence. Cognition or knowledge, as seen from the standpoint of Anthroposophy, only has value to the extent that it is able *to enhance the value of human existence*.

Dogmatic features of any kind are foreign to spiritual science. Its object is the creation of a solid rational foundation for the possibility of supersensible experience *before* it occurs. Ultimately, the entire history of philosophy has been moving in this direction, starting with its very first childlike steps. In philosophy the problem we have described was characterized as follows: How can consciousness attain *being*? Decided failure in the solving of this problem began at the end of the 19th century with the emergence of the transcendentalist way of thinking, which researchers applied to philosophical and then psychological investigation of the subconscious, instead of seeking ways to change consciousness itself, which had been the concern of the preceding philosophical period. Schelling, for example, spoke of the ‘Organ of Perception’ (Beholding), which is able to grasp the world in its unity (‘Philosophy of Revelation’), and Fichte referred, as a condition for the understanding of his ‘Doctrine of Science’, to the development of an inner ‘sense-instrument’, a sense-organ “for which only spirit exists and nothing else whatever”.¹⁾

In the past, philosophy has often taken false paths, which have only proved beneficial in the end, but its last change of direction turned out to be fatal. This, only a few individuals are able to understand, although its consequences stare at us out of every crack in our decaying civilization.

The problem lies in the fact that the path of the development of consciousness, whereby it ascended from a tribal, semi-clairvoyant, then mythological, picture form to pure reflection, is only *one* particular stage in the development of man as a *species*. In this phase he has developed, realized himself, and *culminated* (Ger. exhausted) his development as *homo sapiens*. For this reason he found himself at the crossroads of two alternatives, where he must of necessity make a decision. Either in some way to develop his consciousness and attain a higher stage of the individual, or to rest content with what has been achieved and perfect its qualitative characteristics; in the latter case the human being faces unavoidably a relapse in his development, and gradual degeneration.

As early as the end of the 18th century a new spiritual development occurred, which leads to a metamorphosis of man as a species. This was revealed in a striking way in the phenomenon of Goethe. The ‘power of judgment in beholding’, discovered by this universal genius, a faculty which he applied

extensively in his natural-scientific research, was a manifestation of the activity of that sense-organ of which Fichte spoke. In his practical mastery of this organ, Goethe demonstrated a qualitatively new (as compared to the Hegelian) phenomenology of spirit: the phenomenology of *perceiving/ beholding* thinking.

In the figure of Goethe culture returned in a certain sense to its ancient source, where minds such as Socrates and Plato had creatively worked, but it arose again on a qualitatively different level, in that it passed through a tremendous spiral of development, the fruit of which was the independent, not substantial, yet entirely individual little ‘I’ of man, which had been developed in a manner comparable to fine filigree-work through the experience of sense-perceptions and reflections. Now this ‘I’ stands before the gates of the intelligible world which were closed in Plato’s time and only started to open again at the beginning of the 20th century. But in order to pass through them, the ‘I’ must undergo a metamorphosis in the Goethean spirit of ‘dying and becoming’. The entire, gigantic experience of culture hitherto has been nothing other than an absolute precondition and starting-point for an act of this kind. The experience was without question of immeasurable value, but towards the end of the 19th century the development which it served had, from the standpoint of the main tasks of the evolution of the human ‘I’-consciousness, reached its end. It continues to have a certain relevance, principally for those who have remained behind in development and must therefore make up for what they have missed, before they can take a qualitatively new step. Others, however, thanks to whose creative work the spiritual impulses of renewal influence culture, and – despite all errors, contradictions and confusion – carry it forward, experience the condition of *homo sapiens* as something that obstructs spiritual progress. Amongst these creators we find not only Goethe and Rudolf Steiner, but a whole Pleiad of outstanding spirits who, to express it in a metaphor, did not open the gates of heaven, but still knocked at them. And on the other side they were waiting for human beings to knock. We are not mistaken to count among the Pleiad: Novalis and Schiller, Leo Tolstoy and Nietzsche, the ‘fighter against his own time’, but also the lonely philosopher, the theorist of anarchism Kaspar Schmidt (Max Stirner). In addition we see in this circle Edmund Husserl, Nikolai Losky, the remarkable Russian philosopher, founder of intuitivism and philosopher with an Anthroposophical orientation, and also the sophologist Vladimir Soloviev. Fichte and Hegel were Goetheanists in their way of thinking; even Kant and Eduard von Hartmann are to be counted among those thinkers for whom the horizons of their own time had grown too narrow. In short, we find among the above-mentioned Pleiad all those who were re-

ceived and understood so badly and one-sidedly, and the present day tries quite simply to forget them on account of the particular newness, boldness and sometimes also the radicalism of their creative striving. People carry on in their habitual way, concerned only with the ‘what’ of these thinkers’ work, although the ‘how’ plays a central part in it. People are not yet used to such a shift of emphasis in culture, although it is a shift of this kind which plays a dominant role in enabling culture to be renewed, to become a culture of the future which is already beginning today. At the first glimmer of its dawn Goethe formulated its methodological credo in a poetic epigram that is laconic in the extreme, but memorable and scientifically correct:

“Das **Was** bedenke
Mehr bedenke **Wie**”
“Consider the **What**
But consider the **How** still more.”

It was on the principle of the ‘How’ that Rudolf Steiner built up his gigantic system of knowledge, thus creating a synthesis that is of huge significance not just for culture, but for the *evolution* of the human being. In his books and also in numerous lectures he developed with penetrating (any other word would be out of place) clarity and concreteness, and illumined, from the most varied aspects, all that the greatest minds before him and his time had only dimly surmised. He showed that, since the most important capacity of consciousness is the determination of being, the transformation of states of consciousness – be it cosmic (in the evolution of the world) or earthly (in history) is accompanied, of necessity, by mutations in the human being himself. The first of these took place in the distant past, when the world-spirit in unity with the evolution of species led to the emergence of the human being with the upright gait – *homo erectus*. The second mutation of man as a species occurred when he became *homo sapiens*. In our time man, as he turns to the capacity of ‘beholding’, as the ideal perception of the idea (sic), is preparing new and far-reaching changes in the structure of his entire being, in all three sheaths: the physical, the etheric and astral. As a result of this, the organ of thinking, the brain, changes so fundamentally, that it becomes the *organ of ideal perception*. All this might seem improbable, had not Goethe and Steiner shown through experience that they mastered this new organ and, still more, used it to raise the cultural process onto a qualitatively new level.

* * *

It is symptomatic that our whole contemporary civilization is interested in the problem of transformation of consciousness, indeed one would say without exaggeration that it is obsessed with it. But in a manner that is not in keeping with the tasks of its future. Everything that was done in this direction in the 20th century consisted – of this we must be quite clear – in attempts of many kinds to influence consciousness in such a way that lasting changes arise in a prescribed direction not corresponding to the goals of individual development. Such an activity has been, and still is, carried out with the help of a continuously-improved arsenal of methods. They include: ideology, mass suggestion, parapsychology, the achievements of scientific-technological progress such as the genetic manipulation of foods, even the genetic manipulation of the human being himself, psychotronics etc. Through applying these singly and in different combinations, the aim is to lead the individual consciousness back into group consciousness to such an extent that its reduction to hereditary and other group characteristics of the human being becomes irreversibly fixed.

Experiments aimed at influencing consciousness have long overstepped the boundaries of science. For practical magic has meanwhile become interwoven with materialistic natural science. In certain forms of dark mystery rituals of materialism (and this is by no means just a product of science fiction) efforts are made to gain mastery of other mental states than that of object-orientated thinking consciousness. This is almost the defining characteristic of our time, and it stands under the sign of *radical evil*.

In this way the human being stands, whether he likes it or not, within two streams of development: an ascending and a descending stream. The latter carried him, as it were, automatically. Here it is enough to give oneself up passively to all that a corrupted civilization and sub-culture have to offer. In the first stream, on the other hand, it is only possible to make any headway by dint of continuous personal effort. Through the mutation occurring here, a new species of man appears – *homo liber* – the free human being. If nature brought about the first mutation, and evolution and culture together produced the second, the second *can only be brought about by the human being within himself*, through his intelligent use of the fruits of Anthroposophy.

Its methodology requires that one incorporate the concepts of the supersensible, which have been acquired through the application of thought to real supersensible experience, into the total complex of knowledge that has been built up on a strictly scientific basis. Vague, mythical experiences of the supersensible, the severing of sense-experience from the supersensible and attempts to restrict knowledge (cognition) to one of the two realms, irrevocably separate consciousness from being, and then consciousness can easily be relativized.

The being of consciousness (das Sein des Bewusstseins) can only be *spiritual* in nature, and for this reason consciousness assumes the aspect of something unnatural if it is refused the right to recognize the spiritual as a supersensible reality.

With words of enormous significance which reach through to the heart of the matter, the Gospel speaks as follows on the question of endowing consciousness with being: “Except a man be born of water and of spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God” (John 3, 5).

To be born ‘of spirit’ means to change the entire threefold structure of one’s being: body, soul and spirit. This happened with thinking man, *homo sapiens*, but in him there grew ‘out of the flesh’ reflective thinking, and became his inherited quality. This is why in the soul of man the battle with the flesh began; the doctrines of the contradiction between matter and spirit, ‘I’ and the world, arose. But the free human being is the one who has conquered the flesh and has become *a species in himself, the progenitor and the heir of his own individual spirit*. His autonomy is such, that he is able to prescribe his own moral law, since he has freed himself from the subjection to the flesh. But a state such as this must first be won through strenuous effort. The path to its attainment is long and arduous. And it begins *where homo sapiens acquires in pure thinking the capacity to stand on his own ground*.

The ‘Philosophy of Freedom’ (Spiritual Activity) can be a particularly effective method to apply in this work upon oneself. It is not an esoteric book in the accepted sense of the word. It represents an ‘open secret’. Everything in it seems, at first glance, comprehensible, but access to it is nevertheless extraordinarily difficult. This is the characteristic of the esotericism that is new and right for our time – i.e. at the stage of development at which we stand today: *it begins in the realm of the intellectual and moves on from there into the far reaches of the supersensible*.

Its contemporary nature is also a reflection of the general state of civilization, which has matured to the stage where it can take the first step across the threshold of the spiritual world, i.e. man can transform himself in his own being, together with all the laws at work within it. For this reason Anthroposophy strives to enrich with its impulses all factors of cultural life. True to its *principle of evolutionism* it has made a specially important contribution to the renewal of pedagogy. Here the intention is to leave behind the education of the human being in the spirit of material culture, and replace it with other forms of instruction and education which create, from earliest childhood, in the impressionable nature of the child, favorable conditions for the future attainment of a free ‘I’.

The task underlying a pedagogy of this kind consists in the education of a spiritually autonomous and harmonious personality who has the capacity to transform today’s social structures, breaking through their fixation on reproducing themselves and overcoming the prevailing stereotypes of behaviour. And as the new in culture only arises through creative deeds, the pedagogy of Rudolf Steiner is not a normative system, but consists in bringing to fruition those seeds which the human being bears within himself as a microcosm – a lesser image of the great cosmos. It is an art form.

The metamorphosis of the human race that is now due, the birth of a new species of human being, *homo liber*, could become a widespread phenomenon with the help of such a pedagogy. In a few generations mankind could be radically changed, barbarity and the chaotic indulgence in raw egoism would cease, and a culture would emerge in which the free, creative individual spirit would dominate. But if the ‘Philosophy of Freedom’ (Spiritual Activity) encounters lack of understanding on the part of individuals, the new pedagogy is met with opposition from the various centres of group egoism. Civilization as a whole now prefers to practise the dubious art of eclecticism, contenting itself with ingeniously thought-out combinations of elements of the old, while it ‘earths’ and neutralizes, so to speak, the gigantic intellectual potential of humanity. But for this reason it is all the more urgent for individuals to take on the task of solving the problem that is *of central importance in our time*. If they start to work with the ‘Philosophy of Freedom’ (Spiritual Activity) they can, as mature human beings, grapple in and for themselves with those problems faced by the pedagogue in the work with his pupils. Their task would be to regard the content of the book as a kind of musical score, and, as they work on it, to ‘play it within themselves creatively’: to ‘play’ the Philosophy, bringing into the most perfect harmony the sound of all the instruments and groups of instruments – in this case the soul-qualities.

In the work referred to, a formal element should not be overlooked. It arises from the way the thoughts are developed in the ‘Philosophy’. In the course of their presentation they repeatedly depart from the dialectical framework, and move according to the laws of ‘power of judgment in beholding’. For this reason it is essential to live through its thought-cycles for a very long time; then its laws of development will in some measure be ‘*induced*’ into the soul-organism of the reader. These laws are related to those of creative activity which we habitually apply without becoming aware of them.

We will go through the work chapter by chapter and analyze its entire structure (with the exception of the Introduction and the Appendix) and open up the hidden connections between the chapters and parts of the work, as well

as a great deal more in it that is not accessible to abstract thinking. And since an undertaking of this kind is meaningful only if the person engaged in it has a clear *understanding* of its nature and purpose, so it is necessary by way of preparation to familiarize oneself thoroughly with the methodology of Anthroposophy; to grasp the fact that it can be connected with the general scientific conceptions of the present day, that thanks to this methodology Anthroposophy shows itself to be a verifiable science, just like other recognized sciences, and that naive belief will not enable one to get very far with it.

The methodology of Anthroposophy is also related to the methodology of *initiation*, and on its higher levels passes over into this. The masters of the ancient Mysteries were very well versed in the methodology of the science of their day, which had its roots in the spiritual far more than is the case in our time. In recent centuries science, in keeping with the special tasks of development, became exoteric, and thus it severed itself from religion and art. Today these tasks, which were necessary for a period of time, are fulfilled, and science no longer needs to shut itself off in its one-sidedness.

Rudolf Steiner did not describe his methodology in a separate volume. Throughout his life he was building on it more and more, particularly in its esoteric part. But he created the basis which enables his pupils to provide such a description. This is the task we have undertaken in the following work. We will conduct our investigation using the broad foundation of Anthroposophy in both its philosophical and esoteric aspects. Our work is not an introduction to Anthroposophy; it is an *introduction to methodology*. For this reason it may be difficult for readers who are not thoroughly versed in the basics of spiritual science to follow our discussion. But if they persevere enough, they will – we hope – discover after a while that the book as a whole is characterized by a mutual logical interrelation of its parts, whereby the one element and concept *continually develops and emphasizes the significance of the other*. All that is needed is the patience to read the book through to the end, and then the effort will be rewarded on a cognitive and also a practical level: the reader will feel that it has become easier for him to grasp the central core of Rudolf Steiner's spiritual-scientific system, and this will enable him to experience to a greater or lesser degree the reality of the new form of thinking.

Our aim is to pursue our research within the limits of that unity, of which Rudolf Steiner has said: "...as a soul he (the human being) will be understood

through a *science of freedom*; as a spirit, through *Anthroposophy*" (B.13, p 18).*

The basis upon which the spirit enters into connection with the soul is the body. Knowledge of *this* function of the body is implicit in the knowledge of the first two components of the triune human being.

The author sees it as a welcome duty to conclude this Foreword with an expression of deepest gratitude to the participants in the Methodological Study Group, to whom this book is dedicated. Their consistent attention, patience and good will on the path of cognition we were travelling, created the spiritual atmosphere without which this work could not have arisen.

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* The letter B means that the Rudolf Steiner quote is from the supplements to the complete works (GA).

“But a time will come, and it is close at hand, when Anthroposophy will explain to the spirit the natural phenomena of the spirit-realm in man, just as physics explains the rainbow to the sense of vision and the Aeolian harp to the ear.”

I.P.V. Troxler (1780-1866)

“Humanity is moving with the same certainty towards Anthroposophy, as the solar system is moving towards the constellation of Hercules.”

Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925)

Introduction

Methodology and Science

1. A Historical Review of the Question

If one wishes to establish what the significance of methodology is for science, then to begin with one must reflect upon its ability to solve the fundamental question of the theory of knowledge – i.e. the relation between consciousness and being. In the building up of its methodology Anthroposophy proceeds from the premise that the *original* manifestation of human consciousness is the fruit of the objective development of the world. But the consciousness that has arisen has the inner capacity to actively determine that being which represents its own phenomenology; this is, first and foremost, pure thinking; not this alone, however, but also human scientific activity as a whole. The latter activity, which also presupposes the practical activity of the human being, the motives for which are rooted in his self-conscious ‘I’, forms a part of a complex cultural-historical process.

Manifold forms of spiritual and cultural activity unquestionably work back upon consciousness and are able to *determine its forms*, but not to predetermine its essential nature (Wesen). As a result of education and training, inclinations can grow in the human being to engage in scientific, philosophical, artistic, religious thought, but all these will be forms of the thinking that is realized with the help of concepts based on the experience of (sense) perception. But the capacity of pure, ‘beholding’, or even of imaginative – i.e. supersensible – thinking can only be developed independently by the human being within himself. No outer environment, no human relationships, are able to call forth these radical changes in consciousness.

The influence of the cultural environment shows itself in the formation of the entire soul structure of the human being. The whole, many-sided complex of subjective and objective relations through which the soul organism receives its structure germinates and develops within the environment and acquires complexity under this influence. Thus we discover the sphere in which the fundamental gnoseological (epistemological) question of the methodology of science first appears. This is the *ontological tri-unity of the ‘I’-consciousness, of the soul of the human being, and of their shared phenomenology*. The soul organism in its unity and structure is the primary factor with respect to ‘I’-consciousness, the archetypal principle of the human individual spirit, and em-

bodies to a still greater extent than the spiritual thinking activity the individual life of the subject, so that if it is crystallized out as a *criterion of development*, it can be placed within that part of general methodology represented by historiosophy in the spiritual-scientific sense of the word. According to this, the human being acquired an individual soul life only in the course of the last three or four thousand years. This process took place in inseparable unity with the emergence of the cultural epochs and the civilizations. Within it the metahistorical, super-human plane and cultural-historical phenomenology influenced one another mutually over a long period of time. But the human being was assigned the role of being the *foundation* for the relationship. As development progressed within the soul of the individual spirit, the human being became a creative subject of both history and culture.

Anthroposophical historiosophy distinguishes three great cultural epochs during which the triune (triune as an expression of the laws of higher development) soul of man evolved. In contrast to the accepted historical-cultural understanding of these epochs, Anthroposophy speaks of the cosmic background by which they are determined through the vehicle of the developing human soul. The first of these epochs is called the Old Egyptian; the second the Greco-Latin; the third, the present, is called the European cultural epoch, of which only one third has run its course (knowledge of this fact is important with regard to the social future).

Anthroposophy is not the first science to have recognized the structure of the soul in its tri-unity as it emerges in a process of reciprocal influence with the cultural process. The ancient Greek philosophers already spoke of it, as soon as their thinking had found its feet on the basis of logic, and the problems of the definition of the concepts of structure, unity, polarity had arisen, with their decisive significance for the creation of a method of cognition based on conceptual rather than mythological thinking. And these philosophers were perceptive enough to begin their research into such questions by examining the cognizing subject and his own structure.

Greek philosophy had been preceded by a cultural stage where there was not an individual but a group consciousness; this was guided by pictorial, mythological conceptions which in the case of many people had a virtually clairvoyant, visionary character. When thinking in conceptual form arose and became object-oriented, philosophers began to distinguish between two principles in the soul. Aristotle calls them “striving” and “understanding”. One of them is the soul “that possesses no understanding”, the second is “endowed with understanding”.²⁾ The first of the two souls, *oretikon*, is subject to external influences; the second, *kinetikon*, “is subject to the power of judgment and

obeys it”.³⁾ But there is, says Aristotle, yet another, higher sphere of the soul. In it the soul carries out actions “for their own sake, for the sake of the thinking part of the soul (*to dianoetikon*), which constitutes the self of each human being”.⁴⁾ In Anthroposophy the first two souls are called the sentient soul (this had already been developed by the ancient Egyptians) and the intellectual soul. The third of which Aristotle speaks is the consciousness-soul; in it the self experiences the unity of being and consciousness, which had undergone a splitting-off from the universal world-foundation. Aristotle describes in his ‘Greater Ethics’ that if one develops the *dianoetikon* further, “Reason and feelings will come into harmony with one another; in this way, it (the soul) will become a single unity”⁵⁾; where the opposite occurs, the soul is condemned to enmity with itself.⁶⁾

Actually, in his description of the tri-une soul, Aristotle uncovered the deeper stratum of individual life where that phenomenon is ontologically rooted, which was already manifest to the understanding of the pre-Socratics and was given the name dialectics. Aristotle pointed out that the dialectics of thinking underlies the dialectic of life, of being; the dialectic of the development of the human soul. Within its substance the antithesis between reason and feeling is born and enters into a synthesis. Only to our materialistic epoch can it appear that Aristotle was speaking about things that were already obvious in his time, but which no-one had taken the trouble to describe before. No, he discovered a reality which, before him, had not yet existed in the human soul, as its constitution had been quite different. Its appearance meant that the human being was beginning at that time to undergo a fundamental metamorphosis, the scope of which, as one can judge today, was so vast that it cannot possibly be grasped with the concepts of cultural-historical progress.

The human being was transformed at that time as a *species*. At that stage of development the objective in nature, natural law, came to expression in the soul-development of man. (In this case nature must, of course, be understood as a sensible-supersensible unity). The human being started to think in concepts, and the logical laws of this thinking (identity, negation, the principle of sufficient reason etc.) showed themselves to be in their operation as strict as the laws of nature. With the force of natural necessity they also called forth a contradiction in the inner life of soul: a contradiction between conceptual activity and the experience of sense-perception, of which now in modern times Goethe’s Faust will say:

*Two souls, alas, inhabit in my breast,
And each would fain be parted from its brother....*

The analytical understanding of Aristotle has a first, exploratory perceptual contact with this new *terra firma* in the human being, on which the ark – no, not of Noah, but of Odysseus and his companions – comes to rest: that of the individualized sense-perceptions and thought-images which had aimlessly wandered for so long on the waters of the imaginative world. This *terra firma* shows itself to him in different forms: now as cognizing (*to epistetikon*), now as reflecting (*to logon echon*), now as calculating (*to logistikon*) etc. And all these are factual definitions of the human self, drawing its own substance from the world of concepts; this is more subtle than the world of myth of the Greek group-consciousness, which suddenly began, in the 6th and 5th century before the birth of Christ, to forfeit all essential being-content and to enter into immanent connection with the experience of sense-perception and the activity of the human brain. Thus a split arises in the human soul, which loses its holistic ‘Apollonian’ character and becomes ‘Dionysian’. Now appears Oedipus – who, as we are accustomed to say today, is full of ‘complexes’ – and Judas Ischariot.

The great achievement of Aristotle – and also Plato (since they agreed in this question) – lies in the fact that in an epoch when the second member of the human soul had only just begun its development, he described the soul as a *triune whole*. In so doing he clothed in a secular form and made accessible to the understanding, the call which, anticipating the future, sounded forth to the ears that had been prepared for it in the Mysteries: O Man, know thou thyself! Since that time it has been clear that the basis for knowledge and practical life must of necessity be sought, developed and strengthened within the individual human being. The dualism that arose in the soul of the ancient Greeks raised implicitly the question as to the motives of an activity which is not called forth by the world of higher forces, but which nevertheless does not disturb world harmony. Oedipus stands in utter helplessness before this question. In the answer given by Aristotle reference is made to the consciousness-soul; he is thus pointing to our epoch, because the development of the consciousness-soul arose for the Greeks as a task of the Mysteries. Aristotle, who thought as a mature dialectician, achieved, thanks to the method of his philosophy, what Kant believed impossible - synthetic judgments *a priori* - : looking into the future, Aristotle inferred the existence of a dialectical (ontological?) triad by virtue of which the unitary soul develops; he grasped its law. He says: “There are *three* (forces) of the soul, which are decisive for action and truth: feeling, understanding, striving”.⁷⁾ This was said, let us recall, at a time when advice was sought from the Oracle on any occasion, in the firm belief that it is the Gods who determine the will in man. A certain power of imagination is essential if

one is to look back into the world of the Greek soul and feel what judgments of this kind represented for them, as regards both form and content. And it can still be of value in our age of nominalism and increasing enfeeblement of the understanding to experience that acute sense of reality which, in Greek times, accompanied the dialectical operations of the understanding, which are described by Plato in such a living way. Rudolf Steiner attempts to revive a similar feeling with the help of his cognitive method, though now entirely on an individual, rational basis. He not only does not question the importance of dialectics, but even restores to it its original meaning. He says: “We cannot manage without polarities if we wish to conceive the world in a strong and dynamic way” (GA 324, 31.3.1905). This is not a defence of the philosophy of Schopenhauer. The intention here is to seek in thinking consciousness the principle of autonomous movement, upon which something depends that is of huge significance for the human being: the possibility of free action. Aristotle raised this question, but before Rudolf Steiner no-one succeeded in resolving it – mainly on account of methodological errors and because the question regarding the ‘How’ of cognition was not correctly formulated.

Rudolf Steiner showed that the principle of the free, self-determined motive of action can be inherent in human nature, as the motivating force of the God who indwells the whole of the natural world. Ultimately, the free motive brings forth its ideal bearer in the world of ‘otherness’: a higher nature within nature, which raises itself above the continuum of space and time, is no longer determined by this and constitutes therefore within it a self-determining nature; such is the individual in man, which is able to draw from within himself motives for moral action that are not in contradiction with the moral principle of the cosmos as a whole.

The individual experience of cognition, already in ancient Greece, becomes the inner teacher of ethics in the human being. In his individual being, man had not yet completely severed himself from the Divine, and for this reason he was inclined to view cognition as being permeated with morality. The new element contributed by Socrates is the insight that *one can learn* morality. He advised the young people not to seek teachers in those schools of philosophy where they were unable to appeal fully to the thinking consciousness, where dialectics was weak, and they therefore strove to win pupils through the force of authority. Socrates was convinced of a quite different truth: “It is not seemly for a free-born human being to learn a single science in a slavish manner”.^{8)*}

* Such pathos is inherent in Fichte’s ‘Principles of Philosophy’.

In this way we see that scientific consciousness of a kind that exists right up to the present day has placed in the central focus of its inquiry and its methodology, from its first beginnings in the culture of ancient Greece, the *ethical individualism* which is founded upon conceptual thought; as Socrates continually emphasized, this thinking is able to *teach* virtue and thereby to restore in the cognizing subject the wholeness of the personality, which divides into two parts when it enters deeply into the nothingness of reflection. Greek philosophy was limited in its speculative possibilities, because it was necessary to describe the subject of the unity which needed restoring but which at that time it had not yet completely lost. The time was yet to come when it would experience in its full depth the tragedy of the dualism between sentient soul and intellectual soul. Only now, where objectively the cultural-historical conditions have arisen for the development of the consciousness-soul, and ethical individualism has become contemporaneously relevant also on the level of its *realization in practice*, has the problem of the soul and spiritual (cognitive) synthesis revealed itself in its full magnitude.

The process of cultural creation itself has altered the human being qualitatively, and also on a physical-bodily level in his finer structures. We therefore assert that today the conditions for the emergence of an integral personality of this kind, living out his impulses in conscious, spiritual freedom, are objectively given.

At earlier stages of development – in ancient Egypt and still earlier – cultural experience was fruitful for the human being through the fact that it provided him with *individualized* experience of his condition as a being determined from without. At that time, in the state of group-consciousness, mastery of the outer physical plane, individual experience of one's own activity which was determined entirely from without, embodied the cultural task of the human being. The highest source of earthly goals was at that time Divine revelation, communicated to man by the priesthood.

One must imagine that it was through the vehicle of *revelation* that the human being was provided with what in today's language one would call 'first methodical learning tools' for the mastery of the emerging personality. This is what the Mosaic Ten Commandments are in the final analysis. They have an ethical character and do not address pictorial thinking or evoke mythological motifs (e.g. the Erinyes), but appeal only to the concept. Their character as imperatives was obvious in those remote times, but what is particularly interesting: even with the Greek philosophers they were made into objects of cognition, directed to the power of understanding – which is an instructive lesson for the religious fundamentalists of today.

Everything that is right for development occurs at the appropriate time. Thus the revelation of the Commandments is a sign of profound changes in the structure of human nature, which gave rise to a form of consciousness that enabled it to grasp something in a non-pictorial way. This had no doubt to do with the particular re-structuring of the physical brain, which in human beings up to the time of Moses was more etherised and therefore unable to reflect. The ancient leaders of humanity were far in advance of their age. But in them the individual principle was crystallized out in a different way, in the *Mysteries*, with the help of complicated initiation procedures. Thanks to these, human beings attained something analogous to what the man of today acquires through working with philosophy. So we see how times have changed. One of the tasks of the initiated priests was to direct the clairvoyant-imaginative life of the mass of simple people and accustom them to the necessity of pursuing everyday goals. Thus a kind of cultic 'gnoseology' emerged, which prepared human beings in a clearly 'targeted' way for the future acquisition of the thinking capacity. They were 'instructed' in it (to use another modern expression) with the help, or in the form of various rituals of the cultic religious life – i.e. they were ethical at that time; exclusively so, in fact. These rituals had been brought into relation with the rhythms of nature, the cycle of the year, where different spiritual beings are at work – lofty (Divine) beings and elementary beings (nature-spirits). In Plato's time the former began to be described as intelligible beings, thereby indicating that in their nature they are related to what the human being experiences in his thoughts.

Through his religious-cultural activity the human being overcame the identity with nature that had held him back in a semi-animal stage of development in which, to express it in very simple terms, he did not know *that he knew*. Under the guidance of the initiates he brought order into the nature that worked upon his soul chaotically (the Titans, Typhon etc). Attainment of the thinking principle was the goal of special, arduous preparations, trials and cultic ceremonies which were undergone by the pupils of the so-called *Greater Mysteries*, for which only certain individuals were eligible. For the others, these *Mysteries* represented the focus of lofty ideals which they strove to emulate in one way or another in everyday life or in rituals conducted for the masses and orientated towards the changing of the seasons, and led by priests who were only initiated into the 'Lesser Mysteries'. The educational working of the *Mysteries* on the peoples of antiquity was decisive for all aspects of life (until already in Roman times they fell into decadence), and it should not surprise us that, when the first great philosophers of Greece appeared who began openly to teach certain things that for centuries had been hidden in the obscu-

rity of the Mysteries, they were held in special veneration, and some of them were even hailed as Gods.

As thinking consciousness developed, the sheaths of the human being – his astral, etheric and physical bodies – drew closer together, and experience of the supersensible came to an end. The human being ‘awoke’, as it were, to sense-perceptible reality. And when this reality had become the only one for him, the priest was replaced by the life-teacher, the educator, the academy. In short, the need arose to educate a teacher within one’s own soul. For this reason, the following question gained in importance: What is it that brings into movement the life of soul? Theory of knowledge arose, ethics as a science, the structure and essential nature of the soul-life is explored, and in this the principle of feeling and desire is separated from the thinking principle, and the latter is divided into two: the cognitive part and the part that gives rise to the motives of action. The principle of virtue in the human being was long regarded as God-given, which excluded the possibility of personal moral autonomy, but the autonomy of the thinking spirit (mind) was recognized as soon as the laws of its own autonomous movement (Selbstbewegung) – logic – were discovered. The science of logic was a creation of Aristotle. He said that the thinking principle in us – spirit-understanding, in other words that which ‘governs and leads’ us and (works) within us in our essential nature – also contains within it the concepts of “beautiful and Divine things”; it is either the highest Divinity itself, or the most God-like part of our being.⁹⁾

But Aristotle subjects conceptual thinking to a detailed analysis and even attempts to solve the problem of the nature of scientific proof; he illumines the categories of thinking on an abstract level, etc. “All learning,” he says, “and every teaching arising from reflection proceeds on the basis of knowledge previously acquired.”¹⁰⁾ Thus the foundations are laid for the development of knowledge (cognition) in the stream of cultural-historical time, as a counterweight to the trans-temporal – the ‘vertical’ of revelation with its imperative character.

The ancient philosophers not only revealed the *qualitative* change in the evolution of man which was due to the birth of the intellectual soul, they also formulated basic principles of knowledge from which we draw guidance in the period of the consciousness-soul, the epoch of universal reason. This began in the 15th century. In philosophy its beginning was marked by the appearance of spirits like Francis Bacon, Descartes and Spinoza. One of its most striking peculiarities was the growing independence of science and its division into special sciences. Natural science, embodied in its foremost representatives such as Galileo, Kepler etc., began to separate off from philosophy, despite all at-

tempts to preserve their original unity. At the same time the need for all-embracing knowledge did not decline, but actually grew. For this reason there arises, not fully conscious at first, the wish, the intention, to create a scientific methodology in the true sense of the word, which would enable us to know nature and man in a different way from the ancient Greeks, medieval mysticism and theology. Here, account is taken of a structure and level of scientific knowledge in which experiment begins to play an ever-increasing part and the results of science are directed more and more to practical goals. Science takes on an ever more pragmatic, utilitarian character. “We would admonish all people without exception,” says Francis Bacon, “to recall the true aims of science and not to strive for it for the sake of pleasure or rivalry.... but for its usefulness in life and practice.”¹¹⁾

In the 17th and 18th centuries there follows – hand in hand with the orientation towards empirical knowledge – a broad socialization of science. The salons of Paris receive Descartes, the philosopher and mathematician Gassendi, the creator of the theory of the wave-structure of light, Christiaan Huygens. Scientific academies proliferate. For example, in Italy in the 50’s of the 17th century, the ‘Academia del Cimento’ is founded, an academy for experimental sciences; its members include E. Torricelli, a pupil of Galileo, and the English chemist and physicist Robert Boyle. Science wages battle with theology, but still does not break with metaphysics; the influence of the old philosophy persists for a considerable time. The ground was laid for the break in the consciousness of society at large. Secular teachers of the conduct of life appeared – the creators of the period of ‘Illumination’. The human understanding pretends to the role of universal judge in literally every department of life and knowledge; the hope is that it will bring universal prosperity. As the basis of all these unquestionably progressive transformations in the scientific and social life of the new cultural epoch we must see, first and foremost, the human personality which is undergoing fundamental changes in the sphere of consciousness as it moves irrevocably from the pictorial-imaginative to conceptual thinking. The forms of thinking and the corresponding methods of cognition exercised a decisive influence on the whole structure of human life, a fact admitted even by the positivist philosopher Auguste Comte and the Utopian socialist Saint-Simon. In the course of all these changes the question of the primacy of consciousness was asked with greater penetration than ever before. But from a scientific point of view the question was posed incorrectly, because no attention was given to the *nature of the transformations of consciousness* itself. This aspect was simply ignored, although for this question it is of decisive importance. From the evolutionist position, which had won universal rec-

ognition, one would need to understand that with the transition from the epoch of the intellectual soul to that of the consciousness-soul a kind of ‘turning inside-out’ of the human ‘I’-consciousness from within outwards had taken place. All the phenomena of culture and history bore eloquent testimony to this, but the power of abstract judgment lost the power to understand their language. It became anti-phenomenalist.

What happened to the human being from the 15th century onwards formed part of a world-wide process and had been prepared for thousands of years. The science that belonged to the ancient Mysteries taught that man was a microcosm, a small image of the larger world, the universe. Know yourself by diving down into your own inner being, and you will know yourself and the larger world also! So sounded the principle of the genesis of ‘I’-consciousness in the Mysteries. “Man is a small cosmos,” says Democritus; he is the measure of all things.

Behind the world of sense-perception the riddles of nature were revealed to the inner gaze of man, in those times long past, as the existence and working of elementary spirits and intelligible beings of the higher world – the Divine Hierarchies of Christian esotericism. And it was necessary to know them through vision in this *direct* way. The methodology of this form of cognition was called the science of initiation. Those without mastery of it were as far removed from true knowledge as a man of today who has within him only the warmth of mystical feelings or experiences; a mere chaos of uncontrolled thoughts and images arising from a conglomerate of memories and outer impressions is far removed from science.

As conceptual thinking began to develop, the meaning of the principle ‘know thyself’ changed in such a way that, in order to follow it, it was essential to turn away from one’s own inner realm towards the entire world that surrounds the human being, seeking there the solution to the riddle of one’s own being. The old conception that “the macrocosm and man are actually one” (Paracelsus) retained its validity, but ‘the measure of all things’ now began to be compared to the dewdrop in which the entire starry heavens can be seen, but only as a reflection. The human brain, which had once perceived, beheld, and to which the essential nature of things had revealed itself, began to reflect. Now the whole universe can be reflected in it, but only conceptually, bereft of essential being. It is revealed in its essential nature to external sense-perception, but the latter has been deprived of the ability to perceive the ideal in the world. And because in each case – in both thinking and perception – one and the same universe presents itself, science, in the attempt to know its essential nature, started to travel along two paths simultaneously: that of thinking

and that of the experience of perceptions. These two paths gradually diverged ever farther from one another, and the need arose for a *methodology with the inherent capacity to bring them together again*. The central core of such a methodology can, as in the ancient Mysteries, only be the cognizing subject. Also in the methodology it is the measure of all things – but it is not for this reason at all one-sided as a subject.

The subject is the being who possesses an ‘I’, and outside the ‘I’ one will only ever meet in our sense-world a Fata Morgana – the multiform, beguiling apparition of the great illusion.

2. Methodological Conceptions

It is no exaggeration to say that without methodology no scientific work, indeed no purposeful human activity, is possible. But a professionally conscious relation to methodology is not an indispensable condition for every person who seeks a place for himself in civilization. Here another principle is at work, whereby that which was at a given time the object of scientific research of individual thinkers, at a later time is taken up into the instinct of the masses and rules as an all-determining principle within the infinite multiplicity of cultural and historical phenomena.

Cultural-historical experience (including its supersensible component) and the thinking of the most advanced section of humanity find their synthesis in methodology. As a process that moves onward from century to century, it absorbs into itself the manifoldness of specific methods, procedures, principles and rules of the organization of human life in the spheres of culture, science, religion, rights relationships, economic activities etc. It is because of this that each civilization possesses a single, unified aspect within the framework of its genesis.

Let us now turn to the question: What is the source of the relativist spirit of our epoch? Did hundreds of millions of people assimilate the wisdom of relativity theory? Not at all! In countless ways – through ideology, via the mass-media, through the system of education and training, through every feature of social life – the entire epoch was imbued with an element that stemmed from the theories and conclusions of a by no means wide circle of people who, from the end of the 19th century, under the influence of the crisis of philosophy, relentlessly atomized all inner conceptions and thus dissolved their traditional ties without offering anything to replace them. Methodological thinking was atomized, and this exerted an influence on science too. This effect then manifested as all-determining factors of civilization and called forth in it a *systemic*

crisis, which is now undermining the psychic foundation of the personality itself.

The general structural laws inherent in any civilization are grouped around the emergence of the human being as an individual, and from this arises the unique character of a civilization, which one must not extrapolate beyond its limits. It is founded on spiritual inequality. In the world there is no spiritual equality of human beings, and never will be. Where it is proclaimed as a fact the death of culture and the degeneration of the human race sets in.* For this reason a great ethical and historical responsibility is bound up with individual development. It does not rob the human being of the right to make mistakes, but it prohibits him from carrying principles belonging to lower stages onto the higher stages of his activity. Here, all that exists on a high level may only be directed towards what is still higher. For this reason it says in the Gospel very straightforwardly and clearly: “To whom much is given, from him much is demanded.” Also in other passages in the Gospels the ethic of spiritual inequality comes to expression.

Those spirits who exerted an influence on the development of civilization at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century failed to grasp that a new methodology must reflect the unusually rapid growth of the autonomy of the spiritual being of man which had then begun, his striving for free self-determination. For example, they neglected the fact that when reflection on social matters surged up for the first time, probing questions had to be asked about the source of the dogmas, the ethical, juristic and all the other imperatives, and also about the validity of the principles determining the human being. And it should be recognized that this phenomenon alone proved quite clearly the primacy of the thinking over the material activity of man.

The situation was further complicated by the fact that humanity showed itself unable to master the objective evolutionary processes (transcending the cultural-historical) that were pressing forward into the soul-spiritual sphere with their principles of super-consciousness, which could not be grasped on the level of intellectual understanding. A way out of this difficult situation was to be sought through the attempt to understand the, in some sense, *natural* character of the dualism whose main advocate was Kant. Not through a mere arbitrary play of the philosophical intellect, but through the objective laws of the development of the world and man, a condition arose in the soul-

* In Western Europe today the spiritual equality of all human beings is proclaimed and in a number of states penal law is applied for the protection of this dogma. This is nothing less than a refined form of civilized barbarism.

experience of the human being in which reality, which formerly – due to other factors in sense and thought which in time ceased to be effective – had constituted a whole, fell apart into two mutually opposite parts. Thus arose *epistemological dualism, which took over from metaphysical monism*. This dualism led in practice to a situation where the human being was obliged from now on to seek the motives for his activity, whilst finding himself in a kind of empty space between two parts of reality. The factors which had once determined human actions in a non-personal way – via revelation or thanks to the unity of man with nature – ceased to be effective. This led to the need for a methodology in which everything would have an extremely personalistic character and would hold together through a connection of its parts that is without contradiction.

Pre-scientific – mythological, theological etc. – knowledge rested on the assumption that the human being receives the truth as a direct communication from God, and that the understanding only passes on to us what God reveals. But the creator of Scholasticism, Thomas Aquinas, taught that reason in the Aristotelian sense – i.e. a reason that endows the ideas within itself with an independent but non-substantial existence – can dive deeply into things and receive from them their ideal content. Thus within the Christian world-view a decisive step was taken towards the uniting of concept and percept (experience) in the ‘I’, in order to support the existence of ‘I’ consciousness on this activity.

At that time, in the period immediately before the consciousness-soul epoch, an attempt was made to connect on to the methodology of the ancient Mysteries. Rudolf Steiner said in his book on Goethe’s world-view and its historical-philosophical roots that Thomas Aquinas had taught that revelation had penetrated unusually far downwards and individual reason had acquired the capacity to raise itself up from the earthly plane, so that “the doctrine of salvation and human cognition interweave at a shared boundary” (GA 6, p 35).

In the further development of philosophy those elements which Thomas Aquinas wanted to bring together into a unity separated entirely, and each went its own way. Thus Francis Bacon resorted to analysis and the classifying of single items of experience, which replaced revelation, in the hope of uncovering in this way the *universal* laws of nature, although in his view these can only help us to gain knowledge of further isolated facts, but have no reality in themselves.

Spinoza on the other hand gave priority to the world of ideas, but only those which have arisen outside the realm of perception. Perceptions, so he believed – taking inspiration from Plato in this question – give rise to desires

and thus enslave the spirit. Happiness consists in overcoming the world of perceptions. Descartes and the philosophical direction inspired by him hoped to discover the entire sum of knowledge, all truth, in the pure intellect (Verstand): inductively, on the path of reasoning from the simple to the ever more complex. A position opposite to this was taken by Hume, who saw reality only in perceptions.

The dualism of the world, which fell primarily into concepts and perceptions, was experienced acutely by Kant, a disciple of Hume. He subscribed to the view that the world of experience presents itself to us in the form of a mosaic of different impressions which reveal the effect that is exerted upon our sense-organs. The understanding (Verstand) brings order into the perceptions and creates out of them a wholeness, more or less. But its activity remains entirely subjective, as we only experience the way in which the outer influences affect our capacity to feel (sensations). But the true nature of the influences (inherent in the things of the world) remains enclosed within itself and is inaccessible to us. We are enclosed forever within the world of our subjectivity and experience only the changes undergone by us under the influence of an external, objective realm that is unknowable.

As to the thinking in concepts, which brings order to experience, Kant believed – with Hume – that it receives the ideas within its own sphere. The possibility of the existence of ideas that are pure and independent of experience is proved by mathematics and pure physics.

After Kant, philosophy struggled to find ways to overcome the dualism that had been seemingly eternalized by this thinker; ways in which a direct or indirect relation between the immanent and the transcendent could be established. Since the beginning of the 20th century an ever-growing role in this quest for a monistic world-picture has been played by natural science or, as one preferred to call it later so as to contrast it on the methodological level with philosophy: science. From this moment onwards scientific methodology in this sense is developed in a number of different directions, and in all these philosophy is forced into a secondary role; it becomes a plaything in the hands of experimental physics, of astronomy, even sociology does with it as it pleases. The pragmatic *Zeitgeist* gives priority to the methodology of the special sciences, so-called concrete scientific methodology.

But the same ‘Geist’ also dictates the need for a unified methodology of science. Therefore in the middle of the 20th century methodology assumed the character of a science in its own right. It is concerned with the problem of the mutual relations between philosophy and the special sciences, but also develops the methods and techniques of scientific research. It combines within itself

a large number of different methodological conceptions and theories, which describe the development and structure of knowledge and its methods. The priority of theory of knowledge in the creation of a unified methodology is recognized by some scientists, but rejected by others. For example, the French physicist and philosopher P. Duhem, who was investigating the nature of scientific theory at the beginning of the 20th century, saw it as no more than an instrument for the classifying of empirical data, an assemblage of empirical laws possessing no epistemological value.¹²⁾ This standpoint later found a good many adherents. Nevertheless, a dominant role was played by those methodological directions which did not question the necessity for epistemological research. Of these, two directions should be highlighted in which the philosophy of science plays the main part. To the first belong: logical positivism, a variant of which is empiricism; neo-positivism; and analytical philosophy. The second direction is called the historical and combines within it the relativistic and the historical evolutionary conceptions.

In special cases a division is made into methodology of content and formal methodology. The historical direction corresponds more to the first, and logical empiricism more to the second.

The methodological conceptions of neo-positivism need to be consigned to a special group. Its decisive feature is the absolutizing of natural science in methodology. To this group belong pragmatism and also epistemological scientism (which postulates that all problems of knowledge, social problems included, can be solved according to the model of natural science) but also methodological reductionism (not to be confused with phenomenological reductionism) which reduces theory to empirical fact and attempts to corroborate on this basis the standards of scientific objectivity.

In the manner of formal logic, neo-positivist methodology carries out an analysis of the structure of scientific knowledge and works out procedures for the testing of theories. It also sets out to uncover what is specific to the language of natural science, working on the assumption that the replacement of terms with an imprecise meaning by those with a precise meaning will, of itself, make possible the solution of complicated problems of the philosophy of science. A representative of logical positivism, the logician R. Carnap, asserted that: the conceptual meaning of a statement must be reduced to the observable; the logic of the meaning is superfluous; it is sufficient if the syntactical structure of a sentence or the direct spatio-temporal observability of the events or signs is given.

The creator of the neo-positivist methodological conception which has been given the name operationalism, the American physicist P. Bridgman, consid-

ered it indispensable for the understanding of a concept, whether it is being used in science or in everyday life, first to clarify what we do when we apply it. He said: “We cannot know the meaning of a concept until we have defined what operations we and those belonging to us carry out when we apply it in this or that situation.”¹³⁾ A theoretical construction as such has, in Bridgman’s view, no meaning; the human being is bound up with the object of observation through operational rules: measurement operations; operations with instruments; verbal operations; manipulation of symbols. Thus the question: “Do worlds exist in which other rules apply which differ from our own?” cannot be answered; one cannot even understand the question until one has clarified the operations that need to be carried out in the attempt to answer a question of this kind.¹⁴⁾

The second of the two directions in methodology, the historical, began to emerge at the end of the twenties of the 20th century. Here, the historical aspect of science, the question regarding the building of scientific theories and conceptions in their historical perspective, serves as a basis for the method of research.

The main reasons for the emergence of the historical direction were presumably the following: the excessive complexity of the exact sciences; maturing awareness of the determining of knowledge by social factors; the impossibility of reducing it to logical formulae; the shift of emphasis from the method of cognition to the reliability of knowledge. We could add that, together with the historical direction, representatives of the neo-Hegelian and neo-Kantian directions in philosophy and sociology worked in their time in opposition to the dominance of neo-positivism. Thus Jürgen Habermas, regarded by some as the unofficial leader of the Frankfurt School, advocated in a polemical article against the scientific conception of knowledge which claims that the School is influenced by the achievements of science, the development of a philosophy of science on the basis of “a theory of cognition as a theory of (the development of) society”.¹⁵⁾ After its two acts of mediation there is little left of Hegelianism here, since the goal envisaged by Habermas proves to be no more than the attempt to rehabilitate, in new conditions, the old dogmas of Marxism, already proclaimed in the 19th century. (See: ‘History of Ideologies’ by Karl Marx, and ‘The Dialectics of Nature’ by F. Engels.)

The neo-Kantians of the Marburg School – H. Cohen, P. Natorp, E. Cassirer – who also subscribed to the historical direction – adopted a different standpoint with respect to the methodology of science: namely, that philosophy investigates the structure of knowledge and not that of being. As a result scientific knowledge constitutes a system with its own immanent logic; it is a

product of thinking, not of the empirical content. Through identifying the history of science with the history of logic and philosophy, the adherents of the Marburg School deepened a one-sidedness, albeit a different one from that of the Frankfurt School. In this question they were opposed by E. Husserl, K. Jaspers, M. Scheler and N. Losky. For example, Jaspers insisted that the history of ideas contains, to an almost decisive degree, also an existential ‘moment’, with regard to both the personality of the scholar and the *Zeitgeist*. This view of Jaspers is unquestionably in agreement with Spengler’s idea of a morphology of world history, a sequence of cultures, in which “there are . . . many sculptures, paintings, mathematical and physical systems which differ from one another on the deepest level, each one limited in its duration, each contained within itself, just as every species of plant has its own flowers and fruit, its own type of growth and decline. . . . They belong, like plants and animals, to the living nature of Goethe, not to the dead nature of Newton.”¹⁶⁾

The ideas of Spengler, and to a still greater extent those of Husserl and Scheler, stood on fruitful soil thanks to their proximity to the views of Goethe. Even the convictions of the opponents of Spengler’s idea of the ‘organic’ nature of the cultures, the adherents of the concept of ‘internalism’, were characterized by the same proximity to Goethe. They raised the question as to the original driving force of the cultures. In their opinion this proves to be the human intellect. It is capable of undergoing certain mutations, after which a new world-view arises in the human being. This extends not only to the present, but also to the past. “Nothing changes more rapidly than what has become and belongs to the past,” said A. Koyré.¹⁷⁾

Academician V.I. Vernadski held similar views. He wrote: “Past forms of scientific thinking are seen in ever new and different perspectives. Every generation discovers new qualities in what is past.”¹⁸⁾

For at least half a century (until the beginning of the sixties) the historical direction fulfilled the role of a positive alternative to the formal-linguistic reductionism of positivism with its simplified picture of science, with the method of the artificial dissection of finished knowledge into single components, with the reduction of the process of the coming-into-being of living knowledge to the abstract logic of ideas – in short, to all that was proving to be the final stage of decline of the classical theory of knowledge and could only appear more or less credible to those who, in spiritual inertia, were still nostalgic for the battle with the old metaphysics. To others, however, who had the ability to keep pace spiritually with their own time, the working-out of all these conceptions could only seem a pointless waste of energy, since their abstract and not infrequently fictitious and playful models serve no scientific

purposes that are directed to the real life of human beings. It is hard to understand how such a phenomenon was at all possible under the conditions of the rapidly-growing *pragmatism* of the sciences already noted by Bacon, and its all-inclusive *socialization*, a socialization which did not stop at the attempt to enrich science with the elements of art – even of religion (attempts in this direction were undertaken e.g. at the beginning of the 20th century by the leader of the Baden School, W. Windelband).

It must be acknowledged, however, that the neo-positivist directions, although not only unspiritual but unfruitful in practice, ‘blossom and thrive’, so to speak. From the seventies onwards the historical direction begins to go the same way, just at the moment when it seems to be setting off on its victorious march to the longed-for goal. At that time there appears within its own ranks a new variant, in which D. Worrel sees the ‘focal point’ of the entire methodology of science. Its most eminent representatives are S. Toulmin, T. Kuhn, P. Feyerabend, J. Lakatos, N. Hahson and J. Agassiz. We must also regard as an adherent of this direction Karl Popper, who began his career as a neo-positivist. All these methodologists seem at first glance to have an anti-positivist thrust. This is reflected in the fact that they strive to pursue their research into scientific knowledge in a dynamic and ‘integrative’ manner by drawing their data from logic, psychology, sociology – even from metaphysics. They set themselves the goal of creating, at last, a unified methodology, if only for the natural sciences. In the history of natural science they select single episodes from the works of men of learning, and try with their help to formulate something which, in the conditions of the present day – i.e. post factum – bears the aspect of a ‘theory’ (Feyerabend, Hahson), a ‘paradigm’ (according to Kuhn this word has the same meaning as ‘theory’), or ‘an intellectual strategy’ (Toulmin). Their methodological constructions are restricted to the creation of theoretical models of a development of knowledge of a kind that is understood by Popper to be a stream of permanent revolutions, or by Toulmin a process of the interaction of permanence and change, or by Feyerabend total, uninterrupted, continuous change in which nothing has duration.

It is not by chance that Feyerabend is regarded as the founder of methodological relativism or even anarchism. His attitude as a researcher is the following: “To create and elaborate theories which are incompatible with traditional standpoints.”¹⁹⁾ Such a mood on the part of a learned academic calls to mind the Romantic period in German culture, namely ‘Sturm und Drang’ (storm and stress). Can such a mood be appropriate – i.e. fruitful – in contemporary science? If so, then only on condition that there lies behind it the intention to create a really pluralistic methodology which can provide the basis for a uni-

fied conception of nature which is not isolated from the general development of culture, science and civilization. In such a case even an anarchistic negation could become a dialectical ‘Aufhebung’ (cancellation and preservation). But no, what is decisive for Feyerabend is the data of physics, and then only that part of it which rests on relativist positions. Despite its independent status this part falls entirely under the definition given by the German physicist C.F. von Weizsäcker to this science as a whole. He takes its most essential character – the mode of thinking – and asks whether it has not always picked out “only those qualities of the living which it has in common with the dead”.²⁰⁾ How is this? We are being offered an anarchistic methodological conception of dead nature? Here we have the right to ask: What is this? Scientific boldness, or something unscientific?

To understand the natural-scientific sources of methodological relativism is not especially difficult. It had of necessity to appear because the discoveries of Maxwell, Planck, Einstein had destroyed the traditional picture of space and time and overturned the universal mechanical model of the universe which had been erected with such solidity by materialistic science. After the interpretations made by Einstein in the realm of theoretical physics even the concept of a ‘field’ no longer corresponded to material reality. But the constructions of Kuhn, Popper, show no way out of the rigid, immovable position; on the contrary, they erect a branch in the methodology of science which proves to be no more than a blind-alley. Their abstract constructions remained a mere intellectual game and they exerted not the slightest influence on the development of the empirical sciences. On the level of ‘Weltanschauung’ they could contribute nothing for the simple reason that their thinking is flat and trivial. A few examples will suffice to make this clear. The French physicist Bachelard, who is regarded as one of the foremost thinkers of the historical direction, says: “Only one who has studied profoundly what is complex can describe what is simple.”²¹⁾ But what is complex appears to him quite simple, when he declares: The world – that is “my verification”.²²⁾

In Popper’s case, thinking boils down, not infrequently, to a generalization of the following kind: “I maintain that, for natural scientific knowledge which in its essential character is empirical, its unceasing growth is of especial significance.”²³⁾ But what serious academic would question this? And who would consider stating the opposite: namely, that if knowledge comes to a standstill, this can prove beneficial to it? Nevertheless, declarations of this kind become the object of discussions, of criticism from many angles, which in time turns into real thought-directions in their own right, where a revision of traditional concepts is carried out and questions such as: What is knowledge? –

What is growth? – Is the criterion of rationality rational? – What is a criterion? etc. are tenaciously discussed. One cannot but concur with those who declare openly that the reduction of conceptions of development to Popper, Kuhn, Lakatos and Feyerabend is no more than a fashion.* And, one must add, not just a fashion. As a consequence of the ever-increasing social significance of science in the world, its influence on all spheres of social life, an *ideologizing* of the methodology of science has taken place. In this sense the striving to impress a predetermined character on knowledge and scientific research is equivalent to the intention to subject social relations, even the personality itself, to a form of *regimentation*. With regard to the criteria of what is truly scientific, one finds in both the historical and the neo-positive camps the same epistemological (gnoseological) roots. Their source turns out to be nothing other than the arid scholasticism of *empiriocriticism*. None of the directions offers the slightest possibility of solving the problem of the antithesis between the two main factors of cognition: concept (thinking) and perception. They endow it (cognition) with a special quality, but do not overcome the antithesis between theory and object. They do not possess the concept of causality, which is also absent (superseded) in the philosophy of Mach. Historical relativism and logical-mathematical positivism are in agreement as to the relative character of concepts, and in this they adopt the epistemological position of the medieval nominalists – the true precursors of Mach and Avenarius.

Thus we have every reason to conclude that Machism in all its subsequent philosophical and methodological modifications has become the expression of the final stage in the crisis of knowledge. We have to do with a gigantic process of metamorphosis of the human spirit (mind). At its beginning we have (in Plato) the real beholding of the substantial, intelligible world (the world of the ideas); in the middle the experience accessible to the spirits of Scholasticism, of the possibility of uniting the conceptual, the abstract element arising from thinking consciousness, with the substantial, with revelation; in the final stage the subject becomes aware of the universal character of the phenomenology of thinking consciousness (spirit). And this whole process, which has wandered blindly into the impasse of empiriocriticism with its apparent idealism, lost its connection with sense-reality in cognition, which it failed at the same time to

* Use of inflated and scientifically ungrounded terminology by the aforementioned writers is an unmistakable sign of mental weakness. To demonstrate a number of such ‘masterpieces’ at once, we might construct the following sentence: “Conventionalism and frictionalism in the interpretation of abstraction” do not reduce “in the process of prehension” “of perceptual knowledge” “the heuristic value of the method of extensive abstraction.”

bring into connection with intelligible reality. The ‘I’-consciousness became enclosed in the world of flickering, shadowy, non-substantial ideas which one can arrange like small cubes in a children’s game; but from without this consciousness is attacked by a disconnected aggregate of sense-perceptions, whose real nature must apparently remain forever hidden from the human being.*²⁴⁾

The thinking spirit of our time proved in the end to be condemned to a fruitless vicious circle with a dual aspect. In the one case he is pursuing the shadow of his own subjectivity which (corresponding to the law of the shadow) inevitably slips away as the consciousness casting the shadow approaches. This is the outcome of the process, begun at the time of Socrates and Plato, of the objectification of the intelligible world in the individual human spirit, who thinks within the boundaries of sense-reality.

In the second closed circle the nature-philosophy beginning with Aristotle declares, through the fact that it is limited to a materialistic understanding of the human spirit (as a product of nature), that natural processes are the all-determining, the unconditioned (in Marxism), and leaves the theory of knowledge with no answer to the question what determines *it*. The nature of causality is understood here in the spirit of Baron von Münchhausen, who pulls himself out of the swamp by a tuft of his own hair.

To summarize what has been said so far: In the scientific methodology of the 20th century two main directions can be identified, which cannot in any circumstances be brought into a unity, thereby making impossible a true understanding of the world and man. One of them belongs to a spiritual stream whose beginnings lie in the old world of revelation. In the flow of this stream through the course of time, the cognizing spirit of man passed from metaphysics to the physics of the material world, but as it could not find a right relationship to this world, it turned to a subjective idealism and degenerated into solipsism and nominalism.

An idealism of this kind is confronted, from the earthly plane, by materialistic monism, a universal teaching which transfers the definition of the spirit to matter.

In the situation which thus arose, the leading of philosophy and science to a synthesis that corresponds to the reality of the world took on the character of

* Bachelard: “Knowledge will always be immanent for the idealists because it is closed off from everything external.” By this he means that sense-perception transcends the consciously perceiving subject.

an overriding problem on not only a scientific, but also a social level. And it needs to be recognized that this problem has already found a solution in Anthroposophy.

3. Science and Philosophy

In the confrontation between natural science and philosophy the dualism of percept(ion) and concept becomes manifest in a clear and decisive way. Attempts are made to overcome the dualism by means of a universalizing of one of the two sides, while in fact both form together a unified whole. In some cases philosophy (i.e. the realm of ideas, concepts) is assigned the role of a science of general methodology, in other cases the assumption is made that only the use of mathematical models will enable one to work out a unified theory of the systems, which can encompass methodologically all forms of science. In practice the latter standpoint prevails. The successes of natural scientific research and technical progress appear to give one every reason to share the view expressed by Jan Amos Komensky (Comenius) that “the study of philosophy at the present time is nothing more than a difficult and arduous form of idleness”.²⁵⁾

G. Bachelard and J. Wilmot (a representative of operational rationalism or new realism) are of the opinion that traditional philosophy has neither an object of its own to research nor a research method; philosophical thinking, they say, has virtually no point of contact with science – i.e. natural science. The existing philosophy of science, so they claim, is not a philosophy of science itself.

That philosophy has an object of its own to research was disputed by Mach and Avenarius, who identified it with metaphysics. For this reason the adherents of scientism and neo-positivism reduced philosophy to logic, to mere operations with terms, and the physicalists, who draw on the theses of Hume, insist that any science whatever is only exact if it becomes mathematics of physics.

Such ideas can only be adopted by a person for whom the entire knowable world is a purely mechanical system. As a world-picture of this kind is by no means acceptable to everyone, sober voices are sometimes heard even among the hard-boiled materialists; for example: “The treatment of physics as the fundamental science is in a certain sense only a scientific varnish over the industrial orientation of today’s science.”²⁶⁾

To find a compromise in the dispute concerning the relation between philosophy and science in methodology, the adherents of the historical direction

attempt to develop a special philosophy of science, since, as I. Latakos states: “Philosophy of science without history of science is empty, and the history of science without philosophy of science is blind.”²⁷⁾ Bachelard and Wilmot consider it indispensable to create a special theory of knowledge for natural science, as scientific (natural scientific) activity is “dialectical in principle” and does not take place in accordance with the principle of induction.²⁸⁾ For this reason the entire historical content of knowledge, so they believe, changes completely at certain intervals; new knowledge also reorganizes the old.

At the beginning of his scientific activity Bachelard was eager to attempt to bring theory of knowledge and the experience of perception together into a unified whole. It is true that at that time he adopted a naïve-realist position, but in this question this was especially fruitful as a starting-point. He said that any theory can justifiably be termed ‘realism’, if it engages in the interpretation of perceptions “on the level of the perceptions themselves”, and does not give the general the priority over the particular.* He confessed also to his belief in the “wealth of individual sensations that are given in the spatial world, and the systematic unity of thinking, which is abstract in its essential nature”.²⁹⁾

For this reason the reader of his early works might ask the overriding question: Was not this methodologically-trained scientist attempting to build a bridge between Hegelian panlogism and Goethean phenomenism? Not in the least; in Bachelard’s later works the naïve-realist element in his approach assumes the character of a rational materialism. The ray of true intuition which had once shone in his consciousness faded in the twilight of nominalistic constructions and his realism took on a materialistic colouring.

At first sight, dialectical materialism would appear to overcome, with a spark of thoroughness and consistency, the antithesis between a world based on perceptions and the world of thought, while avoiding at the same time all methodological radicalism. Its adherents subscribe to the view that science provides us with real knowledge, as the cognizing subject reflects objective reality in his thinking. The object of science is the whole of reality, including its reflection in the consciousness of man. Thus a monistic basis is created for the general methodology of science, where the question concerning the separation between natural science and philosophy is superseded (aufgehoben). Object and subject of cognition merge together into a unity – so much so, that the claim is put forward that the determining power of the categories consists in the mirroring in ‘universal characteristics’ of the fundamental contradiction

* Later he holds the view that scientific thinking does not move from the simple to the complicated.

between the material and the ideal elements; admittedly, cognition exerts no influence on the objects – the world is just the same after cognition as it was before. And yet all these assertions can sound highly seductive to someone who is looking for a unitary world-picture. Against the background of bloodless theories of the relativity of all that exists, one can to some degree feel enthusiasm when, without taking account of this world-view as a whole, one reads theses such as the following, with its breath of spiritual ‘stability’: “The laws of thinking and the laws of being are, with respect to their content, identical. The dialectic of concepts is a mirror-reflection of the dialectical movement of the real world. The categories of materialist dialectics have an ontological character and fulfil at the same time epistemological functions: Through reflecting the objective world, they serve as stages in the knowledge of it.”³⁰⁾

We ask quite frankly: What are the thoughts of the exponents of scientism, of logical positivism and other nominalists of our time compared to the ‘fundamentality’ of such principles? Nevertheless, there is a direct affinity between them. This rests on the axiomatic recognition of one and the same outgoing premise: namely, that theory of knowledge is a synonym for the theory of mirroring (of reality in the human mind). But in this case, it no longer makes any fundamental difference whether the ideal is set aside in favour of the material or vice-versa. And the assertion that the gnoseology (epistemology) of the categories in dialectical materialism does not rob them of their ontological meaning is no more than a demagogical trick, if knowledge of the world does not enrich it in any way.

Regarding the identity of the laws of thinking and being, one should, before one talks about it, first clarify what content we are attaching to these two concepts. If we adopt the standpoint of Schelling, who supposed that genetically spirit proceeds from matter, but that spirit, once it has appeared, works back on it, this identity takes on the character of a polar inversion, which corresponds to its nature in the highest degree. In Marxism the inversion assumes the form of a movement that runs in a closed circle, with the result that both thinking and being are relativized. This has shown itself in practice with unmistakable clarity in the post-Soviet period, when the Marxist scholars started actively to combine materialism with experiments in parapsychology. These were previously forbidden, not because one was afraid of mysticism (this has nothing whatever to do with it). No methodological formula had been worked out by means of which one could have come to terms with the ‘counter-revolutionary’

radium* (B.P. Vysheslavtsev). Now the formula has been found, but it stands in contradiction to its own assumptions. For consciousness also mirrors the ‘reality’ that is modelled with the aid of psychotronic devices and electromagnetic fields, by means of which consciousness is influenced. But this will be a ‘reality’ that is not simply given to the sensory faculty, but which by means of sensory manipulation is directly aroused in the perceiving mind of the researcher himself. And yet it can still be worked upon by means of further scientific knowledge, just like ordinary reality. One can manipulate with its facts and, albeit indirectly, register its existence with the help of instruments. It is as though here one had found a sphere into which, after its decay, the radium ‘treasonously’ vanishes. But with this, all hope vanishes of ascertaining who, in the final analysis, is modelling what: is the laboratory experiment modelling the perceptions, or the perceptions the experiment? Is the model of being modelling its mirror-reflection, or is the mirror-reflection (thinking) modelling the model of being? This is the outcome to which the ingenuity and imprecision of the Marxist definition of the relation between consciousness and being has led. But the entire non-Marxist theory of knowledge and methodology of science has led to the same results, even its abstract-idealistic direction. Of course they were identical at their original source, or at least they belonged to the same direction of thought. This source must be sought in Mach and Avenarius.

Dialectical materialism combined Hegel’s dialectic eclectically with empiriocriticism, and although it eventually turned away from the latter, this did not alter anything fundamentally. They remained close relatives methodologically, and although they came before neo-positivism with its sign/symbol role of thinking in cognition they can both be seen as neo-positivist. They are all connected by a single epistemological standpoint, according to which thinking cannot be determined causally from within its own sphere, but is the outcome of various functional dependencies lying outside itself. This is how Mach sees it, and the same follows from the Marxist mirroring theory. The Marxist has also nothing to object to “thinking the world according to the least expenditure of force” (Avenarius); nature remains rational even in its mirror-reflection. And as for the ‘ontological content’ of the categories, this is the ontology of existential nothingness.

Even the historical direction in methodology cannot deny its affinity with dialectical Marxism. For example, Popper states, despite the theses declaring that the world of cognition cannot be reduced to the world of material

* The chemical element is meant.

processes: “The weakness of subjectivism lies in the fact that it introduces a certain dependency of the world on us (as thinkers).”³¹⁾ But Marxist gnoseology is of the same opinion.

To find approval in the world of ideas prevailing in science today, for the conclusions we draw, is extremely difficult. But it is gratifying that many people in that world are of the opinion that philosophy and, following it scientific methodology, having taken the human spirit as their starting-point, have arrived at a denial of the human being. There is a certain compelling force inherent in this antinomy.

The relativizing process affected all spheres of the spiritual life and the activity of the human being, and this led to his alienation from them. The criterion of scientific objectivity itself is put under review with the aim of eliminating the subjective factor. In practice this leads to a situation where, in place of science – with the exception of applied science – a pseudo-science arises, with the consequence that methodology and the real achievements of science are separated by a gulf that grows ever wider. The edifice of science that has been erected over the course of centuries thanks to human genius, is atomized, not merely because of errors in theory, but also as a result of the trivializing of the human spirit, the exhaustion of its earlier potential. New science and the old human being come into an objective contradiction to one another. And this will not turn out to the advantage of the human being, if he does not resolve the crisis within himself – and this will require that he finds new qualities in his own being. The relation between being and consciousness, where nature fills the role of being, has exhausted its metaphysical significance. The human being has now to do with his own gnoseological significance, where being proves to be the phenomenology of the spirit (the older one and the new), which creates culture out of nature. And if a crisis arises in culture, this crisis, determining consciousness, has its roots in the human being. We have in truth entered an epoch in which the downfall of civilization as a whole, but at the same time freedom of the spirit, is possible. We simply need to understand thoroughly the laws of development.

* * *

The initial impulse leading to the decline of science, in which philosophy and not technical progress plays the leading part, was given by the great figures of the past. They had in the end reached the correct conclusion that the solution of the fundamental question of theory of knowledge would require a change of consciousness. But these conclusions remained unnoticed, or were dismissed as the unavoidable ‘downside’ of philosophy, and people mainly focused their attention on the question how in the philosophical systems the

one-sidedness had been deepened in the solution of the fundamental question. And this is easy to understand, because real genius was at work in this deepening process.

Let us take Fichte by way of example. In his polemical exchange with contemporaries who, as he said, were not able to raise philosophy “to the rank of a credible science”, he proposed to select as a basis for a comprehensive survey of the philosophy of science, philosophy in the actual sense of the word. This presupposes that it should be granted the right to be not just science, but higher science – ‘doctrine of science’ (Wissenschaftslehre), ‘science of the sciences’, which is in a position “to demonstrate the basic principle of all possible sciences which cannot be demonstrated within themselves”.³²⁾ The object of such a science, so he believes, is the system of human knowledge itself, since “beholding (Anschauen) without a concept is blind”.³³⁾ And what significance does beholding have for the concept? Fichte did not take up this question. He concludes: “The doctrine of science possesses absolute totality. Within it, One leads to All and All leads to One”, for “in the doctrine of science the ‘I’ is represented”.³⁴⁾

The content of the doctrine of science is this: Reason is absolutely autonomous, it is only for itself, and for itself it is only it(self); all that it is can only be grounded within it, and only be explained from out of itself. This is the central principle of the ‘doctrine of science’. It is ‘certain through its own nature’. This means, so we would emphasize, that its transparent self-evidence is grounded in the absolutism of the triad: doctrine of science – reason – ‘I’. But how can the cognizing spirit approach this triad? Where must he begin? In the formulation of Fichte we have to do only with a kind of ideal. In order to find access to it, one must learn anew how to deal with the world of experience. In Fichte there occurs, parallel to his apologia of reason, a gradual setting aside of the world that is given in perception, in favour of the thinking spirit. In any case, it is well-known that, in drawing the ‘I’ out of an act of absolute positing, he was unable to bring it into connection with the world of experience, the Hegelian ‘otherness’, which would be, according to Goethe, the object of thinking, and not only of thinking: he also stated (and we allow ourselves here to partially paraphrase his line of thought) that the concept without beholding (Anschauen) is empty, abstract, dead.

Fichte called his doctrine of science transcendental idealism. In the subsequent history of philosophy it was relegated to the sphere of the unconscious

* We see that Lakatos cannot claim originality when he says that “the history of science is blind without the philosophy of science.”

and later demonized by Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung, banished into the sphere of psychology, where it assumed the character of transcendental materialism.

Such are the blind-alleys and even abysses in which theory of knowledge is trapped. To secure its release and make it fruitful again it is absolutely necessary to tread the path of that evolutionism which has to do with sensible-supersensible reality, and to form content-filled connections between theory of knowledge and the empirical sciences, so that in future no-one can permit himself to claim that the world is his 'verification'.

These challenges can be met if one turns to Anthroposophy, where not only are the prior conditions laid down, but a general outline of a universal methodology already exists. Not through a vagary of chance, and not through any sort of mystical escape from the world, as its opponents like to claim, but thanks to its rejection of scientific dogmatism, false metaphysics, artificial premises in the theory of knowledge, it arrived at its results, which are able to lead mankind out of the crisis.

At the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century there were a number of important directions of thought in the context of traditional philosophy which were in harmony with Anthroposophy. In a remarkable way they all show in how close a natural proximity to Goetheanism living scientific thinking stands – no matter when and in whom it may arise. Especially characteristic in this respect is Edmund Husserl. Regarding the question whether philosophy should be classified as a science, he described as its main feature the necessity for a fundamentally new approach to thinking. In a short study entitled 'Philosophy as a Strict Science', he says the following: "How philosophy is related to the natural sciences and the humanities (Geisteswissenschaften); whether the specifically philosophical element in its work – which is, after all, directed essentially towards nature and mind (Geist) – demands fundamentally new attitudes which will bring with them goals and methods that are entirely specific in philosophy; whether philosophical activity will lead us into, as it were, a new dimension, or will take its course on the same level as the empirical sciences of nature and mind (Geistesleben): this has remained a matter of controversy to this day. It shows that not even the actual meaning of philosophical problems has been brought to scientific clarity."³⁵⁾

Within the context of those directions of thought which we have analyzed, attempts were made, as we now see, to answer – either positively or negatively – the question posed by Husserl. But they proved unsatisfactory, firstly because of their extreme nominalism, and secondly because of their open or disguised materialism, which prevented them from remaining within the bounds

of the real – or, according to N. Losky's definition: in the bounds of *ideal-realism*.

The intrusion of materialistic natural science into philosophy did a disservice to both disciplines: it set up false goals for natural science, and in philosophy it distorted its method of cognition and precluded the possibility of its further development. In the very recognition of the fact we have just mentioned, Edmund Husserl sees the beginning of a process in which its sovereign rights were restored to philosophy. He says: "As in the most impressive sciences of modern times – those of mathematics and physics – the outwardly major part of the work is carried out according to indirect methods, we are only too inclined to overvalue indirect methods and fail to recognize the value of a direct approach. But it lies in the very nature of philosophy, to the extent that it returns to final origins, that its scientific work takes place in spheres of *direct intuition* (emphasis G.A.B.), and it is the most significant step that our age has to take to recognize that with philosophical intuition in the true sense, the *phenomenological grasping of essential being*, a boundless field of activity opens up, and a science attains, without all the indirect symbolizing and mathematizing methods, without the instrument of inferences and proofs, a wealth of knowledge that is both rigorous and of decisive importance for *all* subsequent philosophy."³⁶⁾

Somewhat more precise than this statement of Husserl is the following by Losky on the same theme; he writes in his 'Foundations of Intuitivism': "Intuitivism discloses and overcomes the false premise of the separation between the cognizing subject and the cognized object. Intuitivism with its thesis according to which knowledge is not a copy, a symbol or a manifestation of reality in the cognizing subject, but *reality itself*, life itself... overcomes the dichotomy between knowing and being, without diminishing the rights of being in the slightest degree."³⁷⁾

Virtually the same as the thoughts of these two philosophers is said, described and proven by Anthroposophy, which rests on a broad basis in theory of knowledge, natural science and Goetheanism. 'Direct intuition' is here called 'the power of judgment in beholding' (*anschauende Urteilskraft*). To this power of judgment the 'grounds of primal beginning' – which are in fact archetypal (Ur-) phenomena – do indeed reveal themselves. The process of their intuitive – or beholding – cognition is the true form of being, higher than all others that are possible in sense-reality. It is the transitional form between the sense reality and the supersensible, and for this reason it has, as it were, two faces – but one centre: the human 'I'. And in this sense Fichte is right when he says that in the doctrine of science the human 'I' itself is represented.

4. Science and the Study of Nature

We now turn to the concept of ‘science’ itself. Let us not be misled by the seeming multiplicity of its definitions, as we pick out its most salient characteristics of which – so we discover – there are not very many. They can be formulated as follows:

1. Science has reality as its object.
2. Science embodies a system of knowledge.
3. It is an activity.
4. It is determined to a greater or lesser extent by social factors.

These definitions which we have highlighted on a purely statistical basis may appear to some to be lacking in content, but few would question them, and if we do not use them we will have no basis whatever for a discussion of this theme.

If, merely from the standpoint of content, we analyse the full range of definitions of science, we have before us so broad a spectrum that we are forced to the following conclusion: “About science everything is known, yet no-one knows what science is.” Thus the British historian H. T. Buckle said in 1859 that science is “a codex of generalizations whose validity is indisputable to the extent that they can be covered by higher generalizations but not undermined by them.... They can be absorbed but not refuted by them”.³⁸⁾ In the middle of the 20th century Karl Jaspers firmly contradicts Buckle’s thesis and asks what irrefutability we can be speaking of, when science has no knowledge of its own meaning, when it is lacking in the ability to know the nature of being, to define the purpose of life etc.³⁹⁾

It will do no harm to our investigation if we leave such views as the following outside the framework of the scientific context: Science is a generator of knowledge, or its ideal is technology, or it is the manifestation of a trans-individual subject that thirsts for the truth (Rickert); a merely personal quality that is lacking in universal relevance is what characterizes the views of academics for whom – to paraphrase an expression of Kant – the history of science is both its science and its philosophy. One will only find firm ground for an understanding of the meaning, the nature and purpose of science if the answer can be found to the question posed by Kant: Under what conditions is the existence of science as necessary and universal knowledge possible? The methodology of Anthroposophy maintains that the first of these conditions consists in establishing the *object* of science as a *reality* which falls into two parts: an object that is given in one’s perception and an ideal object that can be

thought – which includes within its system, with inherent necessity, a third and all-important element: *the cognizing subject*.

Everywhere in non-Anthroposophical methodology we encounter conceptions which reject, with a greater or lesser degree of one-sidedness, this tri-une object of science. In some cases the importance of thinking is underestimated, in others that of experience is overestimated, and in nearly all of them one has no idea what to do with the cognizing subject. Treating the nature of the concept from a nominalist standpoint, the advocates of the positivist conception dismiss as metaphysical any methodological principle whatever which moves beyond the limits of a simple description of experience, and thereby reduce theory to the gathering of empirical data. An extreme advocate of such views was Max Planck. He says, for example, that the totality of human beings together with the whole of their sense-world and their planet “are no more than an infinitesimal nothing within the vastness and unfathomable sublimity of nature”. It would follow from this that we have behind the sense-world the ‘world of reality’, whose existence is independent of the human being. In the quest for knowledge of this real world physics pursues research into the physical world and, the closer it approaches the real world, the more it is forced to exclude sense-perceptions from the world-picture of physics and free it of anthropomorphic elements. In the final analysis “a progressive departure from the physical world-picture of the sense-world means no less than growing proximity to the real world.”⁴⁰⁾

For this reason Planck saw the ideal of experimental physics in as complete a removal as possible of the human being from experimental procedures. This position of Planck is not new. It has its source in the principle of scientific truth postulated by Francis Bacon, who maintained that, because “often enough our feelings deceive us”⁴¹⁾, correcting them is one of the tasks of experiment.

We do not exaggerate the significance of the methodological direction which began with Bacon and plays a dominant role in the world today, if we say that thanks to it our entire civilization is given a direction which will lead the human being sooner or later to a symbiosis with the machine. Successful developments that have already taken place in the fields of psychotronics, genetic manipulation etc. bear witness to this with the utmost clarity. Here we must recognize that it is not the scientific and technical results arrived at by the experts that are leading to the decadence of civilization or something worse, but those consequences which exert their influence on the *human* factor in science.

The exclusion of the thinking and perceiving human being from the process of scientific cognition, the reduction of his role and function to that of a mere operative of this process, leads inevitably to the thesis that the world made manifest in the experiments of physics has a priori credibility. In this case physics opens up to us *the 'true' picture of the world through overcoming the (human) subject within it!* This would be the ultimate consequence of materialistic monism.

This form of neopositivism (which is entirely consistent within itself) does arouse considerable opposition in scientific circles, but of this it must be said that it arises as a consequence of its own inconsistency, its departure from its own criteria of scientific truth. But such is the nature of the thinking and feeling scientist. To eliminate it is not at all easy. Albert Einstein, who in his youth had subscribed to the philosophy of Mach, but later rejected it, perceptively called its creator “a good mechanic”, but “a lamentable philosopher”. In Einstein’s opinion “the edifice of our science” rests unavoidably “on principles which themselves do not stem from experience”.⁴²⁾ Even Heisenberg confessed that in his own works an important part is played by the standpoint of Einstein, according to which “every theory also contains within it unobservable quantities”. He says that the principle stating that only observable quantities should be used “cannot be applied consistently”; theory determines what can be observed.⁴³⁾

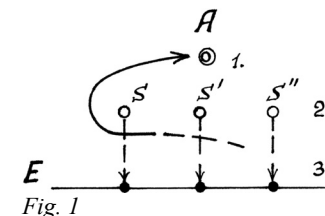
No doubt all this sounds more sensational and more alive than many a schematic formula of eminent methodologists, but how can such views be reconciled with the demand of Planck, a fervent disciple of Einstein, that the picture of the world should be freed “from the individuality of the creative mind (spirit)”⁴⁴⁾ – (a demand already put forward by Newton)? As the emphasis in methodological research shifted away from philosophy and over to natural science, human thinking moved in a kind of circle. Through renouncing the possibility of knowing the essential nature of things with the help of philosophy, it arrived by way of natural science to the *metaphysics of theory* in the Kantian sense – the metaphysics of pure thinking. Was there anything fruitful in this movement in a closed circle? Yes, there definitely was. Thanks to it the futility of a one-sided appeal – either to thinking or to the experience of perception – became evident, in the first instance. And secondly, it proved how little justification there is in placing the question of the pure criteria of science exclusively in the realm of natural science, and thus laid the ground for the extension of the object of science to include art, ethics, sociology – i.e. intrinsically *subjective* forms of human activity, which are able not only to enrich our understanding of nature, but to grasp its essential being even more exactly than is

possible for natural science – especially on its contemporary level – and, most crucially of all, the process of cognition itself became its object. A science that is limited to the investigation of nature has no organ, as Berdyaev rightly observes, “to perceive the freedom in the world”.⁴⁵⁾ But even in the realm of physics itself, the if not all-determining yet in no circumstances dispensable presence of the human subject is felt, in a unified picture of the world, to be an integral part of this world. B. Rieman, for example, bears witness to this. He was no metaphysician, yet he came to the conclusion that the system of space-time co-ordinates is, on the one hand, a mathematical assumption, while on the other it is “determined by the events occurring within it”.⁴⁶⁾

The methodology of Anthroposophy goes far beyond foreshadowings of this kind, and in its *normative* procedure regards the human factor as *system-forming*, both in the realm of theory and of scientific experiment, whereby the last remaining forms of metaphysics (of theory) are overcome and the foundation is laid for a real monism and for freedom of the spirit, which is diametrically opposed to the freedom that can be offered to the human being by relativism or naïve anarchism.

5. Percept and Concept

In a letter to his friend Solowin written on 7 May 1952 Einstein tried to explain by means of a diagram (see Fig. 1) a special method of scientific inquiry to which he resorted when the principle of the observability of phenomena – which he acknowledged – and the traditional method of induction proved inadequate. With the line or surface E in the diagram the totality of sense-experience is represented, “the labyrinth” of sense impressions including hallucinations, in a word – “all the direct, given elements of our experience”. In the field marked with the number 2 we have the judgments “arising from axioms”, made on the basis of the different elements given to us in experience. Higher up, in point A we have the system of axioms. How does it arise? – Not by way of induction, says Einstein. Sphere A, or 1, determines sphere 2 logically, but *deductively*, and the special judgments arising further from axioms are brought into relation to sphere 3. Between levels E and S there is no logical connection moving in an upward direction.⁴⁷⁾



In other words, Einstein stands here in contradiction to the general principle of scientific truth as originally formulated by Bacon. He claims that “an induc-

tive method that is able to lead to the fundamental concepts of physics”, simply “does not exist”(!).⁴⁸⁾

The scientist is led from E to S by a certain curve, a leap, a creative effort, which is accomplished ‘blindly’; the two spheres stand, according to Einstein, in an “*intuitive connection*” that is rooted in the human psyche. Their mutual relation is revealed through a process of illumination the nature of which was unknown to Einstein, and for this reason he only conveyed his secret thoughts to a friend.

From the standpoint of spiritual science there is no secret involved in what Einstein touched upon instinctively. It is the phenomenon of what is known as direct knowledge, which is the foundation for Goethean ‘ideal perception’, the power of judgment in beholding. To summon it into action, a special attitude of soul is required. Einstein to some degree called it forth in himself when he was imbued with the “passionate wish to comprehend” the fragmented and “chaotic” world of perceptions. But whoever feels the wish to master a cognitive method of this kind should not, in undue haste, dispense with induction, that alma mater of genuine, not mysteriously enlightening but individually guided and – albeit in its own way – normative deduction, whose by-product is the heuristic models of methodology.

In his best-known works Einstein offers a clear and popular description of the inductive method of scientific cognition. “Science,” he says, “is concerned with the totality of primary concepts, i.e. the concepts that are directly related to sense-perceptions, and with the theorems which form a connection between them. In the initial phase of its development this is all that is contained in science. But... the totality of concepts and mutual relations arrived at in this way is lacking in any logical unity. In order to make good this deficiency, one invents a system with fewer concepts and interrelations – a system in which the original concepts and interrelations which belong to the ‘first layer’, are now retained as derivative concepts and interrelations. This new, ‘secondary system’ is characterized by greater logical unity, with the disadvantage that it contains only elementary concepts, ‘second layer concepts’, of the kind that are not directly connected with the complex of sense-perceptions.”⁴⁹⁾ Then we ascend to the third system, with its still greater poverty of primary concepts, and so on “until we reach the greatest conceivable unity and the lowest number of concepts in the logical foundation that is still compatible with our sense perceptions”.

This stage of the ‘greatest possible unity’ is basically identical with point A in Fig. 1. It is thus accessible from both directions: by way of scientific induction and also by way of ‘beholding’ in the Goethean sense, which means that

the latter, no less than induction, is rooted in the reality of the world, but demonstrates a higher level of the individual spirit, which is especially important if science is to be for us more than an end in itself; but here there are important consequences for science, too.

Let us consider in more detail this meeting-point of the two methods of cognition. We begin by looking again at Einstein’s surface E, on which there is spread out before us a disconnected aggregate of sense-impressions, which includes the data of experiment. The primary activity with which we approach an experience from a scientific, cognitive standpoint consists in the process whereby the single percepts call forth in us their correspondences, the concepts: defining, quantitative etc., and we bring the concepts into relation with the percepts. Thus a second, ideal reality emerges above the reality of the percepts. The phenomena or facts of cognition which are composed out of elements of both realities form an already consciously apprehended but still disconnected conglomerate of experience. Our system of knowledge at this stage only takes up complex *elements*. Now begins the abstract work of the spirit. It finds *connections* between the elements (Fig. 2) and one can elaborate them with the help of mathematical logic, according to the method of logical positivism, linguistic analysis etc. But in most cases there will be a mechanical processing of the experimental data, consisting in the solving of the system of equations with a certain number of unknowns. In the course of this work, as we ascend from one stage to the next, we become ever further removed from surface E where we started, which has a certain ‘thickness’, because the reality cognized by us has been taken hold of in consciousness. On the higher levels of mathematical abstraction, elements and connections assume a purely ideal character and they begin to determine one another reciprocally. There is within them less and less of the sense-perceptible element we started out with, just as is the case with the homeopathic dilution of substances in medicine. We must therefore ask the question: What kind of reality do we have before us in point A? It stands without any doubt whatever (and it could be, for example, a newly-discovered particle), owing to the many levels of abstraction, in contradiction with one of the fundamental principles of natural science: namely the principle of observability. Natural science ought here to dispense with the results gained in this way or, alternatively, it should abandon the criterion of scientific truth it postulates. It cannot do the first, for perfectly understandable reasons; the second drives it, so long as this criterion remains in force, into the abyss of materialistic metaphysics. It therefore takes refuge in a third possibility – irrationalism; it adopts the standpoint of Planck, according to which the human being is no more than a hindrance in experiment. And why – we would

remark parenthetically – should science not proceed in this way when, given the present – continually advancing – level of computer technology, the discovery by inductive means of point A mentioned by Einstein is only a matter of time and the funding of scientific research? Science has gained the capacity to forcibly wrest from nature her secrets. But once we acknowledge that both – nature and science – are without soul, we are signaling the beginning of a metaphysics such as the world has never seen before.

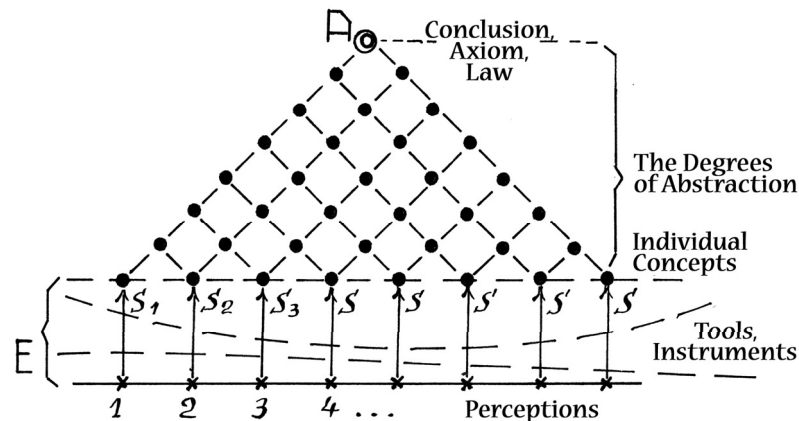


Fig. 2

We then arrive at something that is half fantastic in nature, but which nevertheless assumes entirely real features. Sooner or later it will force everyone to recognize the correctness of materialism and of the conclusion it draws; namely, that the reality known to us is identical to the reality unknown to us. We think of the path followed by applied science, where the aim is to create self-instructing and self-regulating, ‘thinking’ cybernetic systems. The illusory character of their world must not be confused with the illusionism in theory of knowledge; when the time comes it can become objectively real in the future. And in order, when this happens, to answer the question: Why will this still be an illusory world? – the task will be to prove convincingly that *in the universe only the ‘I’ is real*, and that in the physical-material world only the human being has an ‘I’. When we exclude him from science or lose him within it, we deprive science of reality. To discuss this on the level of his concepts with a materialist who contradicts his own principles, has no sense at all. At the same time no-one, in the age in which we live, has the right to ignore the arguments of the materialists. Anthroposophy meets these demands through maintaining

in its dialogue with opponents the position of evolutionism. This is a constructive attitude; instead of the empty abstraction of definitions it considers both the phenomena and the concepts in their development and thus reveals their meaning. It takes time to follow this path, admittedly, and for this reason the entire content of the present book is needed to give to the question posed above an answer that is fully grounded in every detail or, to express it more precisely, to show how Anthroposophy answers it. We would point out in particular that the answer to the question is of decisive importance for the fate of civilization. If humanity fails to find this answer or tries to evade it, then, as Rudolf Steiner says, materialism will become real. And then the human being proves, in reality, to be superfluous on the Earth. Far behind materialism there are beings of the spiritual, sensible-supersensible world who are waging a battle in the universe for the realization of their own special goals. These spirits have remained behind in their development and are striving to make up for what they have missed by using the human being as an instrument and completely ignoring his own evolutionary tasks. For this reason our present activity – cognition – is not useless, and the socializing of science on a colossal scale has not come about by chance – but more of this later. It seems to us that scientific illusionism started to take hold from the moment when neo-positivism began to regard theory of knowledge and ontology as metaphysics. Thus the initial grounds were laid for irrationalism, which destroyed a proper relation to experience. Parallel to the strengthening of the neo-positivist position the development of the empirical sciences was taking place, and this seemed to be showing that even the activity of perception is metaphysical. In order to remove this characteristic one started to ‘build over’ the organs of perception, ‘to put them in touch with reality’ by means of measuring instruments, pickup apparatus. But in doing this, one achieved the opposite of what was intended. On this question we would quote the opinion of Einstein, who is held in high regard in the scientific world. He says: “An observed phenomenon gives rise to certain occurrences in the measuring apparatus; it is their cause. Thus we have to do with processes in the apparatus which work upon our sense-organs and thereby impress themselves in our consciousness.”⁵⁰⁾

Operating with experience in this way has the result that the reflective activity of the experimenting scientist gains the upper hand over perception, and the whole thing is reduced, as Bachelard acknowledges, to “the noumenal* (i.e. conceptual) preparation of the phenomena, which are technically constructed”. This is what the outcome is like, just to give an example: When in the research

* In the sense of Bachelard – preparation on the thought level only.

on protons we speak of the path they follow in a mass spectrograph, they show themselves to have been prepared by technical means and do not exist in nature.⁵¹⁾ Indeed, even Planck refused to regard the quantum as anything more than the formal mathematical procedure. Einstein concurred with the view that multi-dimensional spaces, the wave-function in quantum mechanics, are ultimately nothing more than formalized concepts of theoretical physics.

This is what the most recent physics looks like in reality, and Popper and Lakatos had simply no right in their methodological conceptions to draw from it logical conclusions which justify the separation of knowledge from the cognizing subject in experimental science. Popper maintains that knowledge in the usual sense exists “independently of the knower – outside the cognizing subject”; it moves, he says, within some kind of “third” world which reminds one half of the intelligible world of the Platonic ideas and half of that of the Hegelian objective spirit.⁵²⁾ We are seriously mistaken if we think that Popper is speaking here of ideal beings. No, we have here to do with the usual metaphysics of nominalist theory. These are the fruits of natural scientific illusionism which wishes on the one hand to build up everything on a normative approach to methodology, but on the other hand reduces theory of knowledge to the metaphysical part of scientific theory. And so, when observability is also eliminated as a criterion of scientific truth, scientific theory in its entirety acquires a metaphysical character – i.e. we end up in the realm of the absurd.

All the elements of the structure of the atom are unobservable as objects of experimental science. The philosophy of science has the task of constructing out of them a world which resembles the world of perceptible objects. There emerges something like an inside-out Kantianism: *The thing-in-itself that is known, but not given to us in our sensations!*

The building-up of models, mathematical formalism, the creating of theories – all these are products of the human intellect, which gives science a ‘face’, and determines the way in which the material world is interpreted. The method of cognition and the content of science are unthinkable outside the cognizing subject for the simple reason that their relationship is, from the outset, a contradictory one. In the triad: idea, perception, subject one of the elements can never replace another. If one neglects this initial position, which makes methodology and knowledge possible, then irrationalism arises as an antithesis to the real which, taken as a whole, also contains within it the idea.

This is the mistake that is made by Bachelard when he asserts that scientific observation “transcends what is immediately given” and “reconstructs reality”.⁵³⁾ To interpret observation in this way is just as unscientific as the theological conception of spiritual beings who have the ability to intervene directly

in the world of earthly experience. It is given to the world of experience to do no more than determine the world of our concepts in accordance with law (and not arbitrarily). And the world of concepts, for its part, is not allowed to alter the objective character of experience. Goethe says the senses do not deceive; we fall into error when we interpret experience wrongly.

The task of science, of knowledge, consists in connecting the experience of perceptions with thinking, in such a way *that we do justice to the essential nature of both*. Science itself is a system of knowledge and of methodology; these two constitute a dialectical pair, i.e. they stand in permanent contradiction to one another and at every stage of the development of knowledge they reach a synthesis in the cognizing subject (science is an activity), on which his (the subject’s) progress depends. Human activity, on both the material and the higher, spiritual level, is motivated by this antithesis and receives through it its impulses. Thus is brought about the unity of ‘I’-consciousness: first the gnoseological and then also the substantial. The ‘I’-consciousness of the human being, once it has come into existence, becomes a part of nature, i.e. of the objective world. It is manifestly clear that, once it has come into being, not only the composition of nature, but also the connections between its parts are changed; and because its character is of an ideal nature it forms a part of the world of natural law. It follows from this that nature that is known is different from the nature that was there before the act of knowing took place. A further conclusion arises from this: namely, that *knowledge of nature is an integral part of its process of development*. Living nature, which has a holistic character, develops by virtue of the fact that there is present within it a super-natural (not extra-natural) system-forming principle; consequently, human cognition, being organized in this or that way, must have its own system-forming principle, and this can be nothing other than the cognizing subject. His ‘I’-consciousness is for the system of knowledge the *fundamental law*. An organic world-view is therefore always personalistic.

In the science of the 20th century, parallel to the attempt to play down the significance of thinking consciousness and its organizing creative function, a direction of thought was developed with the quite contrary aim of connecting the methodology of science with the system-forming activity of thinking. This is what is known as *systems analysis*, within the context of which a systems theory is emerging which, it is claimed, could become the general methodology of the special sciences. This direction arose in the thirties, and in the fifties when the ‘Association for Research in the Field of General Systems Theory’ was founded in the U.S.A. as an initiative of the biologist Ludwig von Bertalanffy, it began to function independently. In the 60’s and 70’s the work of the

Association became known throughout the world. Systems research was begun in all the developed countries. Attempts were made to extend it into the sphere of the humanities, but gradually these activities were restricted to economics and leadership in industry – due mainly to the inability to break free from a materialistic and neo-positivist way of thinking. On the basis of a non-organic world-view one can do no more than bring to light the functional connection of the elements, and the system-forming principle remains an unknowable ‘thing in itself’. For this reason there is no way of divining what a system, as an object of research, actually is.

Fear of the metaphysics of the thinking spirit narrowed and weakened systems research. One could also imagine that it was deliberately narrowed down when the great potential inherent in it became evident and one noticed that it was leading science to the boundaries of the supersensible. Here we would merely point to the fact that Nikolai Losky developed, with the help of the systems method, the, in its own way, spiritual-scientific idea of ‘hierarchical personalism’ and laid the ground conceptually for the thinking subject’s ability to penetrate into the sphere of the transcendent, absolute principle.⁵⁴⁾ The tremendous wealth of possibilities inherent in the systems method is opened up in spiritual science, in the methodology of which it constitutes an essential element. We will be returning to this repeatedly in future chapters.

6. Directions of Thought which accompany Anthroposophy

The alienation of the subject of cognition from perception, and then from knowledge of the cognizing subject himself, had the consequence that rational science – as it is in its true nature – finally became caught in a metaphysical materialism, and philosophy in an absolute illusionism. In social life this development led to a growth in irrational tendencies. This is convincing proof of the fact that the crisis of culture and civilization has its roots in the crisis of knowledge. But we understand the working of this law wrongly if we adopt the standpoint of the founder of the logistics school, A. N. Whitehead, when he delivers the following emotional appeal: “To set limits to (abstract) speculation is to betray the future!”⁵⁵⁾ For speculation itself betrays the future if it rejects the need to overcome its limits in the only possible way; by qualitatively transforming consciousness in strict accordance with the laws of development.

When at the close of the 19th century philosophy had exhausted its possibilities on the paths of abstract thought, it turned its attention to the sphere of the unconscious. As a result, the traditional view of the unconscious as a lower form of soul activity lying behind the threshold of conscious mental representations (Leibniz) was finally demolished by Eduard von Hartmann, who

treated the unconscious as a universal principle, as a foundation of all that is. Thus in theory of knowledge a step was taken beyond the limits of pure reflection, and this pushed back the limits which it had set to knowledge. The unconscious became a synonym for the super-conscious. There was a sense – albeit very vague to begin with – that within it there was a certain connection, governed by the laws of evolution, of the individual will dwelling in the unconscious, with the chain of causality which can be made conscious and which opens up to speculation the path towards reunion with the world-will on a conscious (or super-conscious) level.* The first to experience this was Goethe, who, as an empirical realist, was not only a phenomenalist but also a voluntarist where the experience of thinking was concerned.

If one is to realize this reunion in practice, one must not dispense with the formal-logical foundations of thought. On the contrary, one must strengthen them, in order then to transform them in a definite way and raise them onto a higher level. In other words, the task that arises on this path is that of *gaining normative control of the unconscious*, which manifests as the irrational only if it remains unknown. At the same time, the question arises: What does it mean to know the unconscious? One cannot unite with it either in the element of the concept or in that of perception. When we unite thinking with the percept, we must direct our attention to the will activity carried out by us in that moment. For in this activity the human unconscious can be seen to stand particularly close to the process of becoming conscious. As we bring order, concentration and autonomy into this will-activity, we create the pre-conditions for its ‘Aufhebung’ (superseding and preserving) in the thinking, in order to find ourselves again within its pure element – the superconscious. Then the door is opened for us to *direct* knowledge – in ‘beholding’ – and this is at the same time the condition of human freedom. Such are the highest elements of the Goethean theory of knowledge and of that unified methodology of science which exists already in the spiritual heritage of Rudolf Steiner. A right relation to it can, of course, not be found if one cannot grasp the character of its connections with the spiritual heritage of culture through which it is *determined, but not predetermined*. To give outer expression to it was an especially difficult task, just as it is difficult to create great poetic works even if one has a talent for poetry. The laws of true cognition are the laws of creative activity. While they possess the character of the universal, they nevertheless take on an

*Mendeleev discovered his periodic law of the elements – a tremendous achievement of rational science – in dream. Lorenz was unaware of the implications of his discovery: of the principal equation of the special theory of relativity.

individual form of expression. Thus the culture of antiquity and the culture of the Renaissance, which have so great an affinity with one another as regards their cultural canon, constitute two quite different cultural phenomena, because their creators were personalities of different soul types.

Something similar occurs in the history of philosophy and the natural sciences. Within the context of its structural universality numerous thinkers and men of learning were active, but only few of them, who were creative and at the same time artistically gifted in their field, were able to bring new impulses to philosophy or science. What they created, forms within cultural history a unified whole of which it can be said that it is intimately related to the Anthroposophical impulse and stands in harmony with it. The peculiar feature of this whole consists in the fact that the chronological sequence of the development of the ideas does not play a decisive role within it. It is always characteristic of their creators that they break with tradition. They stand, as it were, above their time and are, although most intimately connected with it, not determined by it. They appear as though 'from above' and bring with them the task of renewing their epoch when it is ripe for a new metamorphosis. It is always agonizingly difficult for them to be understood by their contemporaries. We find a first example of this in Socrates and his death sentence. Such personalities, who lived in the past, in some cases thousands of years ago, seem in other epochs like contemporaries, but even then they are not understood completely. In their work is hidden the mystery of the creation of new things. And this mystery is, so to speak, 'not of this world'; whoever undertakes to investigate it must do so with care and sensitivity, in order not to hinder its emergence and its growth, upon which the spiritual progress of entire cultures can sometimes depend.

These special impulses of spiritual development need, in order to enter the stream of life and to be born in the world of culture, certain factors and conditions which lie in the temporal stream of the development of views on life and the world where structural laws of a universal nature are at work. When one thing finally unites with the other, one can have the impression that there is simply one single, general stream of cultural development. But this impression is deceptive. If it were true, the 'ideal state' of Plato would long have triumphed on Earth, in which the conditions for the emergence of the new would have been eradicated. The cultural process is *two-dimensional*; its real 'curve' shows itself to be at every one of its points the resultant of two kinds of forces: those which move along the horizontal of time, and those which activate this horizontal from above. The second kind of force is always coloured by the special characteristics of the age, which sometimes modify very strongly the

nature of its activity, but not its essential content, because this remains in its most varied aspects one and the same.

Anthroposophy possesses precisely this quality. It is simultaneously new and old. The epistemological doctrine of 'beholding', which represents the central core of its methodology, can be found, albeit in a quite different form, not only in the history of philosophy, but also in the Mysteries of antiquity, in mythology. Plato and Aristotle, Kant, Schelling and Fichte wrote about it. But only thanks to Goethe and Rudolf Steiner did it become a phenomenon of science in the full sense of the word, new and in its form unrepeatable, a phenomenon of the spiritual life of the new cultural epoch. The individual development of these creators was ahead of its time. With regard to Rudolf Steiner, a special account would be necessary, to convey an idea of how outstanding this personality is. But if the full potential of the spiritual creativity of these personalities was to be realized in the cultural life, a deeply-felt need for it would have to arise. And in fact it did arise. At the beginning of the 20th century it became more necessary than ever in all spheres of human life, as the crisis of civilization bears very eloquent witness.

Of course the extent of the crisis need not have been so catastrophic, but it is invariably the case that a need for renewal goes hand in hand with a crisis of what went before. Crisis is a structurally necessary part of development. For this reason, when we discuss the methodological directions which have led the culture of thinking into a complete impasse, we are not in any way challenging their right to exist. They are indispensable to development, but in another sense. They belong to its *temporal* axis, where development takes place at the price of countless attempts on the basis of trial and error; here even the most trivial phenomena of the spirit play their necessary part, and crises constitute an antithesis that is indispensable for development. In this sense the neopositivist and abstract-idealistic methodological doctrines we have discussed bear witness through their decadence, but at the same time through their sophisticated intellectuality, to the fact that our epoch is ripe for qualitative, radical metamorphoses of the thinking spirit. This old rationality in its lapses and digressions asked very important questions of cognition.* It was in order to answer these questions that Anthroposophy came into the world. Already at the beginning of the 20th century these questions pervaded, so to speak, the entire intellectual aura of Europe. The ideas of Anthroposophy were, one can

* We need but recall the German physicist and philosopher Du Bois-Reymond, who spoke about the, in his view, insoluble problems of cognition, and wrote about the way psychic processes are causally determined by material processes, etc.

truly say, 'in the air' at that time. A remarkable phenomenon in philosophy testifies to this fact. *After* Rudolf Steiner had published independently his epistemological works, written in connection with the natural-scientific studies of Goethe, a number of important, independent philosophical directions emerged, which could quite justifiably be described as direct forerunners of his philosophy, indeed of Anthroposophy in its entirety. They are all Goetheanistic in spirit as to the method and the spirit of the 'I' which lives in them and lends them a particularly living and awakening quality, distinguishing them very strongly from the lifeless constructions of positivism. One must count among these directions first and foremost the phenomenology of Husserl and two of its offshoots, which then became directions in their own right: the existentialist philosophy of Heidegger and the philosophical anthropology of Scheler.

If we do not dwell on a number of one-sided qualities of Husserl's philosophical system which crept in under the influence of the historical-philosophical inheritance – we could mention for example the assertion of the priority of consciousness over against reality (when in fact the two are identical) – but crystallize out what is new and centrally important, then we find that his demonstration of the immanent nature of thinking consciousness meets this description. Generally speaking, philosophy is mainly concerned with the problem of the objective nature of all that is not consciousness but is only cognized by it. Husserl is concerned with the activity of consciousness itself in the process of thought-formation, but within it the thoughts that bring consciousness into movement – i.e. the nature of selfhood and the self-movement of consciousness. In this way consciousness is viewed by Husserl not as a means but as an *object* of philosophical analysis, which leads this philosopher (via Franz Brentano) to a certain agreement with the doctrine of Scholasticism regarding the intentionality of consciousness.

Fundamentally speaking, there is already contained in the doctrine of Thomas Aquinas (disregarding here the interpretation given by the Church to his teaching) of the two intentions ('*intentio prima*' and '*intentio secunda*'), the origin of the principal question of philosophy as it was formulated in modern times, beginning with Kant – the question as to the relation of consciousness and being.

Kant attempted, in his critique of the old dogmatic metaphysics, to provide a rational foundation to the concept of the objective (world) as a product of the activity directed by the intellectual understanding towards (both factual and possible) experience. The unsatisfactory results of his philosophy are well-known. For this reason Fichte and Hegel, in contrast to Kant, sought to demonstrate the identity of being and consciousness by way of pure theory of

knowledge. Looking at the system of Kant on the one hand, and those of Fichte and Hegel on the other in their relation to the cognizing subject, we see how they complement one another in the sense that in their totality they formulate with the necessary thoroughness the question as to the origins of the autonomous self-movement of consciousness, on the level of two intentions: that intention which is rooted in the experience of the perceptions, and that which works in pure thinking. Extremely favourable conditions were created by these philosophers for the overcoming of the dualism which had emerged in the course of 25 centuries of the history of philosophy as a result of the divergence of the intentions of empirical thinking and pure thinking in the human soul. The solution could have been found in that form of monism which shows how, through the force of evolution, the unity of the intentions is reconstituted in the existence of the individual spirit as a *second entelechy*. The Holy Scriptures themselves speak of the significance and the truth of this monism. We refer to the words of Christ spoken to his guest Nicodemus who came "by night": "Verily, verily I say unto thee, except a man be born again (i.e. from above, from cosmic heights – G.A.B.) he cannot see (i.e. behold – G.A.B.) the Kingdom of God Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God (into the world of imaginative and still higher forms of consciousness – G.A.B.). That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3, 3-6). It need hardly be emphasized that Christ, when He speaks of the birth "of the flesh", is not stating that the human being of the Old Testament had no soul. The Bible says: "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him.... and man became a living soul" (Genesis 1, 27; 2,7). This means that the immortal soul, the first entelechy of which Aristotle speaks, is 'being'. In the course of the evolutionary process it unites with the consciousness in the 'other'. In order that they may become a unity here it is necessary to be born again – "of the spirit", which expressed in the concepts of philosophy would mean: Beginning on the level of individual perception, to bring order to their experience through the abstract understanding, the lesser 'I', and to ascend to the experience of the being of selfhood in pure thinking, and then – in the beholding of the ideas – to the world of thought-beings. In other words it is necessary in the end to return to the starting-point, to perception, but to *ideal* and then supersensible perception, but on a completely individual basis. Thus the second entelechy is attained; *and this is the third intention: 'ich' = ICH* (lesser 'I' = greater 'I').

This is how we should understand Husserl when he advances the thesis that the world is the product of an unfolding of the human subjectivity which the

human being can never transcend; or when he poses the question: “How can the pure phenomenon of cognition meet up with something that is not immanent to it; how can the absolute givenness of cognition to the self meet up with a non-givenness to the self?”⁵⁶⁾

The identity of consciousness and being can only be deduced on the basis of a system-analysis of the holistic structure of the self-conscious and cognizing subject which at no point has absolute limits. Whoever speaks of the limits of knowability, mostly has the abstract in mind; a breakthrough beyond these limits presupposes a qualitative change of consciousness. This is why Husserl resorts to a radical reductionism of consciousness (which, so he believes, corresponds to the spirit of the approaching epoch of phenomenology), and this, so he writes, “has the mission to bring about an entirely personal transformation, comparable in the first instance to a religious conversion, but bearing within it, over and above this, the greatest existential transformation that humanity as humanity is given the task to accomplish”.⁵⁷⁾ Thus the task is to create a state of consciousness with the immanent characteristics of being, which also means to be born “of the spirit” and “enter into the Kingdom of God”.

Husserl came thus far in his thinking, but in the end found himself in a state of isolation in the scientific world – a fate that had also befallen Goethe in his time. Husserl’s call – and it had also been the call of Goethe – to raise oneself to a beholding of ‘the pure phenomena’ through the ‘pure consciousness’ of the ‘pure I’ was considered unfulfillable, even unscientific. Exactly the same objection is raised against the spiritual science of Rudolf Steiner. The fault lies in the inconsistency and the disloyalty with respect to experience which are characteristic of the scientific views prevailing today, their fixation on the quantitative principle in development. For this reason Einstein remained silent about his experience of spontaneous deduction, which Goethe, Rudolf Steiner, Husserl and a number of other thinkers had provided with a strictly scientific foundation with the help of natural-scientific, philosophical and philosophic-esoteric methodology. The esoteric aspect became indispensable, because it had become necessary to find a relation to the emergent new attribute of the individual spirit which was leading it across the boundary of the *sense-perceptible* world.

Someone who has already studied the spiritual-scientific system of Rudolf Steiner and then becomes acquainted with the works of Husserl, might very well suppose – if Husserl were not a fully autonomous and independent thinker – that he had worked within the context of the further development of the philosophical and Goetheanistic ideas of Rudolf Steiner, or rather that he had been their forerunner. The root of the problem – “How can consciousness

be metamorphosed so as to become conscious of the unconscious – of what, from the abstract standpoint, is the irrational?” – is found in ‘beholding’, in Rudolf Steiner’s understanding of the process. And do we not, in the final analysis, also find it in Husserl when he says that “only through a return to the original sources of ‘beholding’ ... Can the concepts (of philosophy – G.A.B.) be intuitively clarified, the problems (of philosophy) be newly formulated on an intuitive basis, and then also be resolved in principle”?⁵⁸⁾ In ‘beholding’ is made manifest the source of transcendental subjectivity which is, basically, a higher unconscious (super-conscious) – “pure subjectivity”, as Husserl calls it. It can be attained as a result of a complex procedure, whose first stage consists in *ceasing altogether to posit the reality of the world that is given in sense-perception*. One of Husserl’s critics, F. Austeda, says for this reason that his philosophy is “actually no more than a refined form of psychic self-observation”.⁵⁹⁾ But this is not by any means a weakness. Here we need only register the fact that, in the 20th century, philosophy merges with psychology to form a unified whole. Rudolf Steiner, who showed why and how this unavoidably takes place, wrote straightforwardly on the title page of the ‘Philosophy of Freedom’: “Results of Soul Observation according to Natural-Scientific Method.” But a ‘total collapse of philosophy’ such as his critic Eduard von Hartmann had feared, did not occur and cannot occur if we do not wish to deprive philosophy of its practical value.* For when consciousness really attains to being, ‘the living soul’, theory of knowledge as *immanent to the (human) subject* merges with psychology, or rather with *psychosophy*, for the soul of the human being, independently of any teachings about it on the earthly plane, expands into supersensible reality.

This is how the existence of the individual spirit is made known in its new form. On the world-historical level its first appearance was marked by the famous conversation between Goethe and Schiller, in which Goethe attempted to explain the nature of the archetypal plant which he experienced in ‘beholding’, in ideal perception. Schiller objected that it was only an idea, and Goethe replied as follows: “I am only too glad to have ideas without realizing it, and to even see them with my own eyes.”⁶⁰⁾

Husserl speaks of the need to train one’s thinking so that it acquires the capacity of ‘intellectual beholding’; Goethe speaks of the ‘power of judgment in beholding’; Fichte and Schelling of the ‘organ of beholding’ of the spirit. Thus

* Its ‘collapse’ takes place when it is combined with parapsychology, which Hartmann rightly feared, and Sigmund Freud and, still more, Carl Jung were those who were to justify these fears.

emerges that mighty phenomenology of the spirit which is finally crowned by Anthroposophy.

Amongst the creations of the human spirit which, as we have characterized them, stand close to Anthroposophy, accompany it and, as in this case the time factor plays no part, provide a frame for it, there is yet another which confirms our idea of the difference between the 'vertical' of the spirit and the 'horizontal' of its becoming in time. We refer to the philosophical system of Nikolai O. Losky.

Of Losky another Russian philosopher, V.V. Zenkovsky said that he was "almost the only Russian philosopher who built up a system of philosophy in the truest sense of the word".⁶¹⁾ And this is really the case. In Losky's system there are no special sections devoted to the philosophy of history or law, and he only touches briefly on questions of aesthetics. But he develops his own theory of knowledge, an ontology, an ethics; he made an important contribution to Russian sophiology. All this entitles us to classify the system of his views as a system of philosophy in the truest sense of this word. The affinity of his system to Anthroposophy could be characterized in the following way. Rudolf Steiner said that if he had followed only his personal inclination he would have devoted his entire life to philosophy. If we ask what kind of philosophy he might have developed instead of Anthroposophy, then the philosophy of Losky could provide us with an answer.

And, incidentally, if Losky's philosophy had been taught at Russian universities in the way that, until recently, the philosophical classics were taught at German universities, this would have been a great achievement of Russian culture on the path to Anthroposophy.

From the purely philosophical standpoint Losky thought through in great depth a wide range of concepts which proved to be key elements in Anthroposophy. In a similar spirit to the Goethean studies of Rudolf Steiner, he attempted to solve the main question of philosophy. In his ontology he created a philosophical foundation for what Rudolf Steiner developed as a doctrine of the sensible-supersensible nature of evolution, of the highest creative beings – the Divine hierarchies – and of much more, right up to the teaching of reincarnation.

Following the basic principle of his philosophy: "All is immanent to all", Losky gave an ontological foundation to theory of knowledge, thereby enabling it to flow in the direction of Goethe's and Steiner's thought. Characteristic of this direction is the striving for immediate knowledge, which is expressed in philosophy, in its special, scientifically justified freedom from

prejudice, its renunciation of dogma, its ability to overcome unfounded conventions of indirect knowledge, of which Mach said at the end of his life that they seemed to him like an evil spirit which leads the thinker round and round in a vicious circle.

Losky's system of philosophy is monistic. He gave his monism the name "concrete organic ideal-realism". In it he developed the idea that "the reality which one cognizes cannot be copied or reproduced by the subject who makes thought-judgments, but is itself present in the act of judgment, is itself a component of this act; *this direct presence of being* is also that which compels the cognizing subject to acknowledge being".⁶²⁾ Such an act of acknowledgement has two sides. One of them is the general-philosophical, where Losky shows himself to be a traditionalist when he says: "... Ontology must receive its orientation from epistemology, and not vice-versa".⁶³⁾ The second side represents what is peculiar to Losky's philosophy; it is new, and to express it openly required great courage in the philosopher. Defining his realism, he says: "... From time immemorial the view has prevailed that the supersensible simultaneously and of necessity also stands above experience. If this were true, we, more than anyone, would protest against realism, since it would lead to a rejection of empiricism and to admission of the possibility of transcendental knowledge... (but) the non-sense-perceptible is not something that stands outside experience."⁶⁴⁾

In order to find a conscious relation to the non-sense-perceptible as something that is given in experience, one must consider the nature of thinking in a new light. In its essential nature it is always intuitive. Losky explains: "With the word '*intuition*' I mean this *direct seeing, immediate beholding* of an object by the cognizing subject... The word '*intuition*' does *not* refer in my system to the irrationality of the object that is to be beheld (the intuition of Bergson) ...even *discursive, abstract* knowing can mean the seeing of the aspects of most authentic being when there are disjunctions and coalescences in being... It is certain that, when this theory maintains that knowing is an immediate beholding of authentic, trans-subjective being itself by the subject, even when it is removed from the body of the subject in space (and sometimes also in time), it puts even the most ordinary sense-perception, for example the seeing of a tree at ten metres' distance from me, on a level with *clairvoyance*."⁶⁵⁾

It need hardly be emphasized how closely all this harmonizes with the basic ideas of the 'Philosophy of Freedom' and also of its Prologue 'Truth and Science'. We have, instead, every reason to be amazed at the immense variety of ways in which related ideas can be expressed by different thinkers.

Losky calls his system metaphysics, but gives this concept a new meaning. For him metaphysics is a “science which forms a part of *every world-view*”. He explains further: “If our theory of knowledge, intuitivism, is accepted, then one must acknowledge at the same time that this science... bears witness to authentic being (the ‘things in themselves’) and reaches into its very foundations... As it pursues its research into the elements of being, metaphysics seeks in the multiplicity of objects, in the sheer manifoldness, their *identical central core*... As it has as the object of its research the world-whole and not some part of it, it is not content with what is *relatively* fundamental, but seeks what is absolutely fundamental (truth).”⁶⁶⁾ If one understands metaphysics in this sense, then Anthroposophy can also be regarded as a metaphysical system.*

Only once did Losky allow himself to make a direct reference to Rudolf Steiner: namely to two of his works which are devoted to Goethe’s world-view (GA 2 and 6). The reason for this is not difficult to grasp. The Russian intelligentsia at the beginning of the 20th century, which set the tone in cultural life, were in many cases hostile to Anthroposophy, and so anyone who displayed an open interest in it risked ostracism by these circles. Both before the Revolution and after it, in emigration, Rudolf Steiner was vigorously attacked by the educated élite, who mostly charged him with ‘sins’ *which had been fabricated by the critics themselves*. No proof is needed here; if one knows Steiner’s works, a glance at the writings of his critics is enough. One of them was entitled ‘Reflections on Goethe’, written by E. Metner.** Andrei Bely gave Metner the treatment he deserved, in a book written in 1915 with the title ‘Rudolf Steiner and Goethe in the World-View of the Present Day’, in which he exposed the lack of substance and reflection in Metner’s arguments. Subsequently Bely was to recall that a circle of known and respected Symbolists and philosophers had acted as jury in his quarrel with Metner and, after a study of the books of both authors, had decided in favour of Bely. But this lesson made the critics none the wiser; their relation to Anthroposophy remained prejudiced and hostile.

Like Husserl, Losky was charged with an ‘illegitimate’ encroachment into the sphere of ontology, and particularly with an attempt to teach ‘metempsy-

* Husserl was of the view that metaphysics is “the science of being in an absolute sense”. Husserliana, Vol II, p. 23.

** A brother of the pianist and composer N. Metner. He was head of the publishing house of the Symbolists, ‘Musaget’. As an émigré he published the works of C.G. Jung in Russian.

chosis’, as ‘sober-minded’ Russian theologians and philosophers sarcastically expressed it. Neither Losky’s serious philosophical treatises helped, nor his reference to the ideas of Leibniz on recreationism. And one must give the philosopher the full respect he deserves for having had the courage to write openly about the conclusions he had reached in his gnoseology: namely, that the substantial ‘I’ of the human being (‘the substantially creative’), as the fruit of evolution, cannot emerge in the course of a single lifetime and, once it has come into being, cannot leave evolution at its present, imperfect stage and enter the eternity of the spirit without having developed a relation to it. The substantial ‘I’ must pass through a series of metamorphoses (not ‘metempsychoses’) in order to transform not only itself but also its corporeality through the spirit, as this was revealed in the highest sense to the world by Christ, the Word-‘I’, in the body of Jesus of Nazareth.

This is how Losky thought, but in the defence of his views he could not refer openly to Rudolf Steiner as he realized that this would merely have provoked new attacks against Anthroposophy; then, as also later in Soviet Russia, there was a special fear of ‘group heresy’. Losky decided to repeat the deed of Galileo. He faced, alone, the judgment of a philosophical-theological inquisition. But times had changed, particularly in the emigration, and Losky was treated leniently. A not inconsiderable role was played here by his universal erudition. But there remained as a sad fact in the history of Russian culture, the unanimity with which those émigrés disapproved of Losky: N. Berdyaev, V. Zenkovsky, S. Bulgakov etc.,* and their Soviet persecutors defended the abstract emptiness of consciousness and rejected Anthroposophy. This situation has remained unchanged in post-Soviet times, which is a very bad omen for the future of the country and its people. In the characterization of N. Losky’s philosophical system as a whole, we would not be wrong to define it as religious-philosophical. One of the contemporary reviewers of Losky’s works in Russia accurately described it as “ontologizing ethics”. The prevailing spirit of Russian philosophy as a whole is religious-philosophical when it can summon sufficient strength to be independent and not imitative. The Russian thinker is, first and foremost, in quest of the path to God. This was true also of Nikolai Losky. In him there lived a soul that was Christian through and through, a soul which not only sought the solution to the Mysteries of being, but also strove to share the joy of its discoveries with others, as it profoundly felt and understood

* It is interesting to follow the fate of some of the critics of Anthroposophy. The theological views of S. Bulgakov proved to be so strange that he was dismissed from the priesthood. N. Berdyaev, who fought fiercely for the sectarianizing of knowledge compromised himself at the end of his life through his open sympathy for Bolshevism.

the unity of all men in God. For this reason Losky developed his theory of knowledge in a form suited to the teaching of beginners. It stimulates the reader's own thinking, reveals the riddles of philosophy as riddles of the spirit. Losky's passionate striving was to help the Russian school of thought to take the necessary step that would have led it into the sphere of spiritual science, since this school, in the form of its sophiologists – first and foremost V. Soloviev – had already come in close proximity to it.

We would note by way of conclusion that Rudolf Steiner knew of this Russian thinker through his book 'The Foundation of Intuitivism', which had been published in German (English edition 'The Intuitive Basis of Knowledge', London 1919). In one of his lectures given in 1908 he said: "In what is, from a certain aspect, a fundamental way ...the Russian psychologist Losky, in his book entitled 'The Foundation of Intuitivism', has pointed to the will direction in human soul life" (GA 57 p. 58). The characterization 'Russian psychologist' and the formulation 'will direction of the soul life' is somewhat mystifying. If we reflect upon the question: To what Russian type do such qualities belong? – then we think of the picture of the 'starets' (an old monk or hermit). And Losky was a starets, even in his appearance. But he was a special kind of starets. Losky combined within himself the type of the starets with what Rudolf Steiner spoke of as a peculiarity of the Russian spirit: "intellectualized mysticism" – he was a starets philosopher in the modern sense of this word. Such a figure is still unique to the spiritual life of Russia. It came, as it were, out of the future. And this future of Russia turned to Anthroposophy.

7. The Subject of Cognition in the Methodology of Science

Science as a system of knowledge arises and exists only in the thinking subject. For this reason, all sciences are directly or in the final analysis sciences of man. Anthroposophy – even anthropomorphism – is fully intrinsic to them, and not even the boldest science fiction can rid itself of them. It is simply not possible for us to know how science might appear from a non-human standpoint. Methodology must therefore not evade the question how the soul-spiritual characteristics and the needs of the human being can, without contradiction, be included among the criteria of scientific truth.

But the adherents of pure physics will ask: Is it at all thinkable that views regarding the nature of the world could be identifiable with natural law? World-views and theories are replaced by new ones just like articles of faith, so they will object. Even the scientific revolution can be equated with "Gestalt transformation" (Kuhn, Koyré). Nevertheless, there are voices among the scientists who say such things as: "Consciousness is an entirely real entity that

is not observable by physical-chemical means".⁶⁷⁾ There are even those who try through the means of materialistic natural science to pose the question as to the ideal source of the material world.

In 1993 in Moscow the physicist G. I. Shipov published a book in which he concluded, from the results he had gained in his research into the physical vacuum, that he had succeeded in solving the problem of the creation of a unified field theory. In the book he describes what are known as the "primary fields of torsion", which are the "simplest disturbances that take place within a vacuum". They cannot be regarded as any kind of matter, "because they are lacking in energy. For this reason one cannot look upon them as zero-vibrations of the vacuum in the modern quantum field-theory".⁶⁸⁾ They arise, says Shipov, as it were out of absolute "nothingness", and conform to the law of conservation of information and not of energy.* They "direct the birth of matter out of the vacuum, its development in the form that has arisen, and also the reciprocal influence of information field and matter. One has the impression", the physicist concludes, "that these fields appear in the role of the super-conscious".⁶⁹⁾

In this way a Russian physicist came via experimental physics to that argument with which Faust fends off the sophistry of Mephistopheles: "In your nothingness I hope to find the All". But here one should be extremely cautious in one's optimism. The new materialism is fundamentally different from the vulgar materialism of the 19th century. To all intents and purposes it combines consciousness with the finer forms of material existence – the energy fields – whereby, as can be demonstrated, the boundaries of consciousness are radically shifted, without any need being felt to refer to the spiritual world. For even in this case the phenomenon can be observed as before, if only indirectly, and the empirical data can be worked upon intellectually. A materialist of the latest school of thought could ask us: Are we not dealing here with the possibility, provided thanks to the latest achievements of science, of entering into relation with that nature (and will this not be 'natura naturans'?), of which Max Scheler says that it is located "beyond all science of a formal mechanical character, and also beyond all philosophy and knowledge of nature"⁷⁰⁾ And are there any important reasons why that nature should be called 'spirit'?

Idealism often loses out against materialism because it does not react to such questions in a responsible way. The spiritual, says Rudolf Steiner, expresses itself of necessity somewhere in the physical. Latent within consciousness there are forces with the capacity to direct matter. And one can follow to

* They and the material objects work upon one another, but they transmit no energy.

infinity two lines whose paths never cross: the primacy of matter over spirit and of the spirit over matter. The only thing that can help here is a transformation of the cognitive principle and a synthesis of what is of man and what is of nature. Precisely this is the concern of the methodology of spiritual science, in which the results of science become factors of consciousness. Rudolf Steiner made a noteworthy statement on this question in an article he published in 1899 entitled ‘Ernst Haeckel and the World Riddles’: “In the different branches of science the human being confronts nature, he separates himself from her and observes her; he alienates himself from her. In philosophy he strives to reunite with her. He strives to make the abstract relation that has come about in scientific observation into a real, concrete, living relation. The scientific researcher wishes to acquire by means of knowledge a consciousness of the world and its workings; the philosopher’s aim is to make himself, with the help of this consciousness, into a life-imbued member of the world whole. In this sense a particular science is a preparatory stage of philosophy.” Moreover, “all true philosophers werefree artists in concepts. They made human ideas into an artistic material and scientific method into artistic technique. In this way the abstract scientific consciousness was raised to concrete life. Our ideas become forces of life. We do not merely have knowledge of things, but we have made knowledge into a real, self-governing organism (i.e. of truth – G.A.B.); our real, active consciousness has raised itself above a mere passive receiving of truths.” (GA 30, p. 392).

A man of science, if in his soul he is also an artist, is always an ethical being too; and in this case he is a born methodologist. The ideal element in the world he also finds within himself and comes to knowledge of it in this way, and he does not try to derive it from matter. Galileo could not come to terms with the discovery that the planets move in so-called ‘mixed ellipses’ – this fact diminished, in his opinion, the perfection of the heavenly Creator. And Kepler was convinced that harmony must be a hallmark of experiment. During his investigation of the harmony and geometry in the reciprocal relations between the planets he wrote the following: “We see here how God, like a human architect, in accordance with rule and order, lays the foundation of the world and has measured out everything in such a way that one could believe it is not art which takes nature as its model, but God himself who, in the act of creation, considers how the future human being will be structured.”⁷¹⁾

It would be a mistake to suppose that Kepler’s religious views diminish his significance as a man of science. In this connection Koyré remarks with great insight: “The interesting identification of the cosmic sphere with the Divine Trinity.... The mythical speculations led him (Kepler) to the idea of placing

the sun at the centre of the cosmos, and thanks to this the Copernican system underwent fundamental modifications.”⁷²⁾

In order to satisfy the man-centered criterion of scientific truth, speculation must acquire a *logical conscience*, because the source of morality lies in “good thinking” (Pascal). As real life has already shown, speculations in the manner of logical construction or of hermeneutics with their methodological claims to universality without logical conscience, only lead to the alienation of thinking from the real personality. For this reason science in its striving for objectivity outside the human being became anti-human. H. Marcuse rightly remarks: “Scientific method, which led to an increasingly effective control of nature, then provided the pure concepts as instruments for the increasingly effective control of man by man *via the medium* of the control of nature.”⁷³⁾

The ethical element is also inherent in empirical research. In Goetheanism it is expressed as love for the object of cognition. Phenomenological reductionism is here extended to the complete setting aside of the egocentrically thinking subject, whereby only the *pure actuality of consciousness* is preserved, thanks to which its metamorphosis – but only on this condition – is possible. It is accomplished in the act of complete identification with the object of perception. And as “all is immanent to all” (Losky) an act of self-knowledge is also accomplished in this way.

If we do not wish always to begin with Plato, it is among representatives of Scholasticism at the very latest that a clear consciousness emerges of the fact that the world of revelation has reached full identity with the world of creation and that there is no God existing outside the world. The universals of the cosmic thought-beings do not, therefore, cause the thinking subject to enter into a transcendental mutual relation with them, and they change their character when, after their union with things, they free themselves from them again. Such a process can obviously not take place without a thinking subject. It follows from this: firstly, that *the cognized world is not identical with the world prior to cognition*, and secondly, that the human being who cognizes the world becomes, as a soul-spiritual being, *an integral part* of it: a *personified* part of that universal cosmic force whose immanence in the world works within him as the laws of his spirit. Thus the laws of nature and the laws of the thinking spirit are on the same level of being, and differ only with respect to the form in which they come to expression.

As Spinoza stated, we know God when we know the world. Other paths to Him do not exist. The process of cognition must be built up in such a way that in every part of the world a part of God is revealed to us, that knowledge is knowledge of God. The things of the world are emanations of the Godhead; in

the laws according to which they exist and which science gains knowledge of, God himself is revealed. Therefore, says Spinoza, “there is a form of knowing in which the thing is comprehended out of its essential being alone”, and not “through the knowledge of its proximate ground”.⁷⁴⁾ What is this form of knowing? Goethe answered this question in the most definitive way. It is attained with the help of the power of judgment in beholding, through which the ideal, essential nature of things is revealed, in the act of direct knowing. This is the reason why the ‘atheist’ Spinoza stood in a closer affinity to Goethe than the metaphysician Friedrich Jacobi.

Natural science, which has come to assume a dominant position in the world, recognized its objective character indirectly. In this case the world is given in a twofold way: in perceptions and in thinking. When we surrender ourselves to the percepts, we drown in simple details: the world of experience is differentiated to an infinite degree. Through thinking we strive to lead the world to a unity, but we find ourselves in an abstract element. This is why Kant called the connections we make between things subjective. And in so doing he did not notice that the activity whereby experience is differentiated also belongs to us.

Kant felt that he occupied a position between Hume and Leibniz/Wolf. Hume proves in fact to be the precursor of positivism. For him, cognition can only provide us with experience, but not with objects of philosophy; the latter, so he thought, can only be objects of belief. The direction taken by Leibniz and Wolf, which dominated at the time of Kant, hoped to comprehend the essential nature of things by means of conceptual thinking alone. They regarded as accidental the knowledge that is provided by way of experience. And for this reason Kant asked himself the question: How can one arrive at judgments of truth in the sense put forward by Leibniz and Wolf, but by way of a cognition that is based on experience? If Kant, in his attempt to resolve this question, had conceded to experience the ability to provide us with knowledge, he would also have had to admit that experience contains within itself universal, real judgment. And in his own way, through carrying out an artificial intellectual operation, he did acknowledge this; he acknowledged that the laws of the world of experience are prescribed by the life of our sense-perceptions and our understanding; the laws exist there, too, in precisely this form; we can make for ourselves a concept of them, but this will be the concept of what we ourselves have placed into the world of experience. For example, existence in space is not a property of the things, but the form in which our sense-organs are able to perceive them. It is quite clear that Kant robs himself in this way of the possibility of cognizing the essential nature of things.

In order not to have to remain satisfied with this result of Kant’s philosophy, Nikolai Losky advises us to recognize in it the following: “Kant is right when he says that the cognizing subject cannot copy (as the rationalists wanted to do) the world of the things-in-themselves *through the autonomous activity of his own individual thinking*, but he neglected the possibility that the cognizing subject might be able within experience intuitively (i.e. in the experience of thinking, which is always intuitive in its essential nature - G.A.B.) *to follow the individual activity of the things themselves*, and in this way to move infinitely far beyond the limits of one’s own ‘I’.”⁷⁵⁾

The question lies solely in the degree of trust that is placed in experience. Kant recognizes that there are no boundaries between the subject of cognition and the thing as it appears to the subject. Consequently, the entire problem of dualism lies only in the interpretation of (what) experience (is). A fundamental thesis in the phenomenology of Losky states that the things are given to us in perception as they are in reality. And if this is so, then the next step which must necessarily be taken away from Kant leads us to the monism of universalistic empiricism, the foundation for which is given by Rudolf Steiner. Losky calls it intuitivism. Kant himself, so he believes, “sometimes describes, when he distinguishes transcendental from empirical consciousness, the processes of cognition in the way required by the doctrine of intuitive perception: In Kant’s view, the empirical consciousness finds the syntheses already present in the perceptions; the categories of causality etc. are as it were wrested away from the cognizing subject and work independently within the sphere of given phenomena.*

If transcendental consciousness is separated still further from empirical consciousness, through the interpretation of transcendental unity of apperception as a trans-individual consciousness that is identical in all empirical subjects, then we have before us the doctrine of the direct perception of the outer world (i.e. of its essential being – G.A.B.), in the full sense of the word.”⁷⁶⁾ And this doctrine will be – so we can carry Losky’s thought further in the spirit of Rudolf Steiner – that of immediate cognition of the world through perception of the idea.

Pure concepts are without question necessary for science, but in the absence of ‘beholding’, they are empty (in this Goethe and Kant are in agreement). They are needed in order to determine the value of the act of beholding for the world-view as a whole. “If now the understanding, with this intention,”

* This was remarked upon by Volkelt in his study entitled ‘Kant’s Theory of Knowledge’ (Losky’s own comment).

says Rudolf Steiner, “approaches nature and draws together those factual elements which belong together according to an *inner* necessity, then it is raising itself from the consideration of the *simple phenomenon* to the *rational experiment*, which is an immediate expression of objective natural law. Goethe’s empiricism draws everything that it brings forward to explain the phenomena, from experience; only the way in which it is drawn (from experience) is determined by its mode of ‘beholding’”(GA 30, p.287). For this reason Goethe called his morphology of plants “a new science”, meaning not its object (botany), but the method of thinking through which he created it. He united the *morphology of thinking* with the morphology of plants, and this was new in science and remains so today. Rudolf Steiner provided this method with a systematic epistemological, and then also a spiritual-scientific, foundation. He wrote the ‘Philosophy of Freedom’ (Spiritual Activity) at the crossing-point of the philosophy of pure thinking and the esotericism of thinking; it is, one could say, written with morphological thinking. This phenomenon is quite unique and it is so difficult, for this reason, to find a relation to it. The present work is an attempt to remove some of the difficulties on the path to a mastery of this qualitatively new thinking, which forms the central core of Anthroposophical methodology.

I Evolutionism

1. Introductory Remarks

The intention to offer a systematic description of Anthroposophical methodology is bound up with a whole series of considerable difficulties of a not merely scientific character. It suffices to point out that one encounters a lack of understanding even in Anthroposophical circles – namely, on the part of those who experience the teaching of Rudolf Steiner in a mystical way only, and who, even if they make certain efforts in the sphere of cognition, do so in an unsystematic and dogmatic manner. In order to conceal the narrowness and superficiality of their understanding of Anthroposophy, they often tear statements of Rudolf Steiner out of their context and absolutize them into dogmas of a belief-system. People of this sort may well refuse categorically to read our book without prejudice on the grounds that, for example, one can read the following in one of the lectures of Rudolf Steiner: “Spiritual science is meant to be an attitude to life, not a theory, a doctrine; it is meant to change our innermost soul-life” (GA 117, 19.11.1909).

For our part, when we meet up with ‘objections’ of this kind, we feel justified in affirming that these words of Rudolf Steiner not only do not contradict in any way the intention and the character of our research, but in a certain way actually constitute its central point. For Rudolf Steiner regarded thinking consciousness as a main instrument by means of which the human being can begin to transform the spiritual life. At the same time he stressed on numerous occasions that this thinking consciousness is at present in a state of decline, is alienated from real life and exhausts itself in empty abstraction. In this sense Anthroposophy is meant to be “not grey theory, but real life” (GA 26, p.56 ff), the life of the ensouled, thinking spirit, since it represents in the last resort a *world-view*, albeit one which, in contrast to other world-views, needs to be *actively taken up in a different way*” (ibid.). When Rudolf Steiner calls Anthroposophy ‘spiritual science’, we should take this to mean that it is both ‘teaching’ and ‘theory’, but its content and meaning differ so strongly from those of existing theories, that to understand it demands a *qualitative* transformation of the entire soul-spiritual nature of the human being. It is clear that the fulfilment of a task of this kind is only possible on the condition that one acquires a *thorough knowledge* of it. But all knowledge has its own method. The peculiar feature of the Anthroposophical method of cognition consists in the fact that it cannot be grasped by means of the understanding alone, but if we

dispense with the understanding and give ourselves over entirely to the mysticism of feelings, we also achieve nothing. As everything of a sectarian and dogmatic nature is foreign to Anthroposophy, the assumption would be that human beings should associate together freely and without restriction on the basis that it provides. But to discuss Anthroposophy in depth and out of true insight is only possible for those who take the trouble to master the “cognitive methods of Anthroposophy” (13.2.1923). Mastery of the method enables one to know Anthroposophy rightly – i.e. in a way that is adequate to its true nature and content. And this presupposes that one is taking it up not only with one’s head, but in such a way that “in everything that it expresses it gives us enthusiasm, and lives in us in such a way that it finds the transition from nervous system to blood system” (GA 169, 13.6.1916). Such is the twofold task confronting anyone who wishes to grasp Anthroposophy, to receive it into himself, and to work on with its content in a fruitful way: He must be able to think intellectually, actively, in order then to rise above the mere faculty of understanding and bring his whole being into activity.

We are endeavouring with the entire content of our research to underline the necessity of this task and to warn the reader against the intention, in his dealings with spiritual *science*, to grasp its method with the understanding alone, to ‘adapt’ to it the methods of abstract-logical, linguistic etc. manipulations (this also happens in the chance, unsystematic, chaotic accumulations of thoughts which, especially in the last ten to fifteen years, have to an increasing degree inflated so-called Anthroposophical secondary literature).

Thus it is quite clear that Anthroposophy cannot be ‘just theory’. It must form the immediate life of the soul. But what can contribute to this to a greater degree than the (ful)filling of the thinking – and therefore unavoidably theorizing – consciousness with ideal real being? If we proceed in this way, we alter the nature of consciousness. A first step in this direction must already be taken on the level of learning about Anthroposophy; at a certain point we will show why it is senseless merely to reflect its ideas. But it would not be right suddenly and ‘in one go’ to do without reflection. When one has adequately grasped the central core of the task one must, by dint of strenuous effort, create within oneself the conditions that are necessary for a new and different form of cognition. Ideas are subject to development. Anyone who has no relation to the experiencing of ideas as they move autonomously on the abstract level will never find a right relation to their real being, either. In this sense we should try to grasp from the very beginning a very simple fact: we are investigating the methodology of spiritual *science*, and this can, so it follows, be nothing other than *science*. Indeed, it is specific in all its parts and its essential nature, but at the

same time it cannot develop its own doctrine of evolution, for example, if it ignores the theory of development put forward by Darwin and Haeckel; it cannot set up its theory of knowledge outside the stream of the history of philosophy. But its evolutionism stands on a level that is qualitatively different from that of natural science, because it embraces sensible-supersensible reality. In Anthroposophy, philosophy undergoes a profound metamorphosis when the thinking consciousness itself is subject to metamorphosis. Rudolf Steiner says: “.... The age of philosophy has been fulfilled.” “The only thing that philosophy can do today is to save that in the human being which the seer must remember at the first stage of his development, to rescue the ‘I’, the self-consciousness. This is what philosophy will need to have grasped.* Try, therefore, to understand from this standpoint my ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’, where a connection is made to that which must lead philosophical consciousness over into the time that is now approaching, the time in which there must again enter into the development of humanity that which can be a more exact reflection of the higher (the Divine – G.A.B.) Trinity than philosophy, the time when Theosophy must enter into human development” (GA 137, 12.6.1912).

Anthroposophy also has access to the view of nature which Rudolf Steiner closely connected in his methodology with this philosophy that is descended from Theosophy, whereby it reaches out into the dimensions of pure spirit.

Another kind of misunderstanding we encounter in the realizing of our intention lies in the way everything that has a connection to esotericism, to occultism, is lumped together indiscriminately. It has become normal practice to regard any mention of occultism in scientific circles as a mark of ‘bad taste’ and in religious circles as ‘Satanism’. And one will have to admit that in very many cases there are good reasons for such a judgment. For this reason it is extremely difficult to defend the right of true esotericism, which has, quite clearly, nourished human culture directly or indirectly in all epochs, which was sometimes acknowledged and sometimes not, but was nevertheless a main component of it. For centuries this was simply not noticed – but this was due solely to the immaturity of human self-consciousness. Those who had attained maturity understood: What is the sense in telling a small child the composition of the air it breathes? And so in these conditions esotericism came to expression in the form of cults, religious beliefs, art and not as systems of knowledge.

* This is something that the creators of the philosophical directions related to Anthroposophy were able to understand.

For a humanity that has reached maturity the situation is quite different. Here it is necessary to explain, above all, in what way the developments that have been achieved by the human being on the external, exoteric path stand in harmony with those esoteric, i.e. purely spiritual and in no way abstract or dark sources that nourish him. They were kept secret from the childish understanding of man (this is why they are esoteric), but now the time has come for the hidden to be revealed, as we are told in the Gospel.

It is precisely in this sense that Anthroposophy is, inclusive of its philosophical and Goetheanistic foundation, an esoteric teaching. And this is its main peculiarity, distinguishing it from other, mostly popularized, esoteric directions and streams in which the needs of thinking consciousness are ignored. In the conception that prevails today in the consciousness of many people, esotericism is associated with a certain stage in the past when human beings were mainly involved in the practice of magic, and miracle-workers satisfied all their needs, even those of everyday existence. Then they were seized with enthusiasm for philosophy – we don't really know why – and for the external sciences, and forgot about the magic, grew superficial and led civilization up a blind alley. But now the time has come to reawaken the old capacities and return to the wonder-workings of the past; not to think about the future, but only be aware of it, as it is fully predetermined by the monotonously repetitive contraction and expansion of the universe; develop clairvoyance rather than a theory of knowledge, telekinesis rather than means of transport etc.

In view of the fact that an ideology of this sort repels many people, its supporters try occasionally to march in time with the scientific spirit of the epoch, but nothing aside from curiosities results from their efforts. Here is a concrete example:

After a long search in the libraries we managed to unearth a book on the methodology of occultism. In it the attempt is made to arrange into a kind of system the stock formulations and terms used by today's leading occultists (they ought rather to be called parapsychologists or – as the Russians say – 'extrasensists'), when confronted with the incredulity of thinking people regarding their occult practices. The book is called 'The Methodology of Yoga' and appeared in St. Petersburg in 1992. At the very beginning the reader (regardless of his level of preparation) is asked to carry out a meditative exercise. Then he is served up with definitions of concepts such as 'God' and 'evolution'. They are quite intelligently formulated, but from the standpoint of pure mysticism and drawing upon the traditions of antiquity which arose at a time when thinking itself was pictorial and thus fundamentally different from that of today, and when the consciousness of human beings was a group-

consciousness and for this reason half clairvoyant. The authors simply do not understand the old spirituality; for this they are rooted too deeply in today's materialistic, scientific conceptions. Through extrapolating them in a quite elementary way onto the wisdom of the ancients, they give it a materialistic interpretation. This, for example, is their description of the "evolution" of the Purusha: "It begins with the formation of the first elements of diffuse energy on the crystal lattice of the minerals of the planets". The evolution of God "takes place in cycles, called pulsations in modern astronomy". Consciousness, in the view of the authors, is "a lump of energy that is conscious of itself"; the human being can "increase" the "mass" of his consciousness, he can "crystallize consciousness". An attempt is also made to pander to Christianity: "... the teachings of Jesus Christ and Krishna coincide ... in the methodology of spiritual progression". But in addition to this the book offers a haphazard, eclectic mixture of "laws" and occult manipulations which have been described by Castañeda, Gurdieff and others. To analyze all this has no sense whatever, and we are willing to concur with a responsible scientist who says he wishes to have nothing to do with such occultism and prefers to remain within the science of the materialists.

In order to make clear the difference between Anthroposophy and all such forms of esotericism, a number of really complex discussions are necessary, which we will enter into in the pages that follow. As their point of departure it must be borne in mind that Anthroposophy as spiritual science maintains consistently the position of evolutionism. This is one of its central characteristics. This needs to be recognized, because in the question of evolutionism humanity is divided into two camps. In the one where religious consciousness plays the main part, the evolution of the world and man is rejected. For example, Christian theology claims that world and man were created in an instant by the Creator in the form in which they exist today. According to this doctrine there is no evolution of species. The world will one day be suddenly transformed in its entirety, and on a purely moral level. One should of course not imagine that the scholars who represent this world-view only have naïve, mythical conceptions. How can one reconcile the process of universal entropy with the idea of continuing development? – asks today's scientifically trained Catholic or Protestant theologian.

In the rest of humanity there prevails a scientific world-view. Here evolutionism is acknowledged, but it is based only on natural laws, those of natural selection and the struggle for existence. It contains no moral principle.

The evolutionism of Anthroposophy is of a different kind, but it pays the evolutionary theory of Darwin and Haeckel the tribute it deserves – for some

of its methodological principles, the manner of observation and finally its central idea of the *natural* emergence of the species. Recently something paradoxical arose in the relation between Anthroposophy and Darwinism. Right at the end of the 20th century a movement began to grow in strength throughout the world (due to global shifts in international politics), which utterly rejected the Darwinist theory. The sect of neo-creationists in the U.S.A., for example, succeeded in banning it from the teaching syllabus in a number of schools. It is conceivable that, at some point, Anthroposophy, against which Darwinism is waging a long-term battle, will be its only defender (within certain limits, of course).

The evolutionism of Anthroposophy reconciles the positions of both camps into which the world is divided: that of the opponents and that of the advocates of the doctrine of evolution. For their polarization is a reflection of the dualism of matter and spirit, which philosophy was hoping to overcome. Anthroposophy as a monistic way of thinking was able also in its ontology to lead evolutionistic dualism to a synthesis. To the question: How did it succeed in doing this? we will attempt to give an answer in the course of the discussions to follow. But first we will examine the views of two Russian philosophers who stand remarkably close to the evolutionism of Anthroposophical teaching. The first of these two views was supported by Nikolai Losky, who saw the ultimate ground of evolution “not in the lowest forces of nature, but in God and in the normative Divine ideas”, which according to Losky, “are inherent in all that is substantially creative”. In this, Losky is aligning himself with the evolutionist standpoint of Vladimir Soloviev, which is put forward by him in his essay ‘The Justification of the Good’ and is expressed as follows: “The order of that which is, is not the same as the order of the world of appearance The conditions for appearance stem from the natural evolution of nature; that which manifests in the world of appearance stems from God.”⁷⁷⁾

2. The System-Objects and their Archetypal Phenomena

The success of physics in its research into the structure of the atom exposed natural science to the danger of losing itself in a multiplicity of structural elements of the material world, of absolutizing multiplicity and thereby atomizing to a hopeless degree the overall picture of the world. As a natural reaction to this alternative in the development of science there arose the endeavour to introduce into methodology the postulate – put forward as no more than a logical conclusion – that the ultimate expression of any multiplicity whatever proves to be a unity, without first waiting for the necessary empirical data.

It was out of the wish to bring to an end the ‘elementarism of multiplicity’ that L. Bertalanffy turned to the principle of ‘organism’ or ‘system’. He gave the first definition of the system as a totality of the elements which are held together by inner connections and stand in a reciprocal relation to the surroundings. Soon this definition was extended to include the concept of ‘super-summativity’ as a decisive factor in the emphasis placed on the system-objects; and then the existence of a mutual relation between the researcher and the researched system was acknowledged, though this factor was not given the attention it deserves. It was not grasped in the necessary way, either on the level of general methodology or from the position of systems theory. Then in practice the following happened: On the one hand it became apparent that such characteristics, ‘components’ of the system-objects, ‘operate’ on the level of the mathematized theory of systems, with no involvement of the consciousness of the researcher. If one recognizes, here also, that “the law of the holistic totality manifests within the system in the emergence of integrative qualities which are not intrinsic to the components that constitute it”⁷⁸⁾, one thereby calmly passes over an element that is, in the last resort, metaphysical, by learning to formalize the “indeterminacies”.

On the other hand the super-summative character of the systems, the discovery of the subjective factor in their structure, furtively shifted the science of nature and brought it into the proximity of parapsychology with its quantum empiricism of thinking. Systems theory thereby became the basis for the founding of a meta-theory of materialism. There is only one way out of the situation that has arisen: it consists in a reorientation of systems research towards personalistic empiricism, towards the Goetheanistic method of the observation of reality in its sensible-supersensible unity.

Goethe distinguished three methods of natural-scientific research, and they are all based on the differences in our perception of phenomena. The first is *general empiricism*, which does not move beyond the limits of what is immediately given. Here the researcher, as Rudolf Steiner says, is concerned only with the *single objects* of appearance. Science on this level does not have the right to leave the framework of the description and summing-up of single facts (see GA 1. p. 187). Rightly considered, this corresponds to the level of surface S in Fig. 2.

The second method is *rationalism*. It does not limit itself to the description of the phenomena, but strives towards the uncovering of certain causes, whereby it sets up hypotheses and thus explains the phenomena. Here the understanding infers from the appearance the nature of the cause. Often these causes are not contained within the phenomena (indeterminacies). Then, so Goethe

says, the arbitrariness of conjecture hastens to the aid of the researcher. For this reason it is not permissible to draw overhasty conclusions from one's observations. If we work in this way, then we grasp in our spirit the connections, and in nature the single facts (elements); "the spirit strives towards the type or species, nature creates only individuals" (ibid., p.189).^{*} And therefore we have the right to conclude that the human being is not only the primary element of the system of cognition, but the principle of its super-summativity, its *system-forming principle*. Here, too, he is "the measure of all things". In this way we overcome the metaphysics of materialism.

Goethe's third method is explained by Rudolf Steiner as follows: "Because the objects of nature are separated in the realm of appearance, the synthesizing power of the spirit is required, to show their *inner* unity. Because the unity of the understanding is, in itself, empty, it has to fill itself with the objects of nature" (ibid., p. 190). Thus the phenomenon and pure spirit combine to form one system, a unity. The advocate of subtle abstract schemes may well object to what we have said: Well now, the whole thing looks so simple! The most complex problems of refined empirical research, and for their solution you offer a methodological truism! – But Goethe's method also contains complexities, very big ones in fact; this learned man had the ability to speak simply about difficult things. And besides, his simplicity also needed a commentator of genius to make it accessible to us. Rudolf Steiner says: "Development consists in the process whereby a unity evolves further (through creation of a form – G.A.B.), and the *forms* which it thus assumes arise as something quite new. This is because these forms do not belong to the unitary process of development, but to the means which it uses in order to manifest itself. The developmental forms must all be capable of explanation in ideal terms from the unity, even though they do not proceed from it on the real level. That Goethe was thinking only of this fact of their 'being contained' in an *ideal* sense is proved, for example, by his statement that "these diverse parts are conceived as having arisen out of an *ideal* archetypal body and to have unfolded step by step in different formative stages...." (GA 30, p. 283). We believe that in this thought of Rudolf Steiner's, access to the systems theory is opened up to spiritual science. It shows how, when the system-objects are brought into focus, the determining element proves to be what Goethe called the archetypal phenomenon. Its existence is at once ideal and real. It also contains within itself the principle of the autonomous movement of the system.

^{*} Let us recall in passing: "The order of what is, is not the same as the order of phenomena" (V. Soloviev).

Our mode of thinking can also have the character of a system or, more precisely, *it must have, if the researcher is to be in a position to do research into the system-objects*. We must therefore reject the idea that it is possible from the positions of materialism or positivism to uncover the true potential contained within the systems method of cognition.

In his thinking Goethe was 'system'-atic in the fullest sense of the word. In his characterization of Goethe, Rudolf Steiner says that "his concepts were in constant metamorphosis, and thus they were ... inwardly adapted to the process (of development – G.A.B.) undergone by plant nature itself" (GA 78, p. 30); it was the same with animal nature, in fact with nature in all its manifestations. This means that Goethe's thinking worked according to the laws of the living, organic world, and consequently his unity stood *higher than that of the purely logical*. It remained so when he turned to the study of inorganic nature. It is extremely important to understand the genesis of this thinking and its non-formal logic. The living, Divine idea created the hierarchy of the kingdoms of nature. They are its manifestations. The task of the scientist is to distil out its fundamental idea from the chaos of chance, secondary phenomena. Rudolf Steiner says in one of his statements on methodology: "The way in which the concept (idea) comes to living expression in the sense-world is that which underlies the differences between the kingdoms of nature. If the real, sense-perceptible entity only attains a form of existence which lies completely outside the concept and is only governed, in the changes it undergoes, by the concept as a *law*, then we call this entity *inorganic*. Everything that happens to such an entity is attributable to the influence of another; and the way in which the two work upon each other can be explained by means of a law that lies outside them." In organic nature that which is graspable in conceptual form stands as sense-perceptible unity before the human being. Here "the concept" appears, "not *outside* the sense-perceptible manifoldness as a law, but *within* it as a principle. The concept underlies it as a pervading element, no longer as something perceptible to the senses." When it "appears in the form of concept itself, then it comes to expression as *consciousness*; here, at last, that comes to manifestation which at the lower levels is only present in its essential nature. Here, the concept itself becomes an object of perception.... *Natural law, type, concept* are the three forms in which the ideal comes to expression. The law of nature is abstract, standing above the manifoldness of the sense-world; it governs the science of inorganic nature. Here, idea and reality are completely separate from one another. The type unites both in a single entity In human consciousness the concept itself is perceptible. Beholding and idea form an identity" (GA 1, p. 282 ff.).

In this way the entire sense-perceptible world represents a hierarchy of the stages of incarnation of the Divine Idea, the archetypal Idea, which comes to itself in the sphere of ‘otherness’. Phenomenologically, these stages are the hierarchy of system-objects which proceeds from the Idea; first the natural system-objects and then those for which the human ‘I’ can act as mediator in their process of becoming. In them the idea comes to expression as a *necessary* connection between the phenomena – but we should note here: not as the connections as such, but as their necessary unity and wholeness. Goethe called them an ‘archetypal phenomenon’ or a ‘fundamental fact’. In the manifoldness of experience the archetypal phenomenon endures as its integral and unchangeable part. This constitutes “the higher experience within experience” (GA 2, p. 94). Goethe ordered the archetypal phenomenon according to the ascending modes of its working: “chance – mechanical – physical – chemical – organic – psychical – ethical – religious – genius”.* These are essentially nothing other than the stages of system-formation, on which the archetypal phenomenon reveals itself as a system-building principle in the evolutionary conditions to which it is subject.

Knowledge of the archetypal phenomenon cannot be acquired if one only uses the inductive method. By means of the latter all that one can do is to convince oneself that it is genuine once it has been discovered; it reveals itself to the ‘spiritual eye’ (Goethe), to intellectual beholding, which has the capacity to carry out sense observations within the sphere of the ‘ur’-phenomenal. Rudolf Steiner says of Goethe, that he had no inclination to derive the complex (i.e. that in which the idea of nature is most clearly revealed) from the simple; he wanted “at a single glance to survey” this complexity “as an actively working whole and then to explain the simple and imperfect phenomenon as a one-sided formation of the composite and perfect The opposite procedure is followed by the natural scientists who regard the perfect form as no more than a mechanical sum of the simple processes. They start from this simple phenomenon and derive the perfected form from it” (GA 6, p.106). We therefore ask again: How can the materialist find access to the system-object? For him it remains a ‘thing-in-itself’. In one of his lectures Rudolf Steiner addresses this question directly: “In a wonderful way, Goethe experienced pure beholding which, in contrast to materialism, he spoke of as the archetypal phenomenon It is the pure beholding of reality” (GA 171, 17.9.1916).

* See Rudolf Steiner, ‘Goethe’s World Conception’ (GA 6, p. 79 ff, and GA. 1, p. 137.)

The mystery of the system-object is the mystery of life. It represents a *self-organizing totality*. For this reason it is, as Nikolai Losky states, absurd to seek the principle of its system nature within the elements and combinations of elements. This principle is the living idea. It is the universal principle of the organism, which embraces all its particular forms. As Rudolf Steiner explained, Goethe also refers to it as the ‘type’: “The type plays in the organic world the same role as the natural law in the inorganic. Just as the latter enables us to recognize each individual occurrence as a member of a larger totality, so the type enables us to see the single organism as a special modification of the archetypal form” (GA 2, p. 104 f.), of the archetypal phenomenon. Law and type are the two successive stages in the revelation of the archetypal phenomenon.

The type culminates in the single entity and identifies with it, but does not formally determine it in the manner of a law. “Each single organism is the manifestation of the type in a particular form (thus it is the system-forming principle of the organism – G.A.B.). *It is an individuality* (emphasis G.A.B.), which regulates and determines itself from a centre outwards. It is a self-contained totality or wholeness” (ibid. p. 113).

If we attempt to find analogous characteristics in the inorganic system-object, it grows to the full extent of the *cosmos*. This means that in inorganic nature there is only one true system-object, and this proves to be the entire material universe. Also in its physical sense-appearance it possesses a type of its own; it is therefore a living totality. All its individual parts, including the planetary system, are sub-systems within the universal system and are ultimately determined by it. Let us take by way of example the law of attraction and repulsion. It is universal by nature. In order to grasp its nature (not its working) one must try to ‘behold’ the entire universe in its macro- and microcosmic manifestations, to filter out all secondary and chance phenomena and rise to its spiritual, primordial foundation.

The type can be recognized by means of the comparison of each of the forms of its manifestation on different stages of the organic – and here we may add, also of the social and human-spiritual world – with itself. It is no exaggeration to say that in the broad spectrum of the sciences, from comparative botany (which Goethe engaged in) to comparative philology, we have to do with one and the same essential type (as ‘I’). Here, of course, we do not mean the usual comparative method according to which the forms are merely compared and contrasted with one another (this is an application of the inductive method, of ‘general empiricism’, of ‘rationalism’). In Goetheanism the forms are compared with the type, with their ‘inner unity’ or with the system-forming prin-

ciple, which works within a given category of systems, but also extends beyond their limits. In the final analysis we have to do, also in this part of general scientific methodology, with a world-whole which, in its forms, is hierarchical and personalistic.

The type is something flowing and changeable. Goethe called it the true Proteus. From it can “be derived all special kinds and species which can be regarded as sub-types, specialized types [sub-systems]” (ibid. p.103). This is the idea of the organism, the “law that reveals itself in the organism, the animal-nature in the animal”, the life that unfolds its form from within itself, and has the strength and capacity, through the potential lying within it, to develop itself in manifold outer forms (kinds, species)” (GA 1. p. 30). The idea, which corresponds fully to the organic, is an entelechy.

“But the idea of the organism is active and working in the organism as an entelechy; in the form that is taken hold of by our reason it is simply the essential being of the entelechy itself. It does not sum up experience; it *brings into being* that which is accessible to our experience” (ibid., p.85).

The entelechy itself – or the archetypal phenomenon as ‘type’ – does not reveal itself in the world directly. It “arises in our inner being as idea when we consider the characteristics shared in common by the living entities” (GA 30, p. 75), i.e. the holistic objects, the unities. And it arises in the power of beholding, i.e. in a spirit organized in a particular way, with the capacity to think ‘system’-atically or, to use Rudolf Steiner’s term, morphologically. We define such a spirit as the second entelechy. It is the ‘power of judgment in beholding’. The archetypal phenomena of things are revealed to it, as it is itself also an archetypal phenomenon of the individual human being, who represents a system with its own primary phenomenon type. It is the concept ‘free spirit’ and we are led to it by the ‘Philosophy of Freedom’.

These are, so to speak the fundamentals of spiritual-scientific ‘systems theory’ in its narrowest interpretation. It is one of the basic components of Anthroposophical methodology.

To guide the cognitive process Anthroposophically means to make some kind of holistic totality into its object, or at least to indicate that system-object of which this or that object (problem) of cognition forms a part and by which it is determined. The discovery of the system-object is bound up with the search for its system-forming principle, which is also real in an ontological sense – i.e. it has existence and is somehow personified. Simply stated: the system-

forming principle is always the ‘I’. For this reason Anthroposophy is, in the last resort, the teaching of the ‘I’-beings, their genesis, hierarchy, phenomenology etc.

The systems researched into by Anthroposophy can be classified as follows: immanent, which bear the ‘I’-principle within themselves (such systems are the human being, the species of organic nature etc.) and transcendent, whose ‘I’-principle organizes them from without (of this kind are administrative, mechanical, electronic-cybernetic systems etc.). The systems of knowledge are always immanent and metaphysical. The overcoming of dualism is dependent upon an understanding of this fact. Its reality is of a sensible-supersensible nature.

If one is to solve the riddle of the system-nature of human consciousness without contradiction and in unity with the world-whole, theory of knowledge in Anthroposophy must, from a certain stage onwards, advance to spiritual cognition. Then the system-objects can be sub-divided into natural, supernatural and mixed. This classification enables one to approach cognitively the Divine and its relation to the created world. Natural-scientific conceptions do not need to be abandoned here; they simply receive a broader interpretation, but on a basis that is in entire conformity with law. Thus the well-known biogenetic law of the unity of phylo and ontogenesis is observed, in spiritual science, in its working in the cultural-historical process and in psychogenesis. Very important results achieved here have been incorporated, as a solid component, into the system of pedagogy developed on an Anthroposophical basis.

The systems method in research into the human soul as an entelechy has made it possible in Anthroposophy for psychology to be raised to a true psychosophy and for the entire hierarchy of soul forms to be discovered; from the ‘ur’-phenomenal to the logical and then to the super-individual, the hierarchies of the forms of being and of the consciousness of the second entelechy. Thus, in Anthroposophy, a well-ordered system of the reciprocal relations of world-evolution with human evolution is set up, in which the Darwinian and Haeckelian doctrine of the evolution of species is only a fragment, albeit a valuable one on the methodological level.

In the methodology of Anthroposophy mathematical methods of systems research are also applied, but they undergo changes of special importance. External science is working intensively at the question how general systems theory, “the new paradigm in science” (Bertalanffy) can be brought into a mutual relation with so-called number theory. Scientific-technical progress is advanced considerably by this work, but the human being becomes more and more alienated from science. For Anthroposophy this path of research is, of

* And also the universal plant in the special plant (GA 2, p. 203)

course, not acceptable. Its methodology contains a strong element of numerical and also symbolic principles of cognition, but it sees in them manifestations of the essential being of holistic objects, systems. For it, the symbols are ‘Sinnbilder’ (meaning-filled pictures) of supersensible reality. Like numbers, they too serve as a form of cognition, one that is more effective than philosophical reflection. This is in no way abstract symbolism or nominalistic operationalism of numerology. Thanks to this form of thinking, we have the rarely-given opportunity to enter into contact with the sacred process of Divine creative activity.

Ultimately speaking, this is the entire method of cognition. It was applied extensively in the ancient Pythagorean school, where an original system of initiation was built up on this basis. Its universality was such that Plato, who stood in a close relation to it, said: God geometrizes. Mathematics proves in its essential nature to be an esoteric science, but in the history of the development of the sciences it is a timeless phenomenon. In neo-Kantian logic one took still further the definition of the essential nature of mathematics. Here, mathematics is understood to be a special form of intellectual construction which is believed to have no correspondence either in physical or in ideal existence. But in our opinion this is already an exaggeration.

The Pythagorean relation to the essence of number can be traced throughout the entire history of science. Thus Galileo stated that he felt remarkably close to the thoughts of Plato, according to whom an understanding of the nature of number means a reaching through to the Divine. In the view of Descartes one could substitute the word ‘God’ with the expression ‘mathematical order of the world’. He was thus repeating the motto of the Gnostics: “Understand mathesis, and you will understand God.” Kepler wrote in a letter to Michael Mestlin (on 19th April 1597): “Reason grasps this thing or that the more correctly, the closer it comes to pure quantity – the source from which it flows.”

In a remarkable way Rudolf Steiner unlocked the meaning (largely forgotten in the course of the centuries) which the Pythagoreans attached to their experience and their conception of numbers and symbols. In addition he enriched them with something new; he filled what over the course of time had grown abstract, lifeless and had really become an empty ‘intellectual construction’, with life and with real content. The significance of what Rudolf Steiner accomplished thus was enormous indeed, since “out of forms, numbers, lines – measure, number and weight, so one says in occultism – the human being was once created by the Gods” (GA 266/1, p.381). Our ability to count is intimately connected with the fact that “we are ourselves counted; we have been

counted from out of the being of the world, and ordered in accordance with number. Number is inborn in us, woven into us by the world-whole” (GA 204, 23.4.1921).

If we wish to think spiritually and realistically, then the symbol has a significance related to that of number. In one of his lectures, Rudolf Steiner asks: Why is it necessary to think in symbols? and gives the following answer: “So that one’s inner production is activated” (B. 22, p. 11).

The Anthroposophical path of knowledge leads the human being to the threshold of the supersensible world. In order to cross it, it is absolutely necessary to change the form of one’s consciousness. Then the human being will live in two worlds simultaneously: the sense-world and the supersensible world, and the cultural-historical process which guides him to this task will rise to a higher spiritual level. It is necessary to change one’s consciousness without losing the capacities one has already acquired. But they alone are not sufficient. The special forms of thinking with the aid of symbols and numbers also do not help one further if one’s thinking remains on the level of the mere understanding. “Most people imagine the following,” says Rudolf Steiner. “When you have concepts, you make pictures, and then you clothe these in symbolism. But this is always wooden symbolism”.... In reality you proceed, at a certain stage, from the idea; and then “the picture arises in a living way as something true and original” (GA 342, 12.6.1921). Sooner or later it is revealed to the faculty of supersensible vision – consciousness rises to the imaginative level, where ideas are not thought through, but are perceived.

As consciousness moves towards a form of this kind, the entire human being must be engaged, not just the head. Living feeling, above all, must be united with thinking, especially with thinking in ‘beholding’. And here, too, a right use of the symbol will help us, because “the symbol is the means whereby we can find the way to human hearts and awaken them to the supersensible”. But in this case “we must live in the symbol” (GA 343, p.120). A science of this kind is imbued with truth – by virtue of the fact that it really enhances the value of human existence and endows human consciousness with existence. Then ‘I’-consciousness becomes the true ‘I’ of the human being. The entire system nature of his consciousness-being changes its character. It frees itself of everything of a conditional, temporal, chance nature. What was formerly cognition now becomes realization, self-realization.

The principle of number plays an important auxiliary role here. It extends the boundaries of the dialectical, and brings this into connection with the real, cosmic interrelations and laws. Here we will look ahead a little to a later stage in our discussion and give an example to show how this is meant: If you take

the number-sequence from 1 to 13, then the number one in the sequence is the absolute whole, the number two is the structure of the whole. The number three fits the structure of the two into the system. This is a dialectical triad. In the four we again have a structure before us; in the five this is transformed into a system – it is microcosm. Seven is the principle of development, viewed as a system; it leads to a unity, or cancels the antithesis of three and three, which are, at bottom, impulses of ascent and descent, of materialization and spiritualization. Eight raises the seven to the octave etc.

3. The Categories of Development

Of the phenomena in which the process of development of the world and man comes to expression, and on the basis of which new forms of the being of Divine world-consciousness arise, Rudolf Steiner points to three most important ones and says of them the following: “Evolution, involution, and creation out of nothing, this is what we must consider if we wish to form a conception of the full majesty and greatness of human development” (17.6.1909). If there were merely evolution and involution and no creation out of nothing there would be no more than a process of repetition such as we find, for example, in the plant kingdom. Here we encounter the first fundamental difference between the spiritual-scientific teaching of evolution and that of Darwin and Haeckel. “As development proceeds,” says Rudolf Steiner, “even the concept of development itself develops further” (21.4.1909). For this reason, so we would mention in parenthesis, anyone who judges Anthroposophy according to its view of the nature of development – whether ‘mystical’, ‘fantastical’ or ‘heretical’ – ought first to take the trouble to bring his concepts into correspondence with it.

Any phenomenon whatsoever can only be seen in the right light if one grasps not merely what evolves, but also what involutes or ‘involves’. Rudolf Steiner gives us the following definition: “Involution is a suctional drawing inwards, evolution is a giving outwards. All world-conditions alternate between these two” (23.12.1904). In another place, Rudolf Steiner expresses it as follows: “Evolution is expansion of the spirit in the external realm of matter. Involution is contraction of the spirit in the inner realm of soul. No evolution is possible without a corresponding involution taking place at the same time”, and vice-versa (GA 265, p. 17). The relation between God and man which holds sway in the world is subject to the working of this law, but also all processes of soul-spiritual ontogenesis on the micro-level: upbringing, education etc. The cycles of the becoming of world and man represent double spirals (comparable to spiral nebula), where every ‘winding inwards’ is necessarily

transformed into an unwinding. For this reason “the human being needs to be a vortex movement” (ibid. p. 18). The system of education and training applied in Waldorf pedagogy, the foundation of which was created by Rudolf Steiner, is built up on this principle. If it were to be observed in all other social connections, this would lead to a significant healing process.

But does it make sense in the light of all we have said, to speak of a dialectic of development? – The answer is quite definitely: yes. For in Anthroposophical methodology we discover the true essence of the dialectical, its ‘thing-in-itself’. This is fruitful, but few people choose to engage in a cognitive act of this kind, because “everything that takes place in the sense of the vortex movement is magic” (ibid.). Yet all grounds for fear of the supersensible disappear when one begins to recognize reality as a structure which constitutes a totality in its sensible-supersensible substance.

The emanation of the spiritual substance of the higher Divine beings laid the foundation stone of our evolutionary cycle. In this process the object of Divine creation ‘involute’. It received the higher emanations into itself and transformed them into immanent qualities. There was nothing of a formal nature in this reciprocal relation between Creator and created, nothing mechanical. In its final stage, the earthly phase, the evolutionary process descended to a cultural-historical level, where it raised itself above biological evolution and became soul-spiritual in nature. It ‘descended’ in its individualized spiritual being. The fruit of this sinking-rising movement was the birth of the individual human ‘I’. In it there emerges the prerogative of creative beings: the possibility of creation out of nothing, the creation of the new, thanks to which it treads the path of *subjective evolution*. This requires the human being to metamorphose the lower ‘I’ – the fruit of cultural-historical evolution – into the higher ‘I’; then this ‘I’ begins, in creative actions which spring from ideal love, in free deeds, to pour itself into the spheres of the spirit.

This activity must be accomplished on the lower level where an object-orientated consciousness prevails, but in accordance with the laws of the higher levels, and it ‘swings itself up’ to the existence of the loftiest beings, the Divine Hierarchies. The beginning of this activity is marked by the ‘power of judgment in beholding’ (anschauende Urteilskraft), which is therefore also an archetypal phenomenon. With the activity of ‘beholding thinking’ in its evolving movement, *the Hierarchies* begin to *involute*, which means for the human being – to express it in religious terms – to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. And entry here is possible for the human being in no other way. This kingdom is the realm of existent being (das seiende Sein), and only what is of like nature can unite with it. Such is the *mystery* – not the theory – of development.

The act of Divine creation was, in its very nature, a free sacrifice. Through evolution, the sacrifice sank deeper and deeper, culminating in the immanent laws of nature, which in the human being turned into an antithesis to God, into nothingness, and led the human being into the Fall into sin. In the act of his final, great sacrifice, the Divine identified with the ‘nothing’ of being-in-otherness (Anderssein) and thereby laid the foundation-stone for the return of created being to its primal source; not, however, through the elimination of ‘being in otherness’, but through its further evolution within the system of the human ‘I’. If one does not let oneself be hypnotized by the dogmas of a religious faith (faith is not identical with the dogmas; understanding only strengthens and confirms it), no particular effort is required to grasp the following: the naïve conception of original sin supposedly committed by an already *thinking* human being, and of the future direct ascent of the earthly human being into Heaven – just as he was after the expulsion from Paradise (and perhaps even before), only morally improved (repentant) – means nothing other than a disparagement of the Godhead. In reality it pleases God that man in his own human works should experience the presence of the creative Divine will, which leads him by way of evolution back to Himself, when the individual ‘I’ in him makes the transition from involution to individual evolution.

This transition is made possible for the human being only in a series of incarnations, as the result of intensive spiritual, cultural work. Rudolf Steiner uses various means to make its nature understandable. In one of his lectures he says, for example, that if you take Greek sculpture you have to do with an involution of colour and an evolution of form: “If we allow painting to develop out of sculpture, then we have form in involution, colour in evolution.” We see something similar in Italian painting, beginning with Cimabue. Somewhat later, in the 15th and 16th centuries, the epoch of the triumph of rationalism and scientific knowledge begins. In Michelangelo their impulses are still engaged in a process of inner becoming, in involution, while, in contrast to this, colour and sculptural form are undergoing a colossal evolution. In Leonardo both processes are visible simultaneously. Thereafter, science plays the leading role. Michelangelo resurrected at a later time would have become Galileo, says Rudolf Steiner. The intellect goes through an evolution. Parallel with this, human wisdom is involuted. It “involute itself in poetry. Poetry becomes a preserver of all that has to do with wisdom” (ibid.).

The human being is initiated, not into theory, but into poetry. The most striking example is Goethe with his poetic science. Here, thinking further in the spirit of Rudolf Steiner’s statements, one can say that, had Leonardo resur-

rected he would, given the strength of soul required for this, have become Goethe, and Dante might well have become Michelangelo.

In the religious consciousness the first stage of objective world evolution, in the course of which the human being began to undergo his transformation from its object to its subject, was reflected in pictorial form as the story of the temptation of the ancestors of the human race in Paradise and the expulsion from thence onto the Earth. After this, thinking consciousness began to emerge in the human being, and by this was determined the specific character of the path of the evolution of species subsequently followed by him, at the end of which he was transformed into *rational* (sapiens) man. As such he developed within himself an individual soul, the bearer of the ‘I’-consciousness, and for this reason he is obliged to wage an increasingly difficult struggle with the immanentism of nature both within and outside his own being, a struggle for the transformation of the involution of the world-process taking place within him, into an ‘I’-evolution of the individual spirit. In pictorial form it is represented in the shape of the battle of St. George with the dragon; on a cosmic scale it is waged by the Archangel Michael with the Luciferic-Ahrimanic dragon. The dramatic swings in the battle are connected in the *most immediate* way with the lot of mankind and also of the individual human being, a fact of which he must remain continually aware. The beginning of our entire evolutionary cycle, which consists of seven great stages (aeons) was initiated through an act of the highest Divine primordial revelation. This was clothed in the substance which had been offered as a sacrifice upon the altar of creation by an unusually lofty Hierarchy; in Christian esotericism its beings are called Thrones. In this way the very first act of creation already possessed inwardly an object and thus also its involution and the antithesis accompanying it. This is the initial principle of development. Rudolf Steiner says that “it is necessary, if things are to come to expression in reality in a living way, for them to be differentiated into polarities and for the polarities to unite again in order that life may progress” (24.5.1912). This law, which revealed itself already at the beginning of the evolutionary cycle, became the macro (cosmic) law of the relation between subject and object, and then passed over into the sphere of otherness-of-being (Anderssein), the physical plane, where it came to be recognized as “a fundamental law that everything has to work through antitheses, through polarities” (9.1.1916).

Thus the Anthroposophical doctrine of evolution reveals the ontological nature of dialectic. The object was imbued by the Creator with the capacity to acquire a content of its own, but at a certain stage of development this content

places itself unavoidably over against the Creator.* Rudolf Steiner throws further light on this process as follows: “The Gods set the world over against us, thus creating a duality: outside, objective reality; within us the life of soul.” The antithesis between these two parts of the world – the outer and the inner – arose without our active involvement: “We are [simply] present and are those beings who close, as it were, the single stream [of unitary being – G.A.B.] and thereby bring together the two poles. This happens within us, happens on the stage of our consciousness. Thus arises what for us is freedom. In this way we become independent beings” (24.5.1912). There are two things in this thought of Rudolf Steiner which we should look at more closely. First, it follows from it that the original relation between God and man becomes, under earthly conditions, an antithesis between the earthly human ‘I’ and the world; or, concretely speaking, the antithesis between concept and percept, which arises on the stage of our consciousness, where the path to freedom also begins, as shown in the ‘Philosophy of Freedom’. Secondly, in the measure in which he becomes a subject, the human being completes the transition to the evolution of the (lower) ‘I’, and this means that he transforms the objective evolution of the world, for which he constitutes an object, into his own, individual evolution, whereby he as subject begins to realize within himself something of a God-like nature – in his human hypostasis he acquires a real ‘I’, which is potentially identical with the world-’I’.

But first one must experience the birth of the ‘I’-consciousness, through which the foundation-stone is laid for the most important of all the metamorphoses which the human being must undergo through the entire evolutionary cycle. Its first act was the Fall into sin, which we should not reduce to a mere moment in time. Here we have to do with an extremely long process taking place under the influence and the working of spiritual beings, whose main function is to make involution possible in all its phases and on all its levels right down to the material plane.

So long as the human being is not ripe for his own individual evolution, he is forced to tread the path of the Fall into sin. This is one of the greatest metamorphoses on the path of a human being’s development into an individual ‘I’-being. To avoid it would only have been possible at the cost of renunciation of development – in other words, renunciation of existence. The Fall brought about in the human being the acquisition of the lower ‘I’. And as soon as he comes into possession of this, his position in the evolution of the world is once

* See Hegel’s ‘Science of Logic’ for a grandiose description of this process in the language of philosophy.

again radically changed: he sets about the task of overcoming the Fall into sin. But if he thinks and feels with his little ‘I’ and thereby remains completely within his material body, he starts to lose his own existence, to die in his nervous system; i.e. to continue on the path of the Fall. The small ‘I’ must become the starting-point for an impulse of will in the human being, to bring about a further metamorphosis constituting the beginning of individual evolution. Its beginning is bound up with a number of specific difficulties. This is due to the fact that those beings who helped man in the past in such a remarkable way and thanks to whom he accomplished the descent, underwent the ‘expulsion’ from spiritual heights to the material level of existence, drew down evolution as it were ‘from below’, while the Hierarchies ‘pushed’ it downwards, so to speak, from above. In this way the materialization of the spirit was accomplished. It led the human being to thinking consciousness. And now those beings who ‘pull’ evolution downwards strive also to pull the individual principle in man downwards, to bind him to the material world alone, to the experience of sense-perceptions, while pure thinking is left to wither in abstract emptiness of being. These beings understand the key position of man in the whole cycle of evolution and they hope, by taking control of his consciousness, to ‘involve’, as before, the entire future evolution of the world completely in the world of otherness-of-being, to make this process and this secondary world into the eternal antithesis of God, to make within it a kind of universe ‘in itself and for itself’, and to lead evolution through the three future zones back to its point of departure, ancient Saturn, whereby their *secondary* universe would become absolute.

The beings whose intention it is to lead the world away from its true path are of three kinds. In esotericism they are called Luciferic, Ahrimanic, Asuric. The entire visible universe is the outcome of their ‘involuting’ activity. They set themselves over against the emanations of the World-’I’ like in-sucking ‘funnels’, corresponding to cosmic egocentrism. Egocentrism is also individual, but in relation to the Divine ‘I’ it is, let us say, counter-individual in that it fixes in one direction, whilst the true ‘I’, which is engaged in development, encompasses within itself the tri-unity of evolution, involution and creation out of nothing. The egocentric ‘I’ – and this, man also has, so long as he does not pass over from reflection to ‘beholding’ – represents in its relation to the Divine the second part of the Fichtean identity “I = not I”. The ‘I’ of Lucifer and Ahriman – beings who belong to the third Hierarchy, but have remained behind in their development – represent ultimately an individualized protest on a cosmic scale against the Divine ‘I’. We have here to do with a world-encompassing dialectic of will and quality which is at the same time the di-

alectic of good and evil, the ‘unutterable mystery of evil’ as it is called in occultism. Thanks to this dialectic there arose in the world a field of gigantic spiritual tension upon which human freedom comes into being.

Rudolf Steiner says that “in the spiritual world there are not things and facts, but only beings and the relations of beings to one another” (GA 266/3, p. 302). This means that everything real in the universe possesses an ‘I’: either directly or in the structure of other beings; in the second case the ‘I’ is called a group-‘I’. Every being in the universe has its own functional role; in the case of the lower beings this is fixed in one direction, hence they serve the good only under strictly defined conditions. Given a change in conditions, one and the same function begins to serve evil. In the distant past the functions of Lucifer and Ahriman were not evil in their effects upon man; on the contrary, they were essential for his development.* But when their role became dangerous for the human being, the Gods obliged him to undergo the process of ever-repeated passage through birth and death, whereby they periodically cancel the harmful activity of these beings.

In the Mysteries of antiquity, under whose guiding star all the ancient civilizations stood, the human beings under the guidance of initiates (Hierophants) – many of whom were truly great figures far in advance of the stage of development of humanity – learned to find the balance between the necessary and the dangerous roles of the Luciferic and then the Ahrimanic beings. To dispense with them completely is something the human being has not yet been permitted to do. It suffices here to refer to the great role played by Lucifer in the opening up of the human sense-organs to the outer world, whereby they contribute to our individualization; without the working of Lucifer creative enthusiasm would be impossible. Ahriman ‘involved’ universal wisdom into the intellectual study of the natural world, without which the human being would not have been able to develop either the subtlety and precision of perceptions and observations that are essential for consciousness, or analytical thinking.

As the human being trod the path of earthly incarnations, he laid the first building-stone of his individual evolution, whereby his relation to the Luciferic and Ahrimanic beings assumed an ever more antagonistic character. In the world surrounding the human being, in the kingdoms of nature, where a colossal process of world involution is still taking place, the ‘inwardization’ of the spirit in the realms of otherness-of-being, the role of Lucifer and Ahriman will

* Relics of these conditions can be found today in the atavistic cults of African tribes and Siberian shamans, where moral categories are completely lacking.

remain indispensable for a long time to come, but not in the earlier sense, because since the Mystery of Golgotha Christ has also united with the kingdoms of nature in the sphere of otherness-of-being.

Lucifer and Ahriman are spirits who have remained behind with respect to the development of their ‘I’. The same is true of the Asuras. They therefore act in opposition to the human being, who is developing an individual soul, a spirit and an ‘I’. His maturing many-sidedness, *multifunctionality*, freedom makes him increasingly immune to their influence, and this compels him to wage a battle with them – for the sake of evolution. The fact that Lucifer once awakened passions and desires in the human astral body contributed to the liberating of this body from the astrality of the tribe. It now became the bearer of the ‘I’-consciousness and needed ennobling, and for this reason it became necessary to fight against its involutive, egocentric nature. Pictorially, but also imaginatively, the atavistic, Luciferized part of the human astral body appears in the form of a dragon with which the human being must fight a battle with the ‘sword’ or the ‘lance’ of consciousness and morality in order to tame and enoble it. This is how the metamorphosis of the human soul takes place.

Ahriman also reveals himself to the human being as a dragon*, which strives to eternalize the *conditioned* character of human consciousness and cause him to remain for ever a “product of social conditions” (Karl Marx). Such is the being who, in the materialistic world-view, is enthroned as the great master of logic and dialectics.

One can thus say of the beings who oppose man, that they inspire an inappropriate process of involution. Therefore, in the human sphere as a whole, in the education of the human race, starting with the child in particular, it is important to think through, from all sides, the question of the harmony of the elements of determination from without and (self-) determination from within. The soul-spiritual ontogenesis of man can be subject to conscious guidance; in it one must create the basis for human freedom – for self-determination on the level of essential being.

The self-determined ‘I’ can only be dynamic. In cognition it must be able to unite the polarities behind which the substantial streams of world development stand. Such an activity has nothing to do with relativism, and is even diametrically opposed to it. The *relatively* true means that it is true in its own place, the place that has been strictly determined for it. The human being must be mobile, and capable of creativity, in the world of concepts. Instead of the ponder-

* In Russian fairy tales we find him sometimes in the form of the obscurantist Kasche Bessmertny.

ous doctrine of universal entropy he must include within the body of science the concept of creation out of nothing. But of course this requires that one first review all categories of development. Rudolf Steiner says: “In reality neither the old axiom of Parmenides asserting the fixity of being nor that of Heraclitus concerning becoming, is true. In the world there is being and becoming; it is merely that becoming is alive and being is always dead; and all being is a corpse of becoming” (24.7.1917). Thus the concept of development itself undergoes development. Being dies and is born anew after passing through a phase of non-being. This mode of becoming is bound up with the space-time continuum. In it is “the marriage of the past with the present a marriage of the cosmos with chaos” (GA 284, p. 85). In the moment of the genesis of the earthly aeon, so we read in the Bible, “the earth was without form, and void”. This was the initial stage of chaos. And if, as Rudolf Steiner says, at a given time chaos had not been added as an ingredient to the cosmos, no process of becoming would have been possible in it. The human genius creates out of chaos, organizing and shaping it. Thus it contributes new impulses to life: “Through the process whereby all laws of causal action are thrown back into chaos, genius arises....” (ibid. p. 86).

The inner representations which we receive out of the chaos are symbols and signs: “The imaginations work from out of the chaos upon the human soul. If they work in a living way, then the chaos is wedded to the human soul” (ibid. p.86). Then human freedom arises.

If we consider the ‘Philistine’ spirit of our epoch, which is always fanatical in its attitudes and falls from one extreme to the other – now unchecked in its revolutionary zeal, now caught in fundamentalistic conservatism – we must again emphasize that in Anthroposophy one cannot make an apologia for chaos in the trivial sense of the word. We are concerned with chaos as an element in the creation out of nothing. This is what the Greeks referred to when they spoke of the condition out of which the world arose. In the beginning was chaos, they said, then out of the chaos were born Gaia, Tartaros and Eros (according to Hesiod). And to this day the living is born out of the chaos which bears within it the fertilized egg-cells.

4. Consciousness, Being, Form

Evolution as a whole in the cycle (system) of the seven aeons passes through three stages (conditions): that of consciousness, that of life (being) and that of form. When we understand how this takes place we receive the key to resolving the riddle of the phenomenon of human thinking and being. The methodology of Anthroposophy organizes the process of attaining knowledge

of the world and man in the unity of both of these, by way of the separation of the essential from the inessential, the primary from the secondary, instead of a disoriented differentiation of the sciences which is generally tied to the random nature of mere sense-experience. One can say that Nikolai Losky was treading the path of Anthroposophy through the very fact that he made theory of knowledge, ontology, cosmology and religion into structural components of his metaphysics; in this way metaphysics was given back its eternal right to be the science of sensible-supersensible reality. Admittedly, one part was lacking, which Losky was certainly contemplating, but concerning which external pressures beyond his control forced him to remain silent. This part is the immediate esoteric considerations, in the spirit of which all the parts – or subdivisions – of metaphysics enumerated above are examined by Losky in his research. Such considerations are contained in Anthroposophical methodology, and as a result the metaphysics of its doctrine of development possesses the necessary unity and fullness.

If we begin the doctrine of evolution with epistemology, we are following the best possible path, for the simple reason (this reason is of decisive importance for a number of different world-views) that we thereby avoid the hazard of transcendentalism in our inquiry into the sources of consciousness. Hegel made a highly significant contribution to this principle with his logical deduction of the categories. The aims and results of his theory of knowledge coincide in two ways with Anthroposophical methodology. Above all we should recognize the fact that the power of pure reflection in Hegel’s philosophy placed human thinking consciousness at the boundary between two worlds: the sense-world and the supersensible. Anthroposophy teaches how one can cross this boundary without at the same time breaking off one’s connection with the sphere of thinking consciousness: namely, by way of the special actualizing of thinking which moves in accordance with the dialectical method, whereby the metamorphosis of both can follow – that of the method and also of thinking itself – assuming that, albeit on a somewhat different level, we follow the definition given by Hegel to the dialectical method, namely, that it [is] the “*immanent* progression (beyond the isolated conceptual determination – G.A.B.), wherein the one-sidedness and limitation of these conceptual determinations of the mere understanding shows itself for what it is, namely, their negation”.⁷⁹⁾ Moving on a step further in this direction, we discover in ourselves the need to negate the understanding itself immanently, whereby its limitation is overcome and the door of ideal perception, of intuitive beholding, is opened up to the ‘I’. This step that we take extends into the future and also into the past – but here we enter already the sphere of Anthroposophical ontology, which researches

the nature of the dialectical definitions of the understanding in terms of evolution, through revealing the character of the metamorphoses underlying them, which led in the past to world-wide processes of materialization, but are striving in the future towards processes of dematerialization, towards the spiritualizing of the material world. The ideas, as intelligible beings, descend in the evolutionary process to the level of the abstract and then strive back to their existent being (Seienden) in the sphere of the absolute, through which the dialectical form of their existence is also determined, their permanent cancellation or setting aside (Aufhebung).

A further aspect in which Hegel's logic is in agreement with the Anthroposophical theory of knowledge lies in the fact that in the latter there is the striving to return to the initial point of departure; in the words of Hegel, to reach through to "the concept of its concept", the beginning without presupposition, without which the question as to the freedom of the spirit remains empty, and with it the capacity of the human being for genuine creative activity. To relinquish all presuppositions and prejudices arising from existing presuppositions and prejudices, but also from *inner representations* or *thinking*, as one enters into scientific cognition – such a task, says Hegel, can only be fulfilled if one has resolved "to will to engage in pure thinking".⁸⁰⁾ Hegel was not able to accomplish this task fully, but it is resolved in Rudolf Steiner's works 'Truth and Science' and the 'Philosophy of Freedom'.

The introduction of the principle of evolutionism into epistemology makes possible an effective extension of the limits and the scientific potential of both. It is the most convincing way of achieving the union of sensible and supersensible realities. The question as to the beginning of science, the beginning of philosophizing, is the question as to the beginning of the individual evolution of the human 'I', of its self-determination, its freedom. Central to this question is the finding of that element which, as a fruit of human spiritual phylogenesis, begins to free itself from it, to determine itself, to stand on its own feet and thereafter to determine this phylogenesis – in cognition to begin with, and later *in being*. It must only be remembered that we are dealing here not with the creation of the world, but with knowledge of it and, we would emphasize particularly, *with the creation of the free subject*. The capacities of the latter will be described at a later stage.

Rudolf Steiner explains that the element we are seeking arises at the moment when the human being begins 'to think about thinking'. As a result of this there arises in the world that is given to us without our participation, a quite special given factor which we ourselves create. Rudolf Steiner describes it thus: "Everything else in our world-picture is of such a character that it must

be *given* if we are to experience it; only in the case of concepts and ideas does the opposite also apply: we must first bring them into being if we are to experience them." This factor is of primary significance on the level of the beginning of epistemology, because it reveals itself to us in its unity of form and content and is thus void of any predicate whatever. It is revealed to us also in 'intellectual beholding', which brings forth itself from out of itself. Thus "real consciousness" arises, which only exists "when it realizes itself" (Ph. of F.). The way in which the content of the category of consciousness is made manifest in Anthroposophy, facilitates the solution of the question as to its existence. The first form in which consciousness is realized as self-consciousness in the ontogenesis of the human spirit is of a logical nature. Dialectics endows logic with an existence, which proves to be the autonomous movement of ideas. Here we must again turn to Hegel, as he, better than anyone else, illuminated this reciprocal relationship in his dialectical deduction of the categories. The beginning of the theory of knowledge in Hegel differs from that in Rudolf Steiner, but what is important in Hegel is that in his logic *method and content* merge into one. Every part of his philosophical system is developed according to the method of the triads, whose elements are thesis, antithesis and synthesis. He sub-divides the whole of science dialectically into three parts: logic, the "science of the idea in itself and for itself"; natural philosophy, which is the "science of the idea in its otherness-of-being" (Anderssein); and the philosophy of spirit "as the idea which returns from its otherness-of-being, back into itself".⁸¹⁾ In this case science is transformed into an objective process of the self-revelation of the ideas (Panlogism), which only has to be given conceptual, philosophical expression by the human being. This is pure thinking, and is in itself almost ideal 'beholding'.

The same three stages of the movement of the ideas as in Hegel* are also distinguished by Rudolf Steiner in his work 'Truth and Science', but as he describes the phenomenology of the spirit as the phenomenology of the 'I' they are all, as it were, pressed together in a single moment of time**, whereby the

* One could also say: As in Thomas Aquinas, if one thinks of his doctrine of the universals.

** We accomplish something similar when we hear the sound of a word. Rudolf Steiner says in one of his lectures, that if we were to make the subconscious conscious in our sense of spoken sound, we would receive, not a sense-perception, but a judgment, a formation of the concept. If it were possible to draw together in time the tones in a melody and perceive the melody as a whole in a single moment, transfer its future into the present, then we would consciously make a harmony out of the melody. But what we are unable to do consciously with the musical tone, we do unconsciously in

idea in itself (an sich) and for itself, in the process of returning into itself (in sich) actively posits (setzt) the being of 'I'-consciousness.

The objective movement of the idea for which, through long ages, the human being was merely the instrument, enters his consciousness, identifies itself with him, endowing him thereby with self-being (Selbstsein). Then one overcomes the fetters of the simple, pure positing of the 'I' which takes place in the philosophy of Fichte. In other words, the movement of the ideas, which in Hegel is only dialectically determined, receives in Rudolf Steiner the character of *object-oriented* consciousness, which is endowed with the attributes of being both self-determined and a new, given factor in world-being; and this is the beginning of the *real* existence of the ideas in themselves and for themselves in the realm of otherness-of-being (Anderssein).

In this way Hegel's phenomenology of the thinking spirit and Fichte's phenomenology of the 'I' gain in Rudolf Steiner the completion they seek, which is at the same time their new beginning, placed on a qualitatively different level. Here it is important to observe that, despite the unmistakable continuity in the development of thought in the above-mentioned philosophers, this is nevertheless secondary relative to the *determination of the thinking of each one of them within the real 'I'*. These and related world-views arise and undergo development in a manner similar to the evolution of species; their 'evolution as a species' is realized within the 'nature' of the human spirit. Despite the fact that they appear to follow one another in temporal sequence (the history of philosophy), there is an absence in them of any kind of teleologism. But developing parallel to them there are world-views of a different sort, which are bound up with the given character of science; features of predestination are clearly visible in them: predetermination through the givenness of what has completed a process of becoming (the logical, abstract, material etc.), i.e. of the spirit that is dying, formal, that is losing its organic character.

our sense of spoken sound. When we hear spoken sounds we transform through an unconscious activity the melody into a harmony (24.10.1909). This mystery has a relation to the riddles of the 'Philosophy of Freedom', a book written according to the laws of the sounding word; the latter determine in it the character of thinking, of the development of the ideas. Consequently, they have in the book their 'melodies' and 'harmonies', which one can raise into the light of consciousness. All this must be borne in mind from the beginning if we are to be able to experience with our sense of thought the character of the thinking in the 'Philosophy of Freedom', when we begin to regard the work as a collection of practical exercises which contribute to the development of the power of judgment in beholding.

Anyone familiar with the positivism of Auguste Comte can have an inkling, in broad terms, of the development that his system was to undergo in the conceptions of neo-positivism. One can foresee the further movement of the monistic tendencies in materialism etc. World-views of this kind are conditioned by the general course of spiritual phylogenesis where, in the case of a considerable portion of humanity, intellectual capacities are already transmitted via heredity. But, in contrast to the biological, this kind of phylogenesis is doomed to self-destruction owing to the fundamental contradiction inherent in it (between what is of nature and determined by the species, and what is of the spirit and individual), and for this reason it will continually lead the thinking spirit into blind alleys. How difficult – indeed, how impossible – it is to find one's way to the idea of human freedom within the circle of 'predetermined' world-views, is convincingly demonstrated in the 'Philosophy of Freedom' (Spiritual Activity).

World-views of the first kind are created by the highest individual element in the human being, within which the single human being is a species in his own right. They describe the character of the cultural and historical incarnation of that higher being which represents the higher 'I' of the human being: – his most important 'species-characteristic'. In every such incarnation (through a world-view) he has the tendency to reveal himself in his entirety: to lead what in him is *universal and essential down into the particular*. Therefore, when we have recognized this character of their manifestation in one epoch, we can recognize it again in any other, in the phenomena of the spirit of leading individualities through whom the character of entire cultural epochs is imprinted and determined. Their creative activity is always unrepeatable, individual, but at the same time it has *universal human* significance; it is well-nigh inexhaustible. We find this in the leading philosophers of ancient Greece, in the leading Scholastics, in the classical philosophers of the 18th and 19th centuries. Indeed we find, regardless of the uniqueness of such figures and the enormous differences between them, a deep affinity (in the spirit of the 'I') between the three stages of the movement of ideas in science (through science) illustrated by Hegel and Thomas Aquinas' doctrine of the three universals. The ideas of Rudolf Steiner's 'Truth and Science' also reach back to these.

The particular and characteristic feature of all phenomena of this kind is the by no means insignificant relation they bear to the historical conditions obtaining in the philosophical epochs. It is, as we have mentioned, determined by the qualities of the individual manifestation of the highest spirit in the thinker. We recognize in the light of this fact that Thomas Aquinas' way of thinking is, let us say, 'positively metaphysical'. Its character is such that its appeal to the au-

thority of Aristotle goes hand in hand with the theosophical quality in the Platonic *way of thinking*. As a result of this, Thomas Aquinas is able to re-establish in his own epoch the true spirit of Aristotelianism, which its Arabian apologists with their disregard for the individual spirit were not able to do.

Thomas Aquinas unites within himself on an individual basis the dialectician and the ‘beholder’ of the idea; though to a lesser degree than the Greeks, it was given to him to perceive ideally what he had developed logically. It is just the same activity of the cognizing spirit which we find, though in a different form, in Goethe. And Rudolf Steiner, who developed it in a new way, elaborated it methodologically from many different aspects, and demonstrated its logic in accordance with the special qualities of the thinking of Hegel, for whom the dialectical classification of (cognitive) science springs from the fact that “the idea” shows itself to be “... thinking that is without qualification identical with itself”.⁸²⁾ Rudolf Steiner gives this identity a substantial content, whereby in his theory of knowledge the phenomenon of intuitive ‘beholding’ is very close to the stream of esoteric philosophy represented by Jakob Boehme and Saint Martin and reaches back to that form of spiritual creative activity characteristic of the second pillar of Scholasticism: Albertus Magnus.

This is the nature, to continue our analogy, of the ‘selectionism’ inherent in that unique ontogenesis in which the spiritually creative activity of Rudolf Steiner takes its course. If this were purely abstract, we would probably be justified in accusing Anthroposophy of eclecticism. But in the sphere of living thinking we have to do with the birth of the *living out of the living*. In the history of philosophy this phenomenon is unique and can therefore be grasped only with the greatest difficulty. We can make it easier to understand if we distinguish two fundamentally different human viewpoints. Then we will comprehend first of all the nature of creation out of nothing, and secondly, that of the unity of philosophy, esotericism and natural science. This unity comes to expression in the world-views of the first type. Its essential being, which remains unchanging, reveals itself in one epoch as the esoteric philosophy of the Pythagorean school of thought, in another as Theo-sophy, in the third it speaks the language of alchemy etc. And it is impossible to define conclusively in which of these languages more is communicated, or in a better way; everything here depends upon the (human) subject of cognition.

Anthroposophy showed itself to be the first phenomenon of the human spirit in which universal wisdom spoke at once in all the languages known hitherto, whereby it became a new ‘word’ in the spiritual development of mankind. When we come to know it in several different languages at once we draw close to the greatest, long-sought-after synthesis of the views of life and

the world; we begin – to state it in simple terms – *to experience* directly what remained for centuries a secret (or mystery) of spiritual cognition – for a single reason, namely, the self-restriction of science to one language; this was later called ‘the limits of knowledge’. Whoever finds a relation to this peculiarity of the phenomenology of the spirit begins to recognize that the problem of the boundaries between the sciences, between the exoteric and the esoteric in them, is due not to the problem of ‘knowability’, but to that of ‘translation’.

Let us try, with the help of a concrete example, to show that this is the case. Saint-Martin wrote a book of no more than ten pages entitled ‘Errors and Truth’. The first page deals with the “universal principle, or the central point from which all central points flow without ceasing”. On the second page we read of the twofold nature of all things and actions, and on the third “of the solid foundations of bodies; of all the results and productions of all species; and here is to be found the *number* of the immaterial beings who do not think”⁸³⁾; they begin to think on the fourth page, which we will not consider for the moment.

In his commentary on the first page of this book Rudolf Steiner speaks of the principles of the connections between thinking and being, by virtue of which every existence which is subject to coming into being and passing away possesses the quality of extension and contraction to a point. It is possible “to experience inwardly a point which contains everything and from which everything flows, which is nothing and all; which contains the unity of being and forces” (Beiträge 32, p. 8). If we proceed in this way to the Hegelian identity of being and nothing we are carrying out, not an act of reflection, but a meditative exercise, and we gain *the experience* of thinking.

The second page of Saint-Martin’s book encourages us to think in dualities, in antitheses, i.e. dialectically (dualistically). And on the third page we return to the monism of the first, but this time it assumes the form of a trinity. Its highest archetype is the Divine Trinity. Rudolf Steiner continues in his commentary to the book: “Whoever grows accustomed to translate the twofoldness into the threefoldness, deepens his insight. To think the world through in its threefoldness means: to think it through with wisdom” (ibid. p. 9).

Thus the existence of the dialectical principle is potentized in esoteric philosophy, to which Hegel’s dialectic has a direct connection even if we find there no open reference to it. In his search for the ‘beginning’, Hegel is trying, like Saint-Martin, to find the central point of genesis of the world totality, from which one could deduce dialectically knowledge of the world as a whole. As the principal quality of the beginning sought by him, Hegel sees that of ‘not being posited’. In this he reaches through to the starting-point of freedom.

For Hegel all the definitions of the understanding are secondary, with the help of which reflective thinking describes its source and origin, as – so he feels – such a thought-process is involutive. ‘I’ = ‘I’, the concept of God etc. – all these, he believes, are inner representations. He seeks for that initial idea ‘in itself and for itself’, with which the evolution of the individual spirit begins, its ‘self-being’ (Selbstsein). The concept of this idea only has a solid foundation if it is deducible from itself, whereby the principle of the non-finite nature of the Divine as such is not questioned in any way – Hegel, it should be borne in mind, is seeking the beginning, not of the Divine principle, but of the human ‘I’. Hegel begins his theory of knowledge with the category of being, of pure being, which “cannot be felt, cannot be seen and cannot be imagined, but it is the pure thought, and as such it constitutes the beginning”.⁸⁴⁾ This thought is completely undefined and is not distinguishable from anything, hence pure being and nothingness are identical. If we consider the whole world, we say: Everything is – and nothing else, we leave all definitions behind and obtain “instead of absolute fullness, only absolute emptiness”.⁸⁵⁾ This, so Hegel remarks, is the Buddhists’ definition of God. In this nothingness which he postulates, Hegel hopes, like Goethe’s Faust, to find the All. He polemicises with the ancients, who declared that “from nothing arises nothing” or “nothing arises, unless it be from something”, because he finds that in this way becoming is eliminated, “For, that from which it becomes and that which becomes, are one and the same”⁸⁶⁾ Admittedly, Hegel has in mind here only the abstract positing of identity, but through this is posited a development (a becoming) and this development is involution. For this reason Rudolf Steiner takes as the beginning of the theory of knowledge, not ‘being’, but ‘thinking about thinking’. The question here, is to find the absolute in the ‘other’.

Hegel is, of course, concerned with this problem too, as he is seeking the beginning of the self-determination and self- (autonomous) movement of the human thinking spirit, the ‘I’. He therefore combines his research into the categories of being with an investigation into the triad: absolute – being – essence, whereby the absolute is ‘absolute identity’: “Within it (itself) there is no *becoming*, as it is not Being.... it is not Essence which merely determines itself within itself”, “it is the *object* of an external reflection ...the identity of Being and Essence, or the identity of the inner and the outer.”⁸⁷⁾ In this absolute Hegel unquestionably sees the Divine principle. In its reciprocal relation with the potentially absolute nature of human consciousness reflection also arises; this is the involution of the individual spirit, as an antithesis to the Divine universal consciousness, whose first revelation is Being. Therefore the

becoming of ‘I’- consciousness is not to be sought in this Being, but in another which is only in a certain sense ‘empty’: as abstraction.

What can be the nature of this becoming which we are seeking? Anthroposophy distinguishes two sorts of becoming. It speaks a) of the becoming of existence (Dasein), which is the visible universe with its life and its forms, with its (according to Hegel) determinate characteristics: quality, quantity, measure; b) of the becoming of the individual spirit in its involutive-evolutive essential nature (Wesen), in its identity with the absolute ‘I’. Viewed as a whole, we have before us a hierarchical, spiral-formed cycle of becoming, in which, out of the existence (Dasein) of the world of nature, the nothingness (Nichts) of the human abstract(ing) understanding arises, the being in itself and for itself of human thought. It is the new given reality (Gegebenheit) whose creator is shown to be, not nature, but the human being. He is the principle of the being of the absolute in the ‘other’: the absolute unity of being and essence (Sein und Wesen), their absolute identity – the form of the individual existence of the world-‘I’ in the other.

Essence arises from the being of the absolute. Its revelation in thinking consciousness is reflection – the nothing of being –, which is the centre, or to express it with Fichte, “the basis enabling a relation to exist”, between the being of the absolute, its (according to Hegel) outer aspect (here we may think of revelation) and the concept. It is in this sense that we could understand the statement of Hegel: “The essence stands between Being and Concept and constitutes the middle between them, and its movement constitutes the transition from being into the concept”⁸⁸⁾; therefore it also becomes the first negation of Being. When we think, so Rudolf Steiner responds to Descartes’ cogito, we do not exist.

Thus we arrive at the phenomenon of the self-determination of consciousness in the human form. “The form”, says Hegel, “is the absolute negativity itself, or the negative absolute identity with (it)self.”⁸⁹⁾ Such is the absolute within the ‘other’. The power of negation inherent in the human spirit that is identical with itself is so obvious, that the thinking activity leads to a death process in the organic realm – in the nervous system. Thus the abstract principle of the nothing(ness) becomes a *fact of organic life*.

* * *

The reality of the primary Hegelian triad (the absolute – being – essence) is confirmed by the Christian gnosis, in the spirit of which the beginning of the St John’s Gospel is written, or rather it has its source there. In the Gospel we read: “In the beginning was the Word In him was life; and the life was the

light of men.” The life in this sense is a manifestation of the Word, of the absolute; it has essential being, but is at the same time appearance (Schein): as the life of reflection. The latter must become the light of cognition, but its original form is ‘dark’ (– If it undergoes a metamorphosis it can acquire the nature of essential being). Reflective thinking is the form in which the Word appears in the ‘other’. This thinking is lacking in essential being, it is nothingness and the negation of the Word, of creative universal consciousness, of the World-’I’; it denies the being of what is, and exists thus: *It comes to its positivity*.

We repeat the words of Hegel: “...the movement of reflection stands ...over against the absolute identity (of the absolute)”. Its movement is external with respect to this identity.⁹⁰⁾ But it is just for this reason that – as a result of becoming – the absolute self-identity of the human I, not-‘I’ = ‘I’, is possible. This self-identity is what Hegel seeks (and Fichte also). But *it does not begin with the concept* (Hegel’s ‘pure Being’ is a concept); it begins *with the phenomenon of thinking consciousness*. Hegel, too, acknowledges this, but in a general sense. He says that philosophy must “make thinking into an object of thinking (itself)”.⁹¹⁾ But he himself takes as his object the *results*, the fruit of thinking activity.

Rudolf Steiner filled the epistemological gap in Hegel’s philosophy, and in addition to this brought philosophy into agreement with natural science; he introduced into the theory of knowledge the principle of evolutionism. And this is not eclecticism, for the simple reason that the evolution of nature is the evolution of the spirit. Contemporary thinkers are unable to develop a unified methodology because they divide the world-whole into two parts and try to recognize one of them as the whole. In Anthroposophical methodology the absolute is the principle of conscious all-unity. It can only be cognized by the understanding up to that limit to which reflection can ascend; the faculty of intuitive ‘beholding’ can lead us further, but a limit is set to it also; the imaginative, inspirative and intuitive consciousness reach still further towards cognition of the absolute. The revelation of the absolute is evolution and being. In this sense, the absolute, being and evolution are identical. Interestingly enough, Hegel says in relation to this: “The beginning itself is also becoming ...”⁹²⁾

Evolution calls forth the being of the Beings (das Sein der Wesen). They are its involution. As the highest achievement of the unified stream of becoming of consciousness and life in the ‘other’, a unique form arises, whose content is the ‘I’. Thus another phenomenology of the spirit is posited: on its return to the absolute. Here, to express it in Hegel’s words, the being of con-

sciousness and its nothing merge completely and cancel one another. Becoming shows itself in this way to be ceaseless transformation; it continually vanishes into itself as it consumes its own material. In the concepts of Anthroposophy evolution represents the phenomenology of the Divine Trinity, which is the reality of the three categories of development we have described. The mutual relationships are as follows:

1. Logos: God-Father – Conscious All-consciousness. World body.
2. Logos: God-Son – Macrocosm. Life. World-Soul.
3. Logos: God-Spirit – Being (Form). Human spirit. Microcosm.

To begin with, the becoming of the world follows Divine predestination which, as it connects with the world, works within it in the form of the laws of development. By virtue of predestination and in accordance with the laws of development, the human being receives as a gift of the Father principle the body, as a gift of the Son the soul and the life, and as a gift of the Holy Spirit self-consciousness, spirit. As the system-building principle there works in this lower tri-unity – this we are fully justified in asserting – the highest *unity* of the triune Divinity, the God of three hypostases, who constitutes the primal beginning and is thus in a certain sense the *fourth hypostasis – the World-’I’*.^{*} For within him the human being involutes as a complete, encompassing form, as the image of God. Then he “moves on to evolution in the ‘I’” (Beiträge 67/68, p.26); we can also say: in ‘I’-consciousness, in order to come in possession of the true ‘I’. On this path, self-consciousness rises from the abstract to ‘beholding’, i.e. to ideal perception, to life in the spirit, and finally it possesses *the form of All-consciousness* as life.

To avoid the abstract, means, for the human being, to renounce his future. The (evolutionary) becoming of the abstract is unthinkable outside logic, although this limits our spirit and does not free us from error. In order not to ‘calcify’ in the logical, one must become a true dialectician. In one of his lectures Rudolf Steiner formulates this in an especially significant way: “In order to come to knowledge of the truth, the human being must dogmatize, but he must never see the truth in dogma. And here we have the life of the truth-seeking human being, who can melt down and transform dogma in the fire of the concept. Thus the occultist can operate with dogma in the freest way. This form of cognition, this blow in the world of the concept followed by a counter-blow – is called dialectics, while one calls a holding fast to the concept – logic. Thus dialectics is the life of logic, and whoever understands the spirit of dia-

^{*} For the earthly human being, Jesus Christ – who passed through the Mystery of Golgatha – becomes such a hypostasis.

lectics will, when he reaches the higher realms of cognition, transform the rigid, dead concepts into living ones, sharing them among certain people. He transforms logic into a conversation. Hence Plato changed logic into dialectic, turned it into a conversation” (ibid. p. 32).

Thomas Aquinas attempted (differently from Plato, of course) to develop the qualities of such a dialectic in his works. But it was not these strivings of his which prevailed in the history of philosophy, but dogmatism and logical formalism. Kant was quite determined to declare war on these, but he too, in his quest for the ‘unconditioned’ being, decided in favour of a number of dogmas. When he erected above the sphere of the understanding, which can only ‘understand’ sense-perceptions, a higher sphere of concepts of pure reason which are not limited by the world of experience and contain within them something ‘unconditioned’, he held to the opinion that even the faculty of reason stretches “its wings in vain, in order to reach beyond the sense-world through the mere power of speculation”.⁹³⁾ And Kant failed to grasp that this is only right in part – if one considers the nature of cognition solely with respect to content, in isolation from the method. Whether the reason or the understanding is drawing the conclusions is not the main point; what is far more important to grasp is *how the human being draws conclusions*. Dialectics can only be limited artificially through the abstract. In reality, even its abstract element actualizes the sphere of ‘beholding’ – i.e. it appeals to a contradiction of a higher order, where not the thesis but the conceptually thinking subject needs to be overcome or set aside. So Kant actually came up against the dogma of his own thinking spirit and thereby set limits to it. Kant’s failure had far-reaching negative consequences, stretching far beyond the realm of pure philosophy, but at the same time it awakened the critical consciousness of his epoch and contributed, by acting according to the principle of antithesis, to the scientific quest which reached from Goethe through to Rudolf Steiner. In the lecture quoted above, Rudolf Steiner describes the law of transformation at work in the cognitive process, which the thinking subject must put into effect if he is to make cognition evolutive within himself. When this has happened, all limits of cognition prove to be temporal and relative. Rudolf Steiner says: “To see in any form of comprehension only a sheath for the (essential) being, this is an important occult principle. The being must live within us. We must continually make garments and sheaths of the essential being or nature of a thing, but we must be aware that the essential being of the thing is not in any way contained in these garments and sheaths. At the moment when we have found a form of expression for the inner, essential nature of the thing, we have made the esoteric exoteric. Never, therefore, can the esoteric (i.e. the intelligible – G.A.B.)

be communicated in any other than an exoteric (i.e. conceptual or symbolic – G.A.B.) form. Create, continually, forms of comprehension, but overcome at the same time these forms of comprehension you have yourself created. First, there is you yourself; then in the second place there are the forms of comprehension you have created; and, thirdly, you are there again, having received the forms into yourself and overcome them. That is to say: you are first Being, then Life in the forms you have created, and thirdly you are Consciousness in the life-forms you have assimilated into yourself. Or alternatively: you are yourself, and you must evolve in your forms, in order then to involute the evolved forms again within yourself. Thus the human act of comprehension is also Being, Life and Consciousness” (ibid.).

These thoughts of Rudolf Steiner are programmatic for our research into his methodology. In the chapters to come we will be working through them from the most varied points of view. But for the present let us summarize what we have discussed so far and draw from it the following main conclusions:

1. The Anthroposophical theory of knowledge comes to realization in a unity of method and content and therefore makes the transition in an organic way to the science of the ascent to higher states of consciousness; it differs from the Hegelian theory in that it begins less with the ‘unconditioned’ than with the ‘self-conditioned’ being (Wesen).
2. We recall that in Hegel the second part of (cognitive) science is natural philosophy. In Anthroposophy the latter is developed in the spirit of that approach already spoken of in the 15th century by Raimund of Sabunde, who asked that we should “read in the book of nature”. This means that in Anthroposophy we are no longer dealing with nature philosophy in the strict sense of the word, but with ideal perception, the ‘beholding’ of nature, to which her ideal essential being is directly revealed.
3. With regard to the third part of the Hegelian classification of (cognitive) science, namely, the phenomenology of the spirit, this Anthroposophy gains knowledge of in development, by way of the method of personalistic empiricism.

These, one could say, are the three structural components of the method of Anthroposophy.

II The Evolutionary Cycle of the World as a System

1. The Human Being as a System

The world constellation within which the human being is evolving at the present time is in many respects conditioned by the fact that our evolutionary cycle of seven aeons has irrevocably passed its mid-point. As an extraordinarily complex, many-layered and many-sided phenomenon this cycle undergoes at its central point an unbelievably radical transformation of all its characteristics. Their metamorphoses follow a quite definite, temporally extended sequence. Through the last such metamorphosis the human being acquired the capacity to know the world and its development with the thinking consciousness, and thanks to it the first half of the cycle (corresponding to three-and-a-half aeons), now elapsed, attained its completion.

In order to grasp this macrocosmic fact, one can look at its small-scale counterpart, a human life. This cannot be regarded as complete if the physiological, psychical and other processes inherent in it are not made conscious and are not cognized by the being in whom they are taking place. In addition, the life of the human being consists of states of waking and sleeping. Few would dispute that both states are necessary for life as a whole. Our inability to penetrate with our consciousness into the unconscious realm of sleep makes our life incomplete, puzzling, and this we can in no way resign ourselves to. If we accept the doctrine of reincarnation, we begin to grasp the wholeness of the individual life, which consists of the earthly incarnation and also that part of life which we spend in the spiritual world as we move from one reincarnation to another. And there are human beings whose striving it is to develop their consciousness in such a way that, in the earthly state, they can bring to consciousness the non-earthly part of their life.

This is how our own evolution proceeds, and scarcely anyone would claim that it can be regarded as complete and self-sufficient without self-consciousness and therefore without cognition. However, there exists the view regarding evolution of the world, that the human being as a component part of it contributes nothing existential with his thinking.

The position of Anthroposophy in this question is different. It sees the acquisition of thinking consciousness by the human being as comparable to the 'awakening' of world evolution in its otherness-of-being (Anderssein), in sense-reality. The development of the sciences completes the stage it has

passed through and endows it with the character of wholeness by creating the conditions for human consciousness to move across to the other, supersensible side of being, to *earlier* epochs of becoming, where the human being was developing on pre-conscious levels. Thanks to this ascent of consciousness the period of evolution that has elapsed acquires no less than one half of its total being. Thus the development of the world changes in a decisive way when the thinking human being appears within it. In the Old Egyptian cultural epoch only a few individuals who were further advanced in their development had the capacity to think in concepts. But it was not possible until the following Greco-Latin epoch for culturally-historically significant results to be achieved by this means. It was at this time that the quite definite process occurred, of the transition of consciousness from picture-forming to reflection. This was a metamorphosis of the human being *as a species* and it went hand in hand with great transformations in the spiritual world surrounding him. Saint-Martin says on the fourth page of his ten-page book, that in that epoch there arose non-material beings “who think”. Plato was able to experience them semi-clairvoyantly and called them intelligible beings. They ‘arose’ in the sense that they changed the form in which they revealed themselves to man: It became similar – in a certain sense – to the forms of conceptual thinking. In this way the affinity between the archetypal phenomenon and its phenomena was revealed. The concepts arose in the head of the human being as a shadow of those intelligible beings. At the same time the *laws* of the highest existence of those beings were also reflected in his consciousness. Their manifestation on the level of reflection devoid of being was described by Aristotle, and thus arose the science of *logic*. The thought-beings, or cosmic intelligences as Rudolf Steiner calls them, are substantial in their nature. They are living beings, and for this reason the true nature of conceptual thinking, leaving aside its secondary, reflected character, must be studied morphologically, i.e. like a living organism. The morphological features of thinking first came to expression in dialectics.

Things polarize themselves, so that the new can arise, but reunite again in order to ascend in their quality onto a higher level. The same occurs in the dialectic of thinking. For this reason the meaning of the spiritual life of man is contained within it. The human being has the task of re-entering the Divine world and of partaking with his ‘I’ in a higher form of being. He can only begin his ascent if he recreates the dialectic of the descent of the life of the World-Spirit into matter in the dialectic of pure thinking.

In this way we come closer to an understanding of the universal character of thinking. On an abstract level this found its reflection in the Hegelian

panlogism. It was not able to reveal itself immediately, i.e. also in its supersensible reality, to philosophy as such in its historical development, essentially because of its focus on research into the development of ideas independently of the connection with the development of consciousness. As a result of the restriction (specialization) of philosophy and of sciences such as psychology, sociology, history etc. to single aspects and manifestations of the unitary being of man, the human being as an object of science suffered again – in the modern age – the fate of ancient Osiris who was torn to pieces by Tiphon and scattered throughout the whole world (i.e. through all the sciences). This is the reason why Anthroposophy strives, like Isis of old, to gather these pieces and join them together into a living, unified whole.

In Anthroposophy the nature and genesis of individual consciousness is viewed in the full totality of the biological, psychological, gnoseological (epistemological) and purely supersensible components of the unitary human being, whose development encompasses within itself both the material and the spiritual world and, on the level where these two meet, the world of art, science and religion. In the three worlds we have just mentioned the human being has, over a period of around 2500 years, undergone at least three metamorphoses of decisive importance for his destiny, in the course of which he has not succeeded completely in fulfilling his main task: namely, to maintain his self-identity in a fundamentally changing ‘I’-consciousness, to remain a unitary soul-spiritual being under conditions in which all his component parts have undergone fundamental transformation.

The urgency of this task does not decrease, it grows as time goes on. But at the same time the possibilities of its solution also increase because, despite the many different ways in which modern civilization works upon it destructively, the power of human self-consciousness has attained a hitherto undreamt-of intensity.

Of course one must in no way underestimate the obstacles which prevent the human being from fulfilling his duty to world-evolution, if he loses his understanding for the meaning of history, relativizes the concept of progress and loses altogether that ability to think ‘on a grand scale’, which was characteristic of the periods when the classical views of life and the world were created. Let us recall, for example, that for Hegel progress consisted in the world-encompassing process of the self-development of the World-Spirit. When subsequently the need arose to bring this concept closer to the human being, even to make it sociological, Auguste Comte, despite the false general conclusions drawn by his philosophical doctrine, viewed progress quite rightly as the ascent of knowledge on the scale of perfection: from theology to metaphysics

and to scientific truth. In his opinion this process progressively changes the structure of human society. What he tragically left out of account was the synonymy of the concepts ‘ascent of knowledge’ and ‘ascent of the human ‘I’-being’. It was not possible for the one-sidednesses of positivism to be countered by anything constructive even from the side of the latest idealistic world-views, in which the concept of progress took on an irrational character; it was defined as, for example, “the fatal cyclic course of things”⁹⁴ or as “eternal recurrence” (Nietzsche).

In Anthroposophy the evolutionary process is regarded as progressive in the sense that, as it proceeds, new forms of *consciousness-being* are born. In them the self-development of the absolute spirit is objectified in a manner corresponding to its essential being. The logical process is the first manifestation of this self-development in the ‘other’, and it is immanent to the being of the subject. In this way the panlogism of Hegel is ontologized in Anthroposophical gnoseology (epistemology), where it is thought through in the sense of progressive evolution.

Progress is intrinsic to both evolution and involution; for this reason its character changes as a result of the transformations that take place in their reciprocally determined unity. One of these transformations occurred with the transition from the fourth (Greek) to the fifth (present) cultural epoch. At that time the evolutive and the involutive in the relation ‘world – man’ began to exchange places, their lemniscatory metamorphosis occurred, as a result of which the relation ‘inner – outer’ in the ontogenesis of the ‘I’ switched into its opposite. This process was the projection of a macrocosmic culmination (Vollendung) on the earthly plane, which had already begun in the old Atlantean root-race. Then our evolutionary cycle *began* to enter its middle phase.

In the cultural epochs of the fifth, post-Atlantean root-race* this macrocosmic process assumed a cultural-historical character and began to reach its completion in the human spirit. Thus cultural-historical development became progressive because the human being, gradually unfolding his self-consciousness, lays in the course of this development the foundation-stone of his own individual evolution (thereby determining the character of the cultural-historical development); as a result of this, a number of qualities which were hitherto hereditary in this or that group, emerge in the individual human being. The individual begins to make the transition, within himself, towards the unity of his phylo- and ontogenetic being in its working in soul and spirit. In this

* For the content of the term ‘root race’ (composed of seven sub-races, or cultural epochs, the existing evolutionary unit), see GA 11 and 13.

way the parts of the well-known identity of Fichte alter their positions. What was formerly ‘I’= not-‘I’ is now the equation not-‘I’ = ‘I’. In the first case, the following applied in objective evolution: If the ‘I’ (i.e. the World-‘I’) is posited, then there is a human, earthly ‘I’ (ich) which realizes itself in the experience of concept and percept. The position now is as follows: If the ‘I’ (ich) – i.e. the not-‘I’ from the standpoint of the World-‘I’ – is posited (and undergoes an evolution), then there is an ‘I’, i.e. the processes in the first involutes a second, which becomes an ever higher ‘I’ of the human being.

This is the nature of the metamorphosis through which the human being passes by virtue of the changing relationship between him and the world. The outer, objective evolution of the world, whose fruits the human being received into himself through long periods of time, became a special characteristic in him: the ability to think in concepts and thus to know the world. He began to project outwards his formerly involutive process through the motives of activity. And then arose the question as to the possibility of freedom, of self-determination in the ‘I’ (ich).

In the metamorphosis described here three of the categories of development we are considering are active: evolution, human being, consciousness. Fundamentally speaking, this triad is the same as that which underlies Hegel’s science of logic (the logic of development, we could say): Being – Becoming – Not-being. All that we have done is to lend the Hegelian triad a character that is more suited to the elaboration of universal and not merely logical conceptions of evolution. This triad – it is very important for us to understand this – forms the central member (Glieder) of the triune human being consisting of body, soul and spirit (Fig. 3). His evolution proceeds in two stages: Firstly, the world-encompassing essential spiritual Being who rules as the creative principle raises, on the basis of the body (which is threefold), the human soul up to that level where the principle that is external to it and by which it is determined – the processes of nature, of revelation, the imaginations of group-consciousness – attain their culmination. In the second stage the human being develops, through the process whereby the soul is structured as a tri-unity of feelings, thoughts and expressions of will, a spirit with the capacity to determine (Ger. condition) itself. He emerges as thinking ‘I’-consciousness and as a lower, everyday, waking ‘I’ (ich). Then the World-principle begins to enter (cross over into) the human being: into his soul, his spirit, his ‘I’ emerges as thinking ‘I’-consciousness.

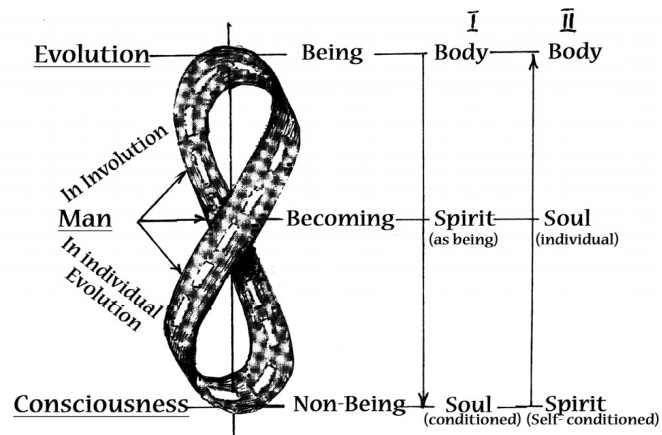


Fig. 3

The 'system' character of what is shown in the Figure becomes apparent when we project it onto the evolution of the world. It consists, as we know, of seven aeons. In the course of the first three there was formed – and thereafter developed – the triune body, not only of man but also of the world; and man was a macrocosmic entity. Beginning with the earthly (fourth) aeon, the human body underwent a development corresponding to the individual 'I', and therefore separated itself from the world with respect to a number of characteristics. The human being developed the triune soul within the triune body. But already in the earthly aeon the human being is overshadowed from above by the triune spirit, as the permanently cosmic aspect of his triune body: Spirit-man, Life-spirit and Spirit-self or, as they are called in the old esotericism, Atma, Buddhi, Manas. In the course of the three future aeons the human being comes into possession of these as an individual. In order to establish a connection with them, it is necessary for him to develop an individual, higher 'I' in the earthly aeon, and this means: to become a free individuality, to be able to set oneself moral goals which can be *involved by the universe as a whole*. Understood in this sense, the human being is the *central system-object* of our evolutionary cycle and thus the measure of all things. He has been born out of the unity of the world. It was his development which predetermined the individualizing and therefore differentiating activity of the nature-process, which extends to the soul-organism of man. Having come to life in the soul and, to some degree, also in the spirit of the human being, nature rose to a higher level, came into contradiction with itself and served as a basis for the emergence of the dualism between the world and the 'I' in man. In the future these

opposite parts of a unitary whole will be reunited thanks to the fact that the human being in his *individual* spirit takes possession of the species-nature of humanity, a part of which he once was, and becomes a species in his own right, identifies with his archetype, the 'ur'-phenomenon, brings to expression his 'world-idea', which is 'the free spirit' and becomes one with it. The overall picture of the system 'man' which we arrive at in this case, is represented in Fig. 4.

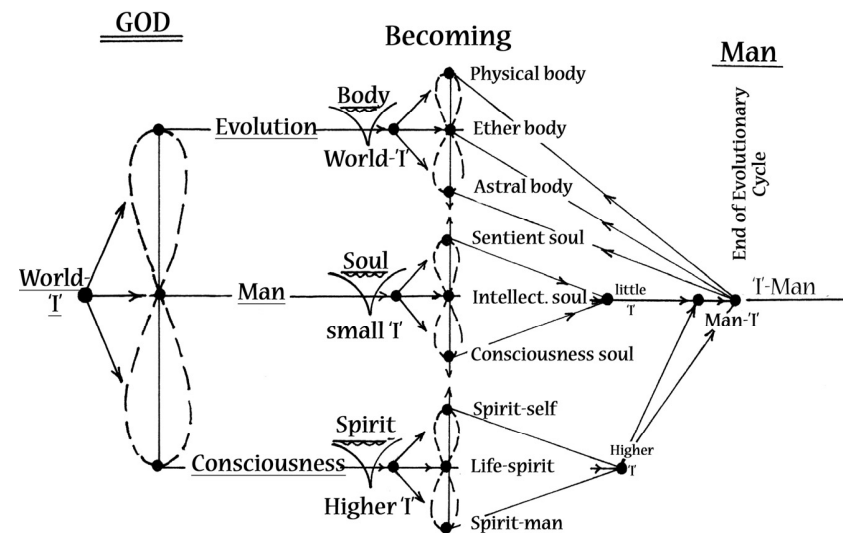


Fig. 4 The System 'Man'

As a system the human being has a multiplicity of sub-systems. All the processes within them bear, by virtue of the basic law of the system as a whole, the character of threefold metamorphoses. In the process of becoming, the threefold principle of lemniscatory metamorphoses grows to a sevenfoldness, returning to threefoldness again, and from thence to unity.

2. The Three Stages of the Metamorphosis of Consciousness

If one is trying to understand the structure, existence and development of the world, its spheres and kingdoms and finally the role of the human being within it, then one must bear in mind that the laws at work in the world on a macro-level come to expression on all levels of being, without exception. For this reason, the higher planes of existence, metamorphosing themselves, are projected onto the lower. This is summed up in the word of the ancients: As above, so below.

In our Foreword we touched upon the theme of the three metamorphoses of man as a species. The most important aspect of these for us is the way in which cosmic structural principles appear in the laws at work in human consciousness. We will not dwell here on the first metamorphosis, as a result of which man developed into a being with an upright gait. It is enough to recall that through this the conditions were created for the development of man into a thinking being. Also in his further development everything was kept in movement through the power of the metamorphoses, of qualitative transformations. An especially important one came to the fore through the birth of Greek philosophy.

Materialistic science tries to demonstrate the existence of reflective thinking in the distant past, in the civilizations of Mesopotamia, of ancient Egypt and America, but in so doing, it ignores the obvious fact, reflected in many cultural monuments, that the thinking of the men at that time had a mythological picture quality and shows signs of being determined by the world of Imagination. Their mythologies did not arise on the basis of a naïve deification of nature prompted by fear of its manifestations. They were created by the initiated priests and fulfilled the role of a remarkable ‘gnoseology’, which was adapted to the state of consciousness of the mass of ordinary people. This consciousness had the character of perception and lived in the process of self-identification with the mythological pictures; it was nourished by semi-clairvoyant supersensible visions and projected these onto the plane of earthly experience.

If we go five or six millennia back into the past, we find the consciousness of the human beings there filled for the most part with supersensible experiences. The world of sense reality presented itself to man as though in a fog, in the shape of a dream which was condensed out of what was perceived supersensibly. For this reason the individual human being was helpless in all life-situations and needed the continuous firm guidance of those who were in advance of their time. The human being of antiquity came to know of himself largely by indirect means, through the group-life of the community to which he belonged. For him this served, so to speak, as a *mirror* of self-knowledge. He perceived all the phenomena of the surrounding world as a direct consequence of events occurring in the supersensible world. His consciousness was truly perceptive, as he saw supersensibly the essential being of things. Through his identification with this, he experienced each phenomenon as a part of some higher totality. Such was this remarkable ‘monism of life’ of men in ancient times.

The force that separated the individual from the group lay in the changes that took place in the world of his perceptions. The perceptions began to assume an ever more sensible character and their supersensible part faded increasingly. This process went hand in hand with a closer union of the physical body with the ether and astral bodies. This meant that in the human being a strengthening of the involutive process was taking place. He began to take in through his sense-organs the world given to him in perceptions, but on the other hand concepts, as shadows of intelligible beings, began to arise in his inner being as a counterpart to the percepts. Through connecting the one with the other, the human being began to develop a soul-life *of his own*. He could now have *knowledge* of his earlier visions; their supersensible being now turned into the mythological content which he was able to connect with his experience of sense-perception, thereby acquiring knowledge of its essential content. This was the foundation of Greek culture. The human being of that time who saw, let us say, a running brook *knew* the name of its elementary divinity, but did not himself see this being.

For this reason a huge Pantheon of Gods, demigods and nature-spirits built up in antiquity. These are direct forerunners of the subsequent ‘Pantheon’ of categories and concepts of philosophy, which in their essential nature are all real and are only devoid of being in their manifestation to reflective thinking. Where in later times people strove to preserve, at least in part, their essential ‘being-nature’, there arose the concepts of mysticism, of occultism, of alchemy, of the magic of numbers and also the remarkable form of artistic representation – icon paintings.

The human being undergoes a colossal metamorphosis in this process of reorientation of the factors of development. And if one learns to grasp the meaning of cultural history these evolutionary changes become clearly visible. It is therefore worth comparing, for example, the heroes of Homer’s ‘Iliad’ with the participants in the Socratic dialogues, looking particularly at the way they relate to each other, and it becomes clear at once that we have to do with two completely different types of human being.* Even amongst the pupils of Socrates the differences in their way of thinking (not the extent of their knowledge) are so pronounced that in our time they could be compared to the difference between young people and adults.

Let us consider a telling example of this. In the dialogue ‘The Symposium’ we are shown how Socrates is trying (as he always does) to awaken in his pupils conceptual thinking, to which, as he well foresees, the future of the world

* Odysseus is clever, but he is archetypal.

belongs. He urges them to elaborate the *concept* of love. But the questions asked by Socrates to point the way, are answered in the language of mythology. His pupils are not able to think through the questions and transform them into concepts, and they use them as inner representations based on sense-perception. Thus Phaidros says with enthusiasm to Socrates that “Eros is a mighty God ... especially because of his *origin*. Since it is an honourable thing, that he is one of the oldest Gods”. In these words one hears, unquestionably, a striving to develop conceptual judgments, which was not yet the case in the epoch of Homer and still less before him, at a time when the myths were related to the people as, quite simply, a preparation for cultic rituals. In the words of Phaidros an individual element drawn from his own life-experience, and not fixed in one direction, is present. This appears still more strongly in Pausanias, who reasons as follows: “For if there were only *one* Eros, it would be a wonderful thing. But there is not only one ... without Eros [there would be] no Aphrodite”; and then there is a lower, “base” Eros. – This is without question already the beginning of dialectics and philosophical ethics. In the spirit of the latter, Agathon says: “Eros ... is the happiest among them [the Gods], because he is the most beautiful and the best” etc.

Thus the Greeks give direct evidence of the beginning of the intellectualizing of their Divinely-imbued pictorial thinking. Already here we find indications of the approaching, scientific thinking with its methods of classification, its knowledge of objects in their development, its use of contradiction etc. But in these Greeks we do not, as yet, find concepts. Only few know how to operate with them. One of them is Socrates himself. For pedagogical reasons he is forced to subordinate himself to his pupils’ way of thinking, but his questions have a philosophical character: “Is the being of Eros such that he is the love experienced by someone (in particular) or by no-one? ... and does [love] desire and love what it desires and loves, when it has this, or when it does not have it? ... Does it not merely appear to be so, but is it not necessarily the case that the subject of desire desires what it is in need of, and does not desire when it is not in need?” The qualitative transition from one type of culture to another which took place in ancient Greece flowed into the stream of soul-spiritual phylogenesis, and also into the forces of biological inheritance of the greater part of humanity. But to begin with, a kind of evolutionary threshold was created. In the case of those who crossed, overcame it, even the organic structures of the body changed, and those who were unable to overcome it or, on account of a particular connection with the old, did not wish to do so, were forced to remain behind, this coming to expression subsequently in the differences between the cultures of the various peoples. These differences are of

many kinds and one must be able to understand what in them serves progress and what is atavistic. In our time we tend, for example, to reproach materialism and material culture for having severed itself from the spirit, and to point to the spirituality of the Eastern or ancient cultures. But it is materialism which has led the human being to the threshold of yet another – the latest – metamorphosis. The spiritualism of the East is an epoch that has already been passed through by Europe, which is moving in the direction of a qualitatively different spirituality.

The better to understand the nature of this ancient threshold, let us imagine three levels of world-development. On the lowest of these the sphere of sense-perceptions is consolidated. On the uppermost level the transformation takes place of the imaginative world, the world of intelligible beings, the world of meta-history in correspondence with the new tasks of development. Between the lowest and the highest level lies the path of the development of human self-consciousness, of the ‘I’ (see Fig. 5). On this path the human being is concerned with the connection between sense-perceptions and their ideal counterparts. In this way is woven the initial reality of the individual human ‘I’. Hovering cloud-like above the human being is the world of cosmic intelligence and from it there stream into his head the ideas of all the things perceived by man in the sense-world. The stream flows with the necessity of a natural law to the degree that individualized percepts come into being. They are themselves also (the) percepts. The Greek philosopher did not, as yet, reflect them as we do. He wove what was for him a single unitary reality out of two kinds of perceptions (if we take perceptions as objects – i.e. as percepts – and not as processes). They remained for him products of the world-unity, and for this reason the Greek was not yet troubled by the philosophical problem of dualism which has occupied us so much since the time of Descartes. As regards monism, an awareness of this as a problem of philosophy arose already at that time thanks to Aristotle. If we are not mistaken, Nikolai Losky is the only philosopher who succeeded in identifying the monistic traits in the Aristotelian system. In his ‘Metaphysics’ – so Losky says – Aristotle is reflecting upon the nature of two principles: Force (matter) and form, whose inseparable unity reveals the real and essential being. For Aristotle the forms can be both abstract concepts and concrete-ideal principles, one of which is God himself. “The force that is guided by this form is a living Being, who strives towards the realization of a multiplicity of goals, which are only attainable in the process of development.”⁹⁵⁾ The abstract forms are subordinate to concrete-ideal forms: the substances, which are concrete spirit “with the infinite wealth of content of existence”. For Aristotle, so Losky continues, God stands at the summit of all

forms, and “the world as a *living totality*, strives towards this highest form. In its striving towards this infinitely lofty goal and on the way to it, through a series of mediatory stages, the world realizes within itself ever more forms and ever higher ones, which raise it onto the level of steadily-growing spirituality. The process is such that matter (force) assumes above all the forms of elementary substances: earth, water, air, fire. At a further stage it incorporates into itself – without leaving these forms behind, but as a completion of them and on the foundation which they provide – higher forms: plants, animals, the human being. In this way the human being, for example, still consists of those original elements (alchemical elements - G.A.B.): earth, water etc.; but the higher spiritual goals make the entire bodily structure subordinate to them in its activity, in such a way that the material, earthly etc. *qualities* (emphasis G.A.B.) are overcome to a considerable degree and withdraw into the background.”⁹⁶⁾ This world-picture created by Aristotle, so Losky concludes, “almost deserves to be called *monism*, because in it from beginning to end every real being is described as an indivisible unity of force and the spiritual order of its activity”.⁹⁷⁾ It is the monism of concrete ideal-realism, “i.e. of a system which finds within the sphere of ideal (spiritual) being not merely abstract ideas, rules, laws etc., but also ... substances ...”⁹⁸⁾

In this way the civilized world in the form of its most outstanding representatives Socrates, Plato and Aristotle recognized in a brief period lasting no more than a century that it was confronting an entirely new reality in which the task was to find the earlier, existential unity of the world and provide it with a solid, rational foundation, by developing the activity of concepts and thoughts next to that of perception, by finding conceptual connections between the percepts and, in addition to this, rising to the sphere of pure thinking. Aristotle was probably the first to succeed in crossing the evolutionary threshold we have described (i.e. undergoing metamorphosis). And the first thing that he did on the other side of the threshold was to seek the earlier (in reality eternal) foundations of being in their new form. He created a system of philosophy whose monism still has features of the ancient esotericism, but he also created the science of logic. His system nourished the philosophy of the intellect for millennia, until Rudolf Steiner extended its limits, developed in brilliant fashion the teaching of pure epistemological monism, which serves the human being as an instrument for the crossing of a further evolutionary threshold that has arisen in the last 100-150 years, and on the other side of which freedom awaits us. Between the first and this last threshold European humanity crossed another threshold which, unfortunately, is underestimated and falsely interpreted in the history of philosophy. We refer to the period of Scholasticism.

Ultimately, as in the case of the world-view of Goethe, it has only become possible thanks to Rudolf Steiner to find a relation to this remarkable phenomenon of the spirit, that corresponds to its role in the spiritual development of mankind. The metamorphosis of consciousness which the human being started to undergo at that time opened wide the gates to that development of thought which came to expression in the idealism of the 19th century and, in the direction that leads from Goethe to Steiner, engendered the problem of ‘judgment in beholding’.

The thinking of the Scholastics, above all Thomas Aquinas, should be seen against the background of a mighty esoteric panorama on which a purely spiritual battle is waged for the Christianizing of the present cultural epoch. The interpretation given to this battle by the Catholic Church in no way reflects its true nature. As a philosopher Thomas Aquinas continually refers back to Aristotle. Parallel to this, Plato’s doctrine of the intelligible beings finds a grand continuation in keeping with its esoteric character. These teachings appear in Thomas Aquinas’ work in connection with the logic and the metaphysics of Aristotle. He achieved, in truth, the synthesis of these two great philosophical directions, and established thereby the principle of monistic ideal-realism, the basis upon which Rudolf Steiner erected his epistemology and methodology.

At the time of Thomas Aquinas the teaching of Aristotle, as it was undergoing its remarkable adaptation in the world of Arabian learning, appeared in Spain. In 10th-12th century Spain, Arabian sages, pupils of Averroes, but also he himself, were teaching that the cosmos is filled with the universally ruling intelligence. When a human being is born, a drop of it flows into his head and fills his body; but when he dies, the ‘drop’ returns to its general ‘reservoir’ in the universe. It follows from this that the human being possesses no personal immortality.

These views concerning immortality were vigorously opposed by the Dominican Scholastics, who insisted that the human being is *personally* immortal, and that the teaching of Averroes was therefore a heresy (see GA 237). This quarrel of the Scholastics with the teaching of Averroes is full of deep significance. The further course of European civilization depended on its outcome. And it would have unfolded less tragically if the teaching of Thomas Aquinas had remained an achievement of philosophy and had not been canonized by the Church. Then modern civilization would not have suffered from an almost ‘chronic’ inability to understand Anthroposophy.

The crux of the matter lies in the fact that the personal immortality of which the Scholastics spoke has been, so Rudolf Steiner explains, “a truth only since the consciousness-soul slowly and gradually entered humanity” (ibid.).

But this highest element of the soul became a common heritage of mankind because, from the 9th and 10th centuries onward, the substance of the cosmic intelligence began to descend to human beings and to become within them “individual human cognition” (ibid.).

Aristotle lived in an epoch when intelligence worked in exactly the way described by Averroes – i.e. it was a group-intelligence. But those who, already at that time, had advanced to the stage of conceptual thinking began to experience within themselves the individual manifestation of the cosmic intelligence. Aristotle was undoubtedly one of these, despite the fact that he regarded the intelligence in himself as a manifestation of the pan-intelligence. This did not prevent him, however, from speaking of the existence of the soul after death. But personal immortality as the Greeks understood it, was something ephemeral compared to the way it was viewed later, beginning in the period of the Scholastics. The circle of those who developed the Scholastic teaching formed the vanguard of the coming epoch of the consciousness-soul. They ‘involved’ the cosmic intelligence, and now that it is actually in the possession of the individual human spirit (this process is still under way), it endows the (human) subject with the strength to become a rightful member within the personified structure of the world. Thus one attains true immortality, which throws new light also on the problem of the creation of the soul.

The view of Averroes regarding the cosmic intelligence corresponded to the stage of group-consciousness. In this case, the human being, even if he has begun to think in concepts, does not actually think this opinion through, but he still perceives it, rather, as something that comes to him from above. Something higher is thinking in him (but inspirations can also have a sinister character). If one thinks in this way it is sufficient to create in the soul a ‘field of tension’ of the intellect and the ideas will stream in; one does not need to develop them oneself. Thomas Aquinas spoke of them as ideas ‘before the things’. Kant defined them as existing a priori. The idea of faith (belief) is an idea a priori and is entirely positive, but only if it is put forward in connection with Christ, the God of the human ‘I’. He it is who says: “Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed” (John 20, 29).

In the Mystery of Christ becoming Man, the higher, universal idea of the human being (Pilate: Ecce homo) united with earthly man, with the result that the intelligible world entered into an immanent connection with the individual human spirit. The ideas pressed down into the thinking human being, just as in evolution, from its beginning, they had pressed down continually into the kingdoms of nature, which were being condensed out of them. The ideas ‘in the things’ and in the human being became two parts of a single identity,

which are only distinct from one another in the form in which they come to manifestation; for this reason it has become possible to come to know the ideas in the things of the world through perceiving them ideally. This fact, which signified a radical change in the constellation of man within the structure of the world as a whole, even the Scholastics tried to understand and express conceptually. For the human being it was equivalent to that threshold beyond which the epoch of intellectualism, of the bare and naked understanding, began (which was sensed very well by the opponents of the Scholastics, the nominalists).

The epoch of the consciousness-soul was approaching. The Scholastics prepared the ground for it in such a way that, even under the conditions of prevailing intellectualism, knowledge remained alive of the reality of the world of ideas, awareness of the fact that the human being, in freeing them from the things, creates a *new* reality in the world. But it turned out that Scholasticism became locked in behind the walls of the Church, where to this day appeal is made to the group-consciousness, to Averroes in fact. The transformation of ecclesiastical Scholasticism into a doctrine of faith assured Averroes’ victory over it throughout the world, and this became a gigantic obstacle on the path to the true spiritual emancipation of the personality, on the path of the cosmic fact of the descent of the Pan-Sophia into the individual ‘I’ of the human being, and thus on the path to an understanding of the Christ impulse.

In this process, Lucifer was at work. And this led, initially within the Church, to a counter-blow of Ahrimanic forces, stretching from Roscelin (11th century) via Occam (14th century) to Guarez (end of 16th century); thereafter all the conditions were given for the appearance of materialism and positivism. What the nominalists had not brought to a conclusion was completed by Leibniz, Descartes and others, who fought against Scholasticism in its – to express it in modern terms – ecclesiastical “packaging”.

Within the stream of nominalism-positivism the question as to personal immortality was quite simply dropped. Through the working of Ahrimanic forces the cosmic intelligence in man came into a perilous situation. It had descended, in order then to ascend anew into spiritual heights and draw the human being upwards with it. By uniting it with the earth in the form of abstract reason, Ahriman strives to gain it for himself and drag it down into the anti-world of sub-natural forces. Since the end of Kali-Yuga the human being has been faced with the task of finding a relation to intelligence in ideal perception, and for this certain transformations in soul, spirit and body are necessary. But the return to a ‘beholding’ of the thought-beings must occur on a purely

individual basis. Rudolf Steiner made the crossing of this threshold possible for culture and civilization as a whole (Fig. 5).

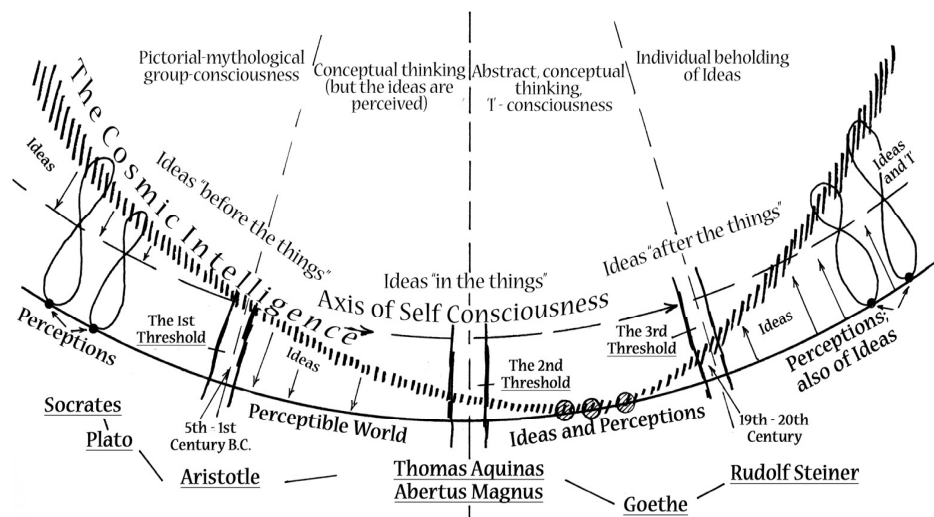


Fig. 5

It has thus become clear for us that for a period of around three millennia a continuous forming of the individual human consciousness, of self-consciousness, has been taking place. It represents a kind of spiritual birth, as a result of which the human 'I'-spirit acquires the character of wholeness or totality. Its birth is the outcome of three metamorphoses, through which virtually everything is conditioned which happens to mankind on a historical, spiritual, social, political and other levels. All of this has its ur-phenomenal source in these metamorphoses, the beginning of its causal connections.

The cultural milieu unquestionably works back upon the human being, but here it is crucial to understand that the human being in his reciprocal relation with his environment has to do with his own activity and its fruits – that is to say, his development takes on a self-determining (conditioning) character and follows the law of the 'type' of world-evolution: in the interplay of evolution, involution and creation out of nothing.

Rudolf Steiner thought through with great thoroughness this problem of the self-determination of the spirit (the motive of activity). He showed that the crux of the matter lies in the way we answer the fundamental epistemological question: Can thinking consciousness be self-determining? The answer to this question must be sought with the combined forces of philosophy and psychol-

ogy, calling in at a certain stage the results of supersensible cognition – i.e. out of the totality of human knowledge and being.

There exists an axiom that has long been accepted, according to which the limits of logic are determined by the formal rules of thinking. In the opinion of Kant logic owes its success to the fact that "it has the right, indeed the obligation, to abstract from all the objects of cognition and the differences between them".⁹⁹⁾ But neither Kant nor Hegel nor all the other philosophers noticed – nor did they wish to notice – that *the forms of the understanding can themselves change*. And if, as Kant maintains, logic since the age of Aristotle has taken neither a step forwards nor a step backwards, then it does not follow from this at all that this will always be the case. Only the logic of abstract thinking remains unchanged, but if thinking changes then logic must *unavoidably* change also.

However, this does not mean in any way that a blurring of the boundaries of the sciences will immediately follow, which, as Kant rightly observes, is "not a growth but a distortion of the sciences".¹⁰⁰⁾ But one must distinguish between a mixing-up of the sciences and their mutual fructification. When quantum mechanics and relativity theory wish to enter into a symbiosis with eastern philosophy, then this amounts to a blurring of the boundaries of the sciences.* But if Eduard von Hartmann and Schopenhauer turn their attention to the philosophy of the unconscious and thereby infringe the limits of the logic laid down by Kant, then we have to do with a legitimate extension of scientific inquiry. Equally justified scientifically is Losky's demonstration of the intuitive nature of thinking.

Nor can we speak of a blurring of the limits of science if we recognize that the human being is an 'integral part of the world', and ask: And what sort of world is it? – A material world, a 'variation'-world, or a unitary world in its sensible-supersensible reality?

3. The Christology of Dialectics

The cultural-historical process crowned the objective evolution of the human being through the emergence of that form of the individual spirit which is founded upon conceptual thinking. In it there is a repetition of the macro-laws governing the natural and then soul-spiritual phylogenesis of the past, in the

* Indian (Hindu) philosophy is esoteric through and through; it is based on the perception of the ideas and is not in the slightest degree developed by way of logic. It was only later that the attempt was made to imbue it with logic.

laws of logic. The abstract nature of logic is employed by the ontogenesis of self-consciousness, which, in each of its phases, creates a synthesis of the elements of earlier spiritual phylogenesis with the elements of its future conditions. Thus functions, and therefore exists, a momentary point of the lower 'I' when it forms inner representations and thinks dialectically.

The macrocosmic phylogenesis of the human being has as its foundation the Divine consciousness, in which aspects (Ger. Momente) of the past, present and future are found simultaneously in development and in the eternal, i.e. they merge together in a higher unity. In the human being this sphere remains in the unconscious. It is possible to penetrate this sphere if, in the first place, one extends the realm of memories and advances with one's self-consciousness to where, in past conditions of the world, memory arose or the objective preconditions for its emergence were first created. And the further we reach back into our own past, which is also the past of the world, the more our future opens up. Does this mean that the future is predetermined? From the phylogenetic point of view, yes. In the sphere of the eternal (the enduring), the future conditions of the world exist together with the past (conditions). But we would emphasize yet again that this occurs only in the *Divine Consciousness*, which consists of the totality of higher 'I'-beings. In the process of development this consciousness gives rise creatively to different conditions of *life* and of *form*. And at a certain point in time it is the task of the human being to intervene himself creatively in the process of spiritual ontogenesis. But given that this process in its creative potential represents a *new element* in the evolutionary cycle, how could that which it has brought into being be predetermined in the world-plan?

In Anthroposophy the teaching of evolution, which extends across our entire evolutionary cycle, opens up to the human being his unconscious part, and he gains knowledge of the conditions and different aspects of his free development within the sphere of the conditioning (power) which, in the final analysis, is simply God Himself. Within the bosom of the Divine it is preordained that the human being should become a free spirit. And if this appears to someone to be a restriction on his freedom, it would indicate that nominalism has become the dominant factor in his world-view.

Thus the human being is accompanied continually by his past. It strives to change itself, to metamorphose itself into the future, above all on the stage of thinking consciousness, thanks to which the human being becomes a creator of the future. And the first thing that stands at his disposal in this creative activity is the dialectical autonomous movement (Selbstbewegung) of thought. If we take it up – and this we can only do through higher spiritual activity – we are

able to experience how the world-process comes to completion and in so doing reaches us in its mirrored form.

Let us try to clarify what has been said with the help of a diagram (Fig. 6). We are using the symbol of a chalice. At its boundary on the left, the descent of the 'I' into matter takes place, with the result that abstract thinking arises. This is the lowest point of the descent, beyond which thinking itself is subject to metamorphosis into 'beholding' (Anschauen), and then begins the ascent of the 'I'.

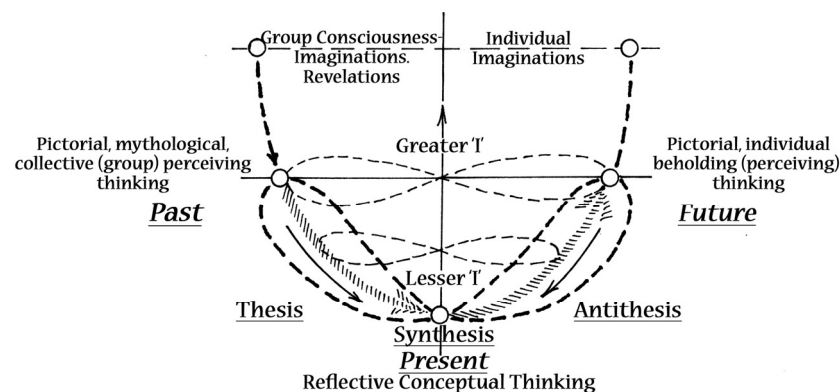


Fig. 6

When we reflect, we are located at a point in the present; in it can be mirrored the entire content of the world that has become (come into being). This is how the theses of the dialectical triads come to us. If they are to move forward into the future they must be superseded (aufgehoben) – i.e. not abolished, but metamorphosed. In this sense the future is always negating the past. Out of their collision arises the factor (Ger. 'Moment') of the present: synthesis, judgment, which becomes for the thesis the form of its existence in the next 'Moment' of the future; the thesis then shifts one step further into the future – i.e. also raises itself above the present.

We have already mentioned that in the past a pictorial group-consciousness preceded the (thinking) reflections. In the future, consciousness will again become pictorial, but on an entirely individual basis; it will become ideal perception. In very ancient times the human being beheld supersensible reality imaginatively; but he was not able to relate it to himself; in the future he will attain to individualized imaginations. In all processes of this kind a decisive role will be played by the higher 'I' in the human being.

In the past the connection of what-has-become with its future was brought about through the mediation of higher beings (in nature-processes it is still so today). The human being was an inseparable, integral part of the whole, comparable to the single organ within the total organism. From the earthly aeon onwards, the higher 'I' of the human being began to play a steadily increasing role in this mediation process (still prior to its individual incarnation in the human being). This early activity of the higher 'I' was observed supersensibly by the human being, but he was unable to establish a personal relation to it; but the activity reaches back to the world-unity, in which past, present and future merge into one.

The human being did not have the feeling (he did not yet possess thoughts) that the world was somehow divided. Only when he had begun to experience his individual 'I' – a lesser reflection of the higher 'I' – did the human being discover that the world as a given reality reveals itself to him in sense-perceptions and that its ideal being is revealed in the concept. A diagram will clarify what we have said:

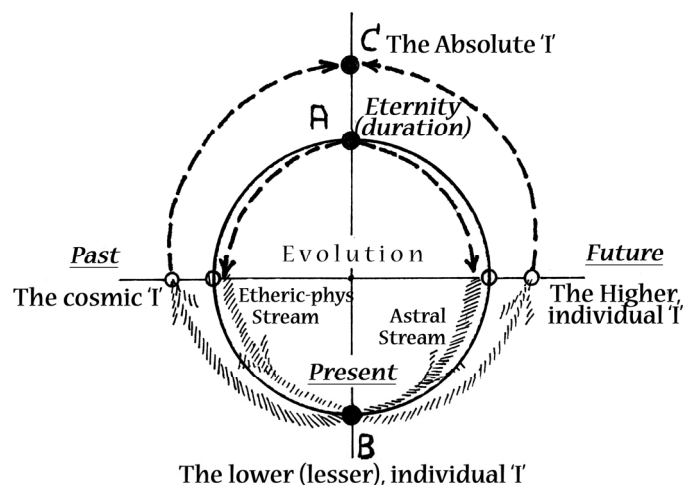


Fig. 7

In order to represent the totality in a picture we have used the form of a circle. At its uppermost point (A) we imagine the position at the very beginning, when in the realm of the trans-temporal the first revelation of our evolutionary cycle takes place. This position is universal; potentially it contains within itself like a seed everything that can emerge and develop in our cycle. This cycle therefore exists, in one sense, continually as a whole, while in the other sense

it develops, also in space and time, realizes itself in the manifoldness of living beings, forms of existence.

This entire phenomenology of life, of form and of consciousness is conditioned by the macro-principle of the evolutionary cycle. The latter, by transforming and differentiating itself in a variety of ways, becomes the laws of nature, and in human consciousness it finally returns to itself as the principle of pure thought. In this sense the human being shows himself to be the antipode of the Absolute: the image of God. He finds himself at a point on the world circle that is diametrically opposite to Him, and this is also the lowest point in evolution (B). The particular feature of this constellation consists in the fact that the human being within it can attain knowledge of the full universality and the cosmic character of being, only in its reflected form and via the mediation of the senses, as opposed to its supersensible immediacy. But thinking consciousness is immanent to this mediation ('mediacy' as opposed to 'immediacy'), and immanent to both is the immediacy of the world-whole. For this reason Losky says that we perceive things as they are in reality. This "in reality" shows up its dark areas, of course: the things that are unknown; this is due to the narrowness of the human perspective, which has nothing to do with the limits of knowledge. Behind these supposed limits is concealed the reality of thinking and perception, in the form of a twofold creative stream of forces which flow towards one another. The stream that is active in our perceptions moves from the past into the future. In Anthroposophy it is described as the physical-etheric stream. The second consists of astral forces and moves from the future into the past. Through the complicated interplay of the two streams the entire manifoldness of the forms of the phenomenal world arises. Their highest fruits, the fruits of the 'I', will eventually be carried by both streams into eternity, within which the streams will reunite (point C, Fig. 7), and the countenance of eternity, of the absolute, will therefore be transformed: it will raise itself to a higher level.

This is the general principle of world development. Knowledge of it is of crucial importance, since it is an archetypal phenomenon whose working comes to expression in reflective thinking, in dialectic. Despite their seeming abstractness and poverty of content they are the expression, at the final limit of otherness-of-being (Anderssein), of the laws of world-being. For this reason philosophy, if it is not to bring about its own impoverishment, must, in the last resort, be religious. And religious philosophy is true esotericism. We will have ample opportunity to convince ourselves of the truth of this fact.

Concerning the beginning of the world, and its essential nature, one can speak in a way that is full of content and of great value for the 'I', if one oper-

ates with the categories of the absolute, of that which is (das Seiende), of being (Sein) etc. But to insist on this method of cognition as the only one possible is a mark of one-sidedness. Another one-sidedness, similar to this one, is the assertion that Faith alone has the right to speak of the Divine. Anthroposophy has a method of its own, which is more fruitful and is not one-sided. And the material of research in Anthroposophy is richer than that in other world-views. All this together enables it to point to the source of the doctrine of evolution in the first revelation of the triune Logos. According to the indications of Rudolf Steiner, the three Hypostases of the Logos show themselves, at the beginning of our evolutionary cycle, in the following form:

1st Logos: Revealer

2nd Logos: Revelation, Activity

3rd Logos: Revealed mirror-reflection.

(Beiträge 67/68, p. 20)

These are the Father, the Son (the Word) and the Holy Spirit. They are on so exalted a plane, Rudolf Steiner continues, that “compared to anything we speak of in the ordinary sense as revealed or perceptible, we must call them occult. So they are three occult beings. They must first be revealed. There are only three, and so they can only be revealed to one another:

The Father reveals Himself to the Word,
The Word reveals Itself to the Holy Spirit,
The Holy Spirit reveals Itself back to the Father.

(ibid.)

Such is the beginning and the highest fundamental principle of the existence and the becoming of our cycle of evolution. All the principles which follow and stand below this (laws) – earlier, later, higher, lower etc. – flow from it and are conditioned by it. The totality of concepts accessible to us is inadequate to express the inner nature of the Divine Trinity. Outwardly, however, it reveals itself in such a way that the Father principle posits what we call evolution, which moves from the past into the future, where ‘the body of the world’ comes into being. The higher, unitary consciousness moves here via the unconscious to the multiplicity of modes of consciousness and conscious beings in the world of revelation. The substance of moving consciousness is the physical (not the material, which represents only one of the forms of the physical). It is ‘being’, and as a principle is devoid of all modes and determinations;

it is indeed the concept most lacking in content. The Son Principle, which is revelation itself (“And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me” - John 12, 45) calls forth the activity in the Fatherly substance, its becoming. It is life, the ether principle of the world, and He bears it into every moment of *becoming*. This life works once in evolution (“I and my Father are one” - John 10, 30), and a second time from above, i.e. from the trans-temporal (“I am the bread of life ... I am the living bread which came down from heaven” - John 6; 35, 51). Through the uniting of the substance with the life, of the physical with the etheric, the phenomena arise. The idea which, in them, acquires its form, pervades them as the totality of immanent natural laws. As it were from the other side, out of the future, which in this sense exists in the trans-temporal consciousness as the totality of the higher intelligible beings – the Divine Hierarchies – whose unity as an ‘I’ of a yet higher order is personified in the hypostasis of the Holy Spirit, the force of individualization enters the phenomena in their process of becoming. This is the power of the Holy Spirit, which brings back to the Father the highest plan of the creation. Out of all that has been created, only pure ‘I’- beings can ascend to the Father.

In order to understand the creative character of natural development, one can imagine a sculptor who is working not with a dead block of marble, but with a mass of living material. It would be developing according to its own laws, but he would imbue it with the stamp of his own *artistic* plan. Something very similar to this takes place in the evolution of the world. Here, the Fatherly ‘material’ and the sculptor – the Holy Spirit – approach the present moment from different sides. Thus the force of the highest individual principle weaves mysteriously and with varying tempo in the evolution of species.

When in the world of otherness-of-being a phenomenon finally appears which is endowed with ‘I’-consciousness, i.e. with the characteristic of a hierarchical Being, then the cosmic intelligence is personifying itself already on the other, sense-perceptible side of the world, and is doing so directly, i.e. not as a wisdom-filled (artistic) natural form, nor as a kind of psychical activity. It becomes a second entelechy in the human being. The hypostasis of the Holy Spirit, which has hitherto revealed itself to the Fatherly consciousness in natural phenomena, now assumes the character of the phenomenology of the human spirit, revealing itself now to human consciousness. Thus it is given to the human being, when he perceives the objects around him with his sense-organs, also to perceive their ideas. They are, of course, not direct manifestations of the Holy Spirit, but they are ideas mediated by the Hierarchies and the entire past evolution of the world.

When the Bible tells how God commanded Adam to give names to the created things, it is indicating the capacity of man to receive the things from two sides: through perception and through concepts. God was preparing him for this already before the Fall, the emergence of a new quality in the world He had created. Now that the human being has developed his self-consciousness, the becoming of the phenomena is influenced by a spiritual working that comes from the sense-perceptible side of the world. The human being begins to mediate with his consciousness the flow through him of two evolutionary world streams. In this case, they do not simply return to themselves – to point A, if we express it once more in the pictorial language of Fig. 7 – but they rise higher than this and create a higher unity (point C). We may therefore say with full justification that becoming in space and time has its effect upon the eternal.

The world grasped cognitively by man is qualitatively different from the world he has not taken hold of in cognition: it is enriched with concepts and with the life of ethics and aesthetics. In its movement in time, that which is *position* and *relation* in the world of the Trinity, becomes an antithesis as a driving force. Through the collision of the polarities the new arises. Otherness-of-being has to negate the natural course of things, in order to become the self-being (Selbstsein) of self-consciousness. Dialectical negation is a movement upwards – from the less to the more perfect; and at a certain level it assumes the *position*, in which the real, personified *relation* of the human being to the higher is achieved, the ability to unite with the universal consciousness.

It says in the Bible that on the sixth day of Creation “God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good” (Genesis 1, 31). What is this if not the confrontation of creation and creator? The world stood before God and confronted him, and because it is God’s creation it is also his reflection. In the future the world will be reunited with God; not, however, as His mirror-image but as a realization (actualization). Something similar to this also happens in the human being. As he attained to conceptual thinking he became able to separate himself from the world-process, to reflect it within himself and evaluate it. And in the future, when he passes over from reflection to ‘beholding’, accomplishes a higher development within himself, he will unite anew with the world that is given to him in perception.

The concept of reflection has a double significance. The first remains exclusively within the sphere of the abstract, the second is opened up to us through an understanding of the triune revelation of God. The third Logos, the Holy Spirit, as it were reflects back to the Father His own creation. He does this in such a way that, like a sculptor or artist of superhuman gifts, he sets the

imprint of the primal idea of the First Logos upon the substance that has been offered up on the altar of creation. The Second Logos, the Son, imbues it with life, the Holy Spirit endows it with form. In this way the revelation of the Father is reflected back to him in the shape of the multiplicity of forms. This multiplicity of forms is given to man in perception. And when the perceptions ‘gaze into’ the thinking spirit of the human being, then they are reflected back in him in the form of concepts and ideas which are imprinted in them through the working of the Holy Spirit. In the process of perception it is given to the human being to gaze into the primal idea of God. This is the process of cognition. For this to be possible, it is necessary to have an ‘I’ which, by virtue of the second activity of the Son, comes to the human being from above. He gives being and life also to the *individual spirit*, and this is, basically speaking, what the phenomenon of the ‘I’ is. All forms of being, all the kingdoms of nature, have an ‘I’, but it works in them from higher cosmic levels. The human being alone acquired it in sense-reality; and this is why he has the gift of cognition.

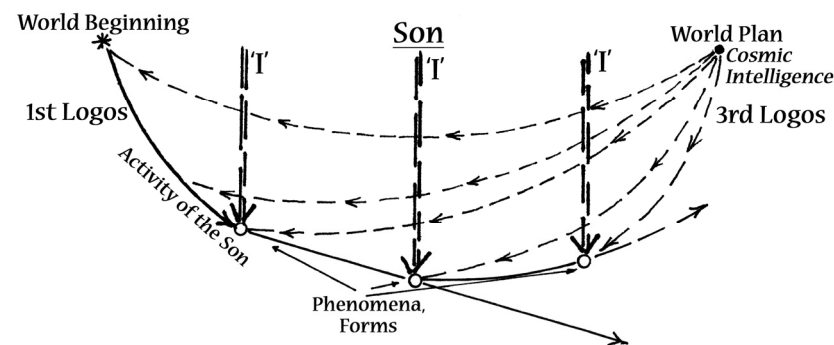


Fig. 8

The third Logos, which creates the forms of being, also ascends and descends on its various levels until it reaches the form in which it can reveal itself in a purely spiritual way. Thus arise the forms of the psychological, the soul-nature, and of thought. The only thing that it cannot give them is the substantial ‘I’. When a sculptor takes a block of marble and works upon it he imbues it with the stamp of his idea, which receives the form of an artistic work. To endow it with his own immediate ‘I’ is not possible for him (we recall the legend of Pygmalion). The life of the ‘I’ comes with the second Logos. The third Logos is the unity of the entire cosmic intelligence; it is the Pan-Intelligence of

the world. When it comes into relation with the earthly plane, with the spiritual life of man, we call it Sophia – Divine universal Wisdom.

In its orientation towards the Father principle the third Logos engenders a form of being of the 'I' that is without substance and can do no more than reflect the reality of the spirit which descends to it. This is the 'heaven' of the lower 'I'. Its 'earth' is the world of perceptions. And into this constellation of the human being the macrocosmic 'I' itself once descended – the Son of God. In His unity with the Father the impulses had once been given to the gigantic evolution which had resulted in the body and the living soul of Jesus of Nazareth. And His unity with the Holy Spirit was needed, so that the substantial 'I' could enter this body. This leaves us with no choice but to acknowledge that the Son is of like nature with the Father and, equally, with the Holy Spirit.

There is an Apocryphal Gospel according to which the voice that sounded at the Baptism in the Jordan said: "This is my beloved Son, now I have given birth to Him." But the one who gave birth was the Holy Spirit. The angel says to the doubting Joseph concerning his wife Mary: "... that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost" (Matth. 1, 20). We know that, for one single time in the whole evolution of the world, the entire fullness of the Divine plan as it was revealed to the Son before the beginning of the world, descended then to the earthly plane. And when the Resurrection of Christ had taken place, the final stage of our evolutionary cycle was reached – no longer in the world of the Great Pralaya, nor in eternity, nor in the trans-temporal realm, but in the realm of otherness-of-being, albeit in a single, cosmic-earthly all-encompassing act, and the Holy Spirit reflected back to the Father the fullness of this revelation, which had been opened up to Him, the Spirit, through the Son at the beginning of the world. At some time every human being experiences what happened to Jesus of Nazareth. But first the basis is laid in the human being for so high an ascent. In time and space the hierarchy of the phenomena arises. As He follows it backwards into the past, the Holy Spirit reaches the Father in eternity and reflects back to him the character of otherness-of-being. In the realm of otherness-of-being there takes place, by virtue of immanent laws, an evolution of species. As the formative influence streams out of the future, it is not possible for what has become to foresee the future fully and entirely. For example, one cannot say that the amphibia of today will one day, after a series of metamorphoses, grow similar to today's mammals. Evolution is a creative process which unfolds on the basis of its immanent laws and also of the individualizing force of the spirit. All the beings, all the phenomena of the world, reveal in their forms the wisdom of the spirit, the idea that has determined them as form and as being. But they represent an im-

perfect embodiment of the idea, and therefore Pan-Sophia negates them. Thus an antithesis always arises between what has become and what is in a process of becoming. The forms negate the forms, existence negates existence. Their reconciliation occurs through the metamorphosis of the less perfect to the more perfect. This metamorphosis is the life of the 'I'.

4. The Three Logoi and the Beginning of the World

The phylogenesis of thinking consciousness contains a deep contradiction within itself. It consists in the following: The conscious human being occupies the highest position in the hierarchical order of the kingdoms of nature, but the activity of thinking leads to the death of nature in him; he descends to its lowest, mineral level. In fact a mysterious process takes place in human consciousness, of movement upwards on a descending scale. One cannot solve this riddle without turning to the highest foundations of the world.

In religious tradition it was customary not to characterize the Holy Trinity, but to give it names of a pictorial nature in order to point to the character of the relationships in which the human being stands towards it. We, too, would pursue our research in the spirit of this tradition.

In a lecture of Rudolf Steiner's one can read the following: "If we are speaking of a threefoldness of the soul we must say Father, Mother and Son: Osiris, Isis, Horus. If we are speaking of a threefoldness of the spirit, we must speak of Father, Word and Holy Spirit" (Beiträge 69/70, p. 25). This is the reason why the human spirit is threefold – also in its conceptual manifestation, dialectics. Its genesis is also threefold.

The most perfect expression of the impulses of the Father and the Holy Spirit which come towards each other in evolution is the mineral, the crystal – the most perfect form in nature, able to exert an aesthetic influence on the human soul thanks to its play of light and colour. The thinking spirit also strives for such a form, through mineralizing its bearer. The problem of the life of the spirit is resolved through the second hypostasis. This is why the central question of epistemology, but also of the theory of mirror-reflection – namely the question of the autonomous movement of the dialectical triads – cannot be resolved without Christology. These questions are, in addition, a structural component of the evolutionary teaching as illumined by Anthroposophy. At the present stage of development it is *given* to us in contemplation in thought, to reach back to our primal origin and come to knowledge of the threefold revelation of the absolute, of the absolute unity which contains no object, by which, as John the Evangelist writes, "all things were made". It is also the source of

all true knowledge, which has to do with reality, with being. But its manifestations in being and in cognition are not equal in significance. Rudolf Steiner says that it is customary in the philosophical and (in the Platonic sense) theosophical traditions to describe that which penetrates into the realm of the knowable as spirit, in the sense that “all consciousness of the world.... also lives in the human being, in abstract thinking. Within himself the human being calls it ‘spirit’; insofar as it works outside in creative nature, he calls it ‘Holy Spirit’” (GA 93a, 12.10.1905). That which works in the sub (or super) conscious life of the soul, stands behind all that is living, and works in our speech, is grasped by means of the concept of the word, and through the name of Christ. “And that which belongs both to nature, as something at first unknown to us, and to that portion of our own being which is akin to nature, this the human spirit has always referred to as the Father-principle” (GA 131, 5.10.1911).

All this stands thus before the human being at the present stage of his development, when he possesses the faculty of cognition. His cognition is the fruit of development. Development proceeds, on the one hand, from unity, whose primal being is the relation between the Father and the Son. Rudolf Steiner says that, in order to understand the activity of that which gives the impulse to revelation, we need to imagine a Being who strives to form his mirror-reflection similar to himself, down as far as the condition of life (Round). In other words, we must conceive a total, cosmic consciousness which has the wish to reflect itself, in the manner of a sacrifice, in the condition of life.

Let us imagine, so Rudolf Steiner continues, that a Being of some kind gives up his existence, his life, to his mirror-image; then we would have an idea of what the first sacrifice means (B. 78, p. 31). This is exactly what the First Logos does, and in so doing he ‘impairs’ the unity. He reveals himself as the universal power, which consists in the fact “that the Father reveals himself to the Word. This is referred to as the First Creation ...” (B. 67/68, p.21). The Greeks called it ‘chaos’. We have to do here with the creation out of nothing. Thus it is the beginning of all beginnings. In the course of further development, creation out of nothing can no longer be a primal act. It arises on the basis of what has already been called into being, and on two levels: as evolution and involution. Thus it is conditioned by the original relation of the first to the second Logos, which can be characterized as follows: “The first Logos begins by mirroring itself back, then it gives its own life to the mirror-image. While in the first Logos everything is directed outwards, existence works outwards, the second Logos has, firstly, the existence it has received and, secondly, the quality [ability] of radiating its content back to the first Logos.

There is thus a duality in the second Logos. The life and the content of the second Logos are two different things. The content is the same as in the first Logos (universal consciousness – G.A.B.), but the life is different from that in the first Logos ...” (B. 78, p. 32). The life in the second Logos is the involuted universal consciousness of the first Logos. But the universal consciousness itself in both Logoi is the same. This truth is expressed in the Fichtean identity ‘I = ‘I’: if the ‘I’ is posited, then the ‘I’ is posited. As in the beginning of creation, so also in the philosophy of Fichte, one cannot derive from this identity a multiplicity of created ‘I’s.

For this reason, at the beginning of creation the *relation* between the first and the second Logos is again *mirrored back*. The Gospels speak of both processes of mirroring. The first is referred to in the following sayings: “I and the Father are one” (John 10, 30); “I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world” (John 16, 28); “neither came I of myself, but he sent me” (John 8, 42); “And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me” (John 12, 45); “But now I go my way to him that sent me Because I go to my Father” (John 16, 5; 16, 10).

It says of the second mirroring: “But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me” (John 15, 26). This means that he will bestow upon us knowledge of the Christ, but, let us emphasize again, not the life of the ‘I’. Thus works the third Logos: As the *mirroring of the mirror reflection, as a mirroring of the relation*. And great as the distance may be between God and dialectics, such also is the initial phenomenon of its law of mirror-reflection, thanks to which a synthesis becomes possible.

The third Logos, says Rudolf Steiner, contains within itself:

1. The mirror-image of the first Logos.
 2. The mirror-image of what the first Logos has brought about in the second Logos: namely, its life.
 3. The mirror-image of what the second Logos rays back to the first.
- (B. 78, p. 32)

In this way, the first Logos lays the foundation stone of a new evolutionary cycle in absolute freedom. In ‘An Outline of Occult Science’, his most important work devoted to the theme of evolution, Rudolf Steiner says: “For one has entered a region where the beings and processes no longer receive their justification through that from which they originate, but through themselves” (GA

13, p.171). Only an activity which springs from love for the deed possesses the freedom to create from nothing (– in future the same will also be said of human freedom).

The impulse of the Divine creative activity arises in a condition that is beyond time and ‘before the world’. Within this condition the Divine creative activity is “the highest spiritual universal light....” (B. 78, p. 33) – conscious universal consciousness and omnipotence. Through mirroring Himself in the second Logos, the Father calls forth the life of the world; thanks to the third Logos the life acquires forms, one of which finally becomes human consciousness.

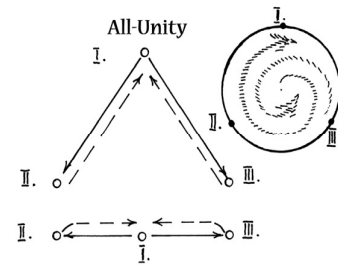


Fig. 9a

Summarizing all that has been said about the three Logoi, the Tri-unity Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we arrive at the following picture. At the initial point of departure (which lies beyond the limits of reflective consciousness) the primal principle of the world is revealed in a threefold form. Through this revelation a super-consciousness emerges, which does not belong to our evolutionary cycle. Revealing itself as a new universe, it makes a sacrifice to which, in its omnipotence, it is not prompted by anything external. This consists in an act of mirroring itself within itself. For this purpose it manifests itself, as a unitary content, in three hypostases.

The most important feature of this first manifestation is that the unity in it has precedence over the threefoldness. And whatever else may happen thereafter in the universe, its unity remains forever indissoluble and fundamental. *Everything proceeds from it and everything returns to it again.*

The first revelation must not yet be enclosed in a triangle, because this is a symbol representing the *Tri-unity*, which embraces a fourth element: the unity, whose symbol in esotericism is the ‘all-seeing eye’. But at the initial state of the world the first impulse proceeds uniformly from point I, moves out to points II and III, and back again: It proceeds from points II and III and moves to point I. We have to do here with an original non-dimensionality of the world, but also with absolute identity: ‘I’ = ‘I’ = ‘I’. It is essential to grasp this concept if one wishes to understand the monotheism of Christianity.

Rudolf Steiner describes the primal relation between the three Logoi, making it easier for us to understand by assigning letters to the concepts: “If the first Logos is the outward-striving creative activity, then its mirror reflection in

the third Logos is the reverse activity of the first Logos” (see Fig. 8). Light (A) of the first Logos appears in the third Logos as the outermost darkness (‘I’ = not-‘I’). In the second Logos there is life. “It is not the life that sacrifices itself, but that which has been received from the first Logos – G.A.B.). The life which sacrifices itself in the first Logos is love. The opposite of this in the third Logos is the absolute desire (B), longing, striving for Logos” (the first L. – G.A.B.). C is the “faithful mirror image of the first Logos” in the third Logos (ibid.).

One can say that the threefoldness of the unitary God is revealed in the second act of the primal revelation, where the initial unity shows itself to be a unity of consciousness (universal consciousness) and life (AB) (see Fig. 9b). It reflects itself within itself (in A) and sacrifices its life (B’) to the reflection. Thus was created the beginning of the dualism of consciousness and life, which philosophy has so far been unable to resolve because it shies away from an ‘ontologizing’ of theory of knowledge.

Moving on, we see that life (B’) and the whole relation AB’ are reflected back not only to the initial position I, but also to III. Thus the Divine Tri-unity, which is known from religious conceptions in both east and west, reveals itself thanks to a further sacrifice, since the second hypostasis is also prompted by nothing external to reflect itself in the third hypostasis. Christ himself speaks of this; “Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again” (John 10, 17). Let us recall that Rudolf Steiner notes in this connection: “The life which sacrifices itself in the first Logos, is *love*” (B.78, p.33). Thus the esotericism of Anthroposophy is nothing other than the esotericism of the Holy Scripture.

In the words of Christ everything has meaning. They contain – to use a modern expression – no platitudes. When He says He has the power to “lay down” His life, then this is, of course, in relation to the third hypostasis; this is therefore the *second* sacrifice. It receives its impulse from the Father, but is not conditioned by Him. Christ cannot sacrifice to the Father the life received from Him, since, in Him, they are both completely one. But the relation (AB’) of Father and Son already assumes a different aspect (A’B’’) when it is mirrored in the third hypostasis; moreover, it is here that the problem of the existence (the fact) of consciousness arises, and then of its life in the ‘other’.

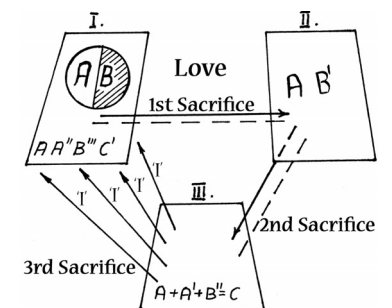


Fig. 9b

Super-consciousness (A) is also contained in the third hypostasis; to it comes that which the second hypostasis reflects back to the third. All of this must be mirrored back by the third hypostasis to the first. Thus a third sacrifice takes place, since the third hypostasis too is autonomous. If in the Gospel the word of the Holy Spirit were revealed, it could sound as follows: All that comes from the Father and the Son is Mine; I have the power to endow it with form, in order to receive it (the form) back anew: To give nature forms and to receive back forms of self-consciousness, of the 'I'; to give ideas and receive back 'beholding visions' (Anschauungen).

This is how the development of our universe begins on an ur-phenomenal level. First of all, there is revealed the threefold *identity* of the universal consciousness, of the universal 'I'; then the identity sacrifices itself to the relation, in the form of a mirror-reflection; and then arises the tri-unity of consciousness, life and form. Then perfect love becomes wish, the light of universal consciousness becomes the darkness of reflection; *contrast or antithesis* takes the place of relation: "And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not" (John 1, 5). When in the process of development the form of 'I'-consciousness of the lower 'I', is born, then in it the Divine Universal Consciousness begins to return to itself. Thus there takes place in three stages the development of the world, the fruit of which is the human being. In the final stage it is the task of the human, conceptually thinking consciousness to make the sacrifice of moving on from confrontation with the object in reflection, to merging with the object of cognition in the act of 'beholding'. Then the individual spirit of the human being begins to merge and become one with the universal consciousness.

5. From the Beginning of the World to the Aeon of the Earth

The universe is not just an organic whole. It is a world-individual and all its parts are individualized spiritual beings. They are called the Divine Hierarchies. The Divine Trinity in the many-membered structure of the world-individual constitutes its spirit. He is the highest spirit in the universe. His revelation was for Him, so to speak, a transition from one state to another. This transition can be compared to a lemniscatory metamorphosis in which the transitional point from one loop to the other represented, on that highest level, the all-encompassing unity and the system-forming principle of our universe. For this reason we find, when we move on to similar lemniscatory metamorphoses in the human soul and the human spirit, at that point the pure activity of the 'I'.

In its ur-phenomenal state, in the World-'I', this system-forming principle belongs neither to the elements of which the universe consists, nor to the

connections between them. It exists in the realm of the 'inexpressible'; the attempt is made to form a conception of it as a unitary God by so-called 'negative theology' (Dionysius Areopagita), in which a negative answer is given to all questions regarding the Divine attributes, since, as N. Losky says, "every 'something' in this world is too small for God; He is the *more-than-something*; negations that lead to this more-than-something point to the fact that in God there is nothing that contains within it a negation; they are therefore, in the final analysis, *negations of negations*" (!).¹⁰¹⁾

Thanks to the principle which lies beyond the world and beyond logic, it is by way of the logical element that the beginning is created in man for his ascent to God, since it is also the mission of the human being to become an individuality within the structure of the world individual. And when God speaks in the Revelation of St. John: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending" (Rev. 1, 8), we have the right to interpret this as follows: "The ultimate foundation of the world is God, the principle that transcends systems and transcends the world" (N. Losky).¹⁰²⁾ God is the Alpha. His Omega is the individual spirit of the human being, who thinks in accordance with the laws of dialectics, through which the emptiness of reflection is negated.

The evolution of the world also took its course between the 'Alpha' and the 'Omega' in the sense we have just described. In evolution the revelation of the God who transcends the world, the transcendent 'I' of the world-individual, was of necessity followed by the revelation of His Spirit (of the Trinity), and thereafter also that of the other members of His being (of the soul): namely, the Hierarchies. The revelation of the Spirit established the fundamental law of development (the tri-unity); the Hierarchies mediated the manifoldness of his manifestations. The aeon of Old Saturn became the first of these mediated manifestations.

In his work 'An Outline of Occult Science', Rudolf Steiner states that the beginning of the Saturn aeon was created through the sacrifice of the substance of will, offered up on the altar of creation by the exalted Hierarchy of the spirits of Will (Thrones). Out of this substance arose the seeds of the physical body of men, which densified into a warmth condition. A kind of 'atmosphere' of this cosmic body consisting only of warmth monads, was formed by the Hierarchical beings who stood below the Thrones: the spirits of Wisdom (Kyriotetes), the spirits of Movement (Dynamis) and the spirits of Form (Exusiai). "There was now a continual interaction between the warmth bodies of Saturn and the beings we have characterized. These projected the members of their being into the physical warmth bodies of Saturn. And while there was no life in the warmth bodies themselves, the life of the beings who surrounded

them came to expression within them. One could compare them with mirrors; but these were reflected from them, not the images of the living beings referred to (the Hierarchies – G.A.B.), but their life-conditions” (GA. 13, p.160).

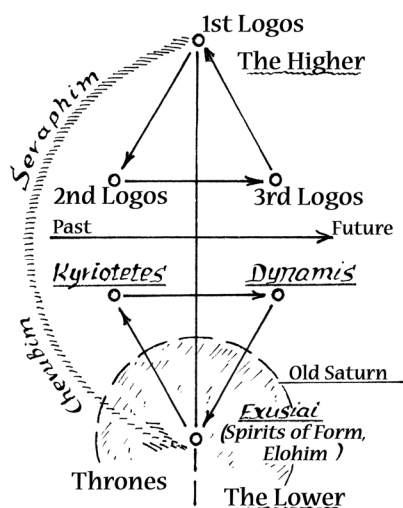


Fig. 10

beings was needed, so that the primal revelation could enter a process of becoming. These were the Seraphim (the spirits of universal love) and Cherubim (the spirits of Harmony; they are also known as the fullness of wisdom). Together with the Thrones they have, as Rudolf Steiner describes, “a direct ‘beholding’ of the Godhead” and all that they bring with them, all that they do, they do out of their ‘beholding’ of the Godhead, God does it through them.... for the ‘beholding’ of the Divine is so great a power.... that they put into effect with immediate certainty and immediate impulse whatever they are called upon to do by the Godhead.... and as they do so, they see the Godhead in its original, true form....” (GA 110, 18.4.1909).

Such, therefore, is the ‘Alpha’, the primal phenomenon, not of reflection, but now of the power of judgment in beholding – the ‘Omega’ of the evolutionary process extending over the first four aeons; in this question, too, it is not possible to know the nature of the individual ascent of the human being if one does not wish to know what was the primal beginning of the world. In that primal beginning we come to know how the transition of the Divine Tri-unity took place from the condition of eternity, of duration, to that of creative activity. The entire ‘otherness of being’ of Old Saturn becomes a kind of mirror in which the higher Tri-unity is reflected. The ‘surface’ of the mirror represents

In the description quoted here there are two things we would point to: Firstly, we find in it the primary phenomenon of our reflection; from the beginning of the world we ourselves served for a long time as ‘mirrors’ for other beings, until we acquired the reflection within ourselves; secondly, we see that there is an analogy between the creation of the world and the revelations among the three Logoi, but that the former no longer has the power of unity inherent in the latter. This is the second (the secondary) creation.

It is not by chance that the Thrones have this name: They create a ‘place’ for the Father principle within our evolutionary cycle. But the activity of yet higher

the beginning of the working of the *law of symmetry* and at the same time forms in the stream of development a surface, or rather *the axis of the relationship between past and future*.

The second axis of world symmetry arises along the vertical of creation, so to speak (Fig. 10). The outcome of this is the emergence of the *world cross of creation*, upon which, so Plato says, the world soul is crucified. Here we have before us the greatest *archetype of the Mystery of Golgotha* (which we can only discuss in more detail at a later stage).

The Thrones sacrificed the substance of their will, out of which warmth arose – the ‘otherness-of-being’ of that which *is*, the will of the Father. And one can say that the life of the second Logos straight away reveals itself in accordance with the principle of the Gospels: “I go unto the Father” (John 14, 28). This is a very important phase which helps us to understand the force underlying the dynamic of development. In the ‘otherness-of-being’ of the Father, mediated by the beings of the first Hierarchy – Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones – there moves the life of the Son, which is mediated by the beings of the second Hierarchy – Kyriotetes, Dynamis, Exusiai – in a *reverse direction*, so to speak, to the Father substance of will, the warmth monads. Thus there arises a process of mirror-reflection in which the hypostasis of the Holy Spirit is revealed, mediated by the beings of the third Hierarchy which are as yet coming into existence – the spirits of Personality (Archai), Archangels and Angels, and after them by the human beings, and, finally, after the human beings by the kingdoms of nature. Thus arises a gigantic stream of becoming, which to begin with moves away from the Father Ground of the world (is reflected away from it), but only to return to it again in the ‘I’. Therein lies the essential nature of the evolutionary process. It takes its course along two paths. One of them extends, so to speak, across the ‘heavenly firmament’ of the aeons, where the Hierarchies begin, one after the other, their activity in the evolutionary process. On Old Saturn they produce an effect on the other path, where the warmth monads are found, and in these various processes arise.* The warmth monads themselves, however, form in the initial stages of evolution what in conventional language could be called a ‘reflective surface’ (space as we know it had not yet come into being), into which the beings of the second Hierarchy ‘gaze’ with their existence and thus *comprehend* their own tasks in

* For the numerous details of these evolutionary processes we refer the reader to the works of Rudolf Steiner, as our purpose is to introduce the methodology of Anthroposophy, and we are therefore citing the material available only to the extent that it serves this aim, and not a popularized presentation of Anthroposophy.

the realization of the Divine Will in the other. Their super-conscious activity, in which *'beholding' is a life-process*, is brought to a synthesis by the third Logos. He is their higher 'I' and creates with their help the multiplicity of forms consisting of life and consciousness, which to begin with are *transcendent* to these forms.

The first step towards the immanence of being-in-otherness was taken when the spirits of Personality acquired an individual 'I'. They were the first in our evolutionary cycle for whom the process of mirror-reflection (albeit not of the shadowy kind) became what we now call 'I'-consciousness. Rudolf Steiner speaks of the Archai as "human beings of Saturn". Like the Archangels and Angels, they came into being not at that time, but at a still earlier stage – the beginning of their existence reaches back, beyond the limits of the first aeon –, but now acquired the individual 'I' (Fig. 11).

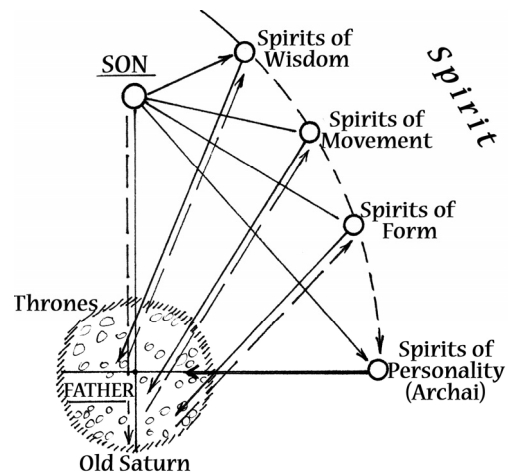


Fig. 11

stage of development that it works like the human 'I' of today. With this they work upon the warmth monads, which are provided with the illusion of life, as life itself belongs to the beings of the second Hierarchy.

The spirits of Personality, says Rudolf Steiner, "lend the parts of the Saturn body the appearance of personality but on Saturn itself the personality is not present, only its mirror-image, the shell of the personality. The spirits of Personality have their real personality in the surroundings of Saturn" (GA 13, p.163). In them it is of hierarchic nature, as they came into being in pre-Saturn times and developed their astral body, but depend at the same time upon what the monads reflect back to them: "They do not merely *have* an 'I', they also

know of it, because the warmth of Saturn, in radiating it back, brings this 'I' to their consciousness. Thus they are 'human beings' under conditions different from those on the Earth" (ibid. p. 164).

In order to serve as a kind of 'brain' for its heavenly surroundings, the Saturn world of warmth monads also had to undergo far-reaching changes. "When the Saturn bodies", so Rudolf Steiner continues in 'Occult Science – an Outline', "have acquired the capacity to reflect life, this reflected life is able to permeate itself with the qualities which have their seat in the astral bodies of the 'spirits of Movement'" (ibid. p. 162), and Saturn began to reflect back soul processes, but of a general kind. Immediately after this, the spirits of Form divide this life up into single, living beings..." (ibid. p. 163). Thus arises a kind of *'model'* of the future earthly human being with his physical, ether and astral bodies which, as they join together to a unity in the human being, form his soul-body.

This hierarchical activity directed to the monads led to a considerable degree of separation of them from their spiritual surroundings. The final entry of the substance of will offered up by the Thrones into the world of emergent materiality was brought about by the influence exerted upon the monads by the imperfect astral bodies possessed by some of the spirits of Personality. This was in a certain way *the archetype of the earthly Fall into sin*. The human monads found themselves between the influence exerted upon them by the higher Hierarchies and the individualized perception of this activity in them by the 'I'-beings of the Archai. *Thus arose the primal phenomenon of what, under earthly conditions, the human being experiences as the dualism of percept and concept*. If we reach back to the original source of dualism we can understand the way it is resolved: through (re)cognition of the (for the human being) *pre-conscious mutual immanence of the two sides of the duality*.

The concepts of the Archai were, of course, pure imaginations, supersensible visions (Anschauungen). And when material correspondences (consisting of warmth) to these arose, originating from the world of otherness-of-being, they were able gradually to relate these imaginations to themselves – i.e. to know that they possessed an 'I'. But for the monads the imaginations proceeding from the Archai were somewhat in the nature of a group-consciousness, and they reflected them back through a certain manifoldness of their warmth existence which emerged thanks to the working upon them of the different Hierarchies.

The densification of the warmth substance led to the result that a part of the working directed towards them from the Hierarchies was gradually *mediated* by the spirits of Personality and this led in its turn to the emergence in these

spirits of the new form of consciousness. This arose through the combined working of the highest revelations of consciousness, of life and of form and can be described as object-oriented because it rests upon the experience of interaction with otherness-of-being.

In the Archai this consciousness did not, of course, have a sensory character, but neither was it independent of otherness-of-being; within their consciousness the workings of otherness-of-being appeared in symbolic form. Only through the formative principle did the consciousness of the Archai become similar to that of the earthly human being. One can regard it as the 'ur'-phenomenon of the developing human 'I'-consciousness.

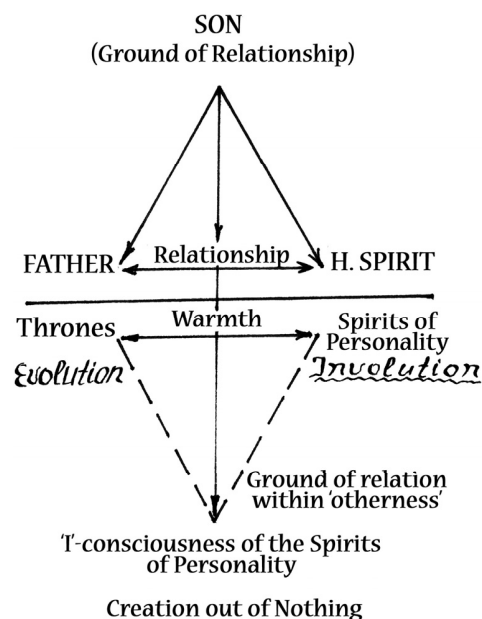


Fig. 12

What the Father on the highest level posits freely and out of Himself alone, becomes on a lower level warmth and a form of being which places itself over against the source from which it has originated. In order to maintain the emergent warmth within the sphere of otherness-of-being and prevent it from becoming spiritualized prematurely, the Son forms the medium (or basis) for the relation between the Thrones and the spirits of Personality, this coming to expression in the creative activity of the second Hierarchy. Or, to be more precise, the Son passes on the life which He has received from the Father, to these

But the 'ur'-phenomenon of the 'I'-consciousness of the Archai was the Divine Trinity itself. At the beginning of evolution the relation between the hypostases of the Father and the Holy Spirit grew ever more distant. What separates them at first is the working of the Hierarchies and then the outer warmth. The hypostatis of the Son plays the role of the medium which sustains this relationship. Revelation and creation begin to grow distinct from one another in the following way (see Fig. 12). Creation absorbs into itself the highest principle of the Tri-unity and develops a threefoldness of its own; evolution, involution and creation out of nothing. As an outcome of this the 'I' of the Archai emerges.

beings, and they direct it to the sacrifice of the Thrones and receive back in the form of a mirror-reflection that which causes the movement of general development 'downwards' on the 'heavenly firmament' (see Fig. 11) of the Saturn aeon and lends impulses to the development of the spirits of Personality.

Thus Christ is revealed as the true heavenly Creator: He creates individual life, for which the stream of evolution merely provides the preconditions, and in this sense He creates out of nothing. He follows His creation on its path downwards, and when this becomes the conscious human being He descends to the material plane, and then shows His creation the path of spiritualization through the Mystery of Golgotha.

In the course of two further aeons – those of the Old Sun and Old Moon – the Archangels and the Angels acquired an individual 'I'. The principle of their development was the same as that of the spirits of Personality: their consciousness did not descend lower than the imaginative level and remained centrally connected with the existence of the universal consciousness. But the feature in it of orientation towards an object was stronger than it was in the spirits of Personality. This was due to the growing contrast between spirit and the material nature of otherness-of-being. The latter assumed the form of the kingdoms of nature, and the human monads acquired their own threefold corporeality and also the seeds of soul processes. The 'mirrors' which reflected the 'I's of the Archangels and Angels connected them more closely with their own being.

The emergence of the consciousness of the three kinds of beings of the third Hierarchy was guided by the spirits of Will. It was, therefore, from the very beginning, will-like in nature. These worked in their 'I', as a principle of transformation, will that had become conscious. Their 'I' was, and remains, a permanent becoming, in which two kinds of supersensible perception are united. One of them embraces within itself the activity of the Holy Spirit which comes from the future. Its substance is astral. In otherness-of-being the spirits of Movement carry out within it a mediating activity which leads it out of the highest sphere into a lower. Imaginations of the second kind are received from the past by the beings of the third Hierarchy; they are mediated by the spirits of Will and are imprinted sense-perceptibly in the kingdoms of nature. In their primal source the two kinds of imagination are identical; for this reason the world is perceived as a unity by the hierarchical beings. But in the realm of appearance the world is continually revealed in the shape of a kind of gigantic funnel with two spirals of becoming, moving in opposite directions. At the point where these spirals merge together, stand the beings of the third Hierarchy and earthly man. And here the past is reflected in the future. The 'I'-

consciousness of the beings of the third Hierarchy is able to gaze behind the surface of the 'mirror' which arises in the moment of the present. They thereby bring to the Father His primal revelation, it being the task of the Holy Spirit to mirror it back, but now in its realization on the path of evolution.

This is the 'reflection' of the beings of the third Hierarchy. They experience the past as a given fact, just as the human being finds within himself the boundless multiplicity of thetic (i.e. expressed in the manner of a thesis, affirmative, dogmatic) judgments; they are all connected with what 'has become'. The imaginations which come from the future to the beings of the third Hierarchy, complete the past, make it conscious on the level of these beings, who were not able to perceive it consciously in those epochs (aeons) in which they did not yet possess the individual 'I', or were just developing it. The completed past ascends to the Father in the form of 'I'-being. In sense-perceptible reality it is the human being who is called upon to fulfil this task.

The 'I' of the human being arises in a different way to that of the hierarchic beings, because his sense-organs are opened outwards and his reflections are shadowy in nature. At the beginning of the earth aeon the beings of the third Hierarchy rise in his heavenly firmament. The beings of the second Hierarchy withdraw, as it were, into the depths of the world, into the heights of the spiritual universe, into the world of the fixed stars; in the planetary system, only their effect remains.

There unfolds in the otherness-of-being of the earthly aeon the complicated life of the natural kingdoms, representing the phenomenology of the old forms of world consciousness, which creatively conceived in thought the becoming of man. The human being himself, who separates himself off from this consciousness and the natural kingdoms, has at his disposal, under the conditions of otherness-of-being, an individual 'I'. The peculiarity of this earthly constellation of man's development lies in the fact that the point in Fig. 11 which, one could say, unites 'heaven' with 'earth' and into which the beings of the third Hierarchy placed themselves alternately, is seen here to be unoccupied (Fig. 13).

After the beings of the third Hierarchy have developed the 'I', 'heaven' – i.e. the spiritual world – begins to move away from the 'earth'. It moves away in accordance with objective laws of development, because the human being with his reflective thinking has reached the lowest point necessary for the descent into matter. His further development will only take place in an ascending direction, and lead to various forms of spiritualization, though first to a refining of material existence. It is also such a breakthrough in development that leads to a crisis of cognition.

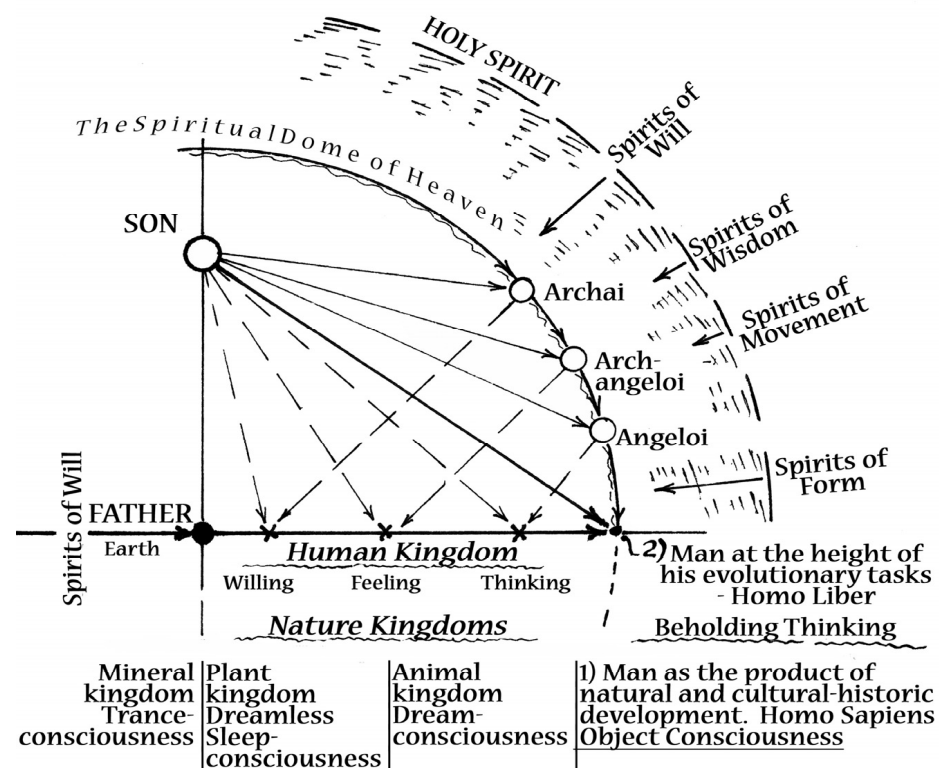


Fig. 13

6. Man within the Structure of World-Unity

In the aeon of the Earth the human being unites within himself two worlds. One of them belongs only to the human being. This is the soul-spiritual world. The second is composed of the physical-etheric-astral corporeality. In this the human being is closely bound up with the kingdoms of nature around him. The life of soul and spirit lends a special character to the threefold corporeality, hence it is different in man from that in the natural kingdoms; at the same time, the life of the human will is on the same level of consciousness as the plant world, the life of feeling on the level of consciousness of the animal kingdom. In thinking consciousness the human being is only identical with (comparable to) himself. Thanks to it the dream consciousness of his feelings and the consciousness of dreamless sleep inherent in his will become ingredients of his 'I'

and, in the content of mental representations, fill the individual life of soul and spirit.

The ancient mythological consciousness of humanity formed the transition from dreaming clairvoyance to waking, object-oriented consciousness. The human being begins to serve the aims of the development of the world and of himself in their mutually conditional unity, when he possesses an individual thinking consciousness in which he develops conceptual thinking on the basis of individualized sense-perceptions. In order to be able to take a further step in our research into this form of consciousness, we must add some remarks to what has been presented in Figs. 11 and 13.

We connect the temporal axis of development represented in them with the vertical axis of world-symmetry (changing Fig. 13 into Fig. 14), and then we have the hierarchical stages of evolution on which the spirit descended to its materialization. At the starting-point of this vertical there is the relation of the Father to the spirits of Will; this relation is that between All-consciousness and form, since the substance of will offered up in sacrifice there took on form in the 'other' – the *primal form*. God the Father was not able to endow it with life, as this would only have been a life in itself and for itself. But the beginning had to be *absolute*; therefore it was posited by the spirits of Will in the hypostasis of the Father. But life comes to it out of the hypostasis of the Son, which is likewise mediated, but through spirits of a lower rank, those of the second Hierarchy. If at that stage the life had come directly from the Son, it would have striven back at once to the Father.

The beings of the second Hierarchy unite with their own spirit the life received from the Son, in order to work in evolution out of the fullness of their essential nature. But in the spirit of the Hierarchies the Holy Spirit prevails. Thus arises that relation between Father and Holy Spirit, into which evolution 'inserts itself'. The beings of the second Hierarchy bring their life, but despite their colossal power, they were, in the aeon of Saturn at the very beginning of creation, not able to bestow upon the sacrifice of the spirits of Will an existence of its own. They only maintained it in a certain way in the realm of otherness-of-being, standing towards it in a transcendent relation. Thus the substance did not identify itself with the power of the higher Hierarchies, and the spirits of Personality were therefore able to approach it, to find by means of it a relation to its spiritual archetype – the spirits of Will (Thrones) – and to become 'I'-beings in correspondence with its form and image, thereby opening up to them the path to the further becoming of otherness-of-being.

In the aeons of the Old Sun and the Old Moon the second Hierarchy develops sufficient forces to endow otherness-of-being with the seeds of a true self-

hood (Selbstsein). But the becoming of the individual 'I' within it (already in the earthly aeon) is furthered by the beings of the third Hierarchy, because they have themselves had (if only indirectly), through their entire process of becoming, the experience of working with sense-reality. They undertake the directing of human thoughts, feelings and expressions of will (see Fig. 14). Thanks to all the combined activity of these, the human being attains at first the group form of consciousness, which only allows him to draw indirect conclusions regarding his own being. At this stage of development he says to himself, as it were: The life which I share with others in the human community to which I belong enables me to know that I am.

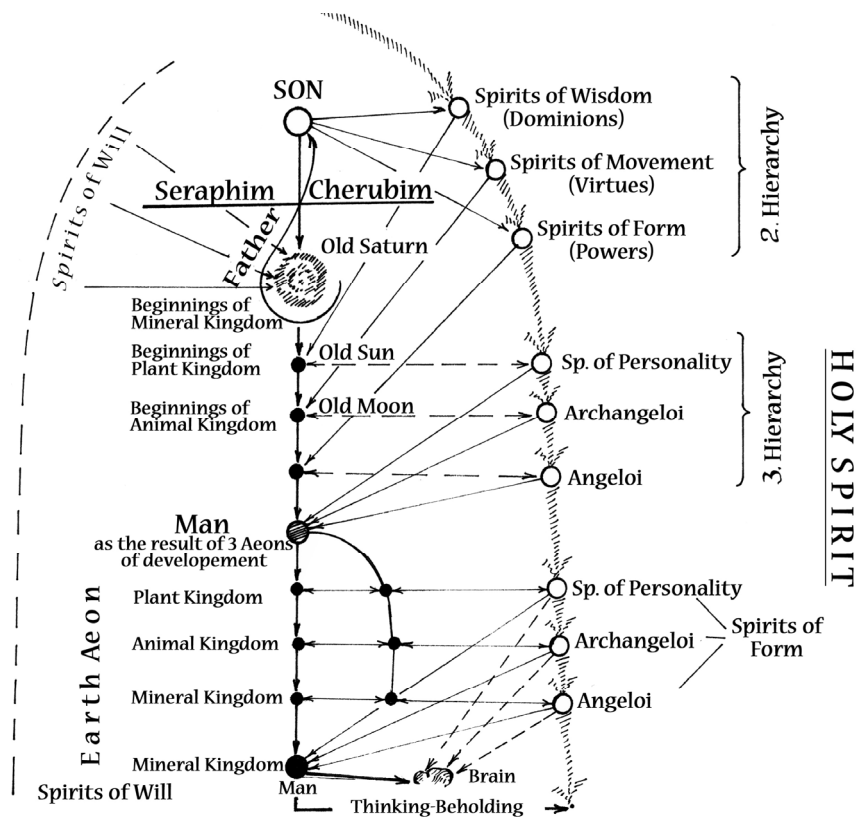


Fig. 14

Thus, thanks to the new qualities acquired by the human being, the beings of the third Hierarchy too receive more exact knowledge of how the world

looks as seen from the side of sense-perception – a world which, as spiritual beings, they are not able to enter directly – and they pass on this knowledge to the higher Hierarchies. The human being thereby becomes the basis for the relationship between the material and the spiritual world. In a certain sense he divides into two within the stream of evolution and on the one hand follows a path (as we said at the beginning of this sub-section) together with nature, while on the other hand he follows his own: in thought, feeling and will (see Fig. 14). It is on his individual path that he becomes the above-mentioned ‘basis for a relationship’. From this it follows that the Christianizing of the human being begins at the moment when he acquires a thinking consciousness. Augustine was therefore right to say that the great Greek philosophers were Christians who had lived before the coming of Christ.

The new constellation of the human being is shown here in two separate diagrams (Figs. 15 and 16). In them we see that the Father World (the All-consciousness) stands before the human being as the world of perceptions, and also as the foundation of his being, with which he exchanges substance. Out of the forms of otherness-of-being, forms of soul-life begin, from a certain point onwards, to grow and to separate out, and within them the lower ‘I’ begins to crystallize.

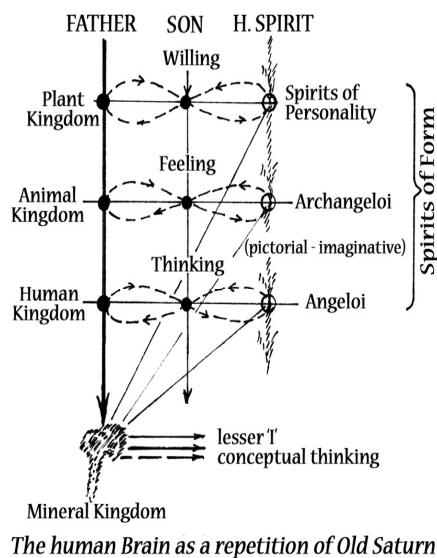


Fig. 15

On the other hand, both the world of perceptions and the life of soul are permeated by the world spirit, whose work upon the human being is mediated by the third Hierarchy and the spirits of Form who, in the aeon of the Earth, bestow upon humanity the true (not the shadow-like) ‘I’ – i.e. they do not ‘induce’ it into man, nor do they make it transcend him; they have the power to bring it into immanent union with the triune corporeality of mankind. By virtue of this ‘I’, the human being was able, within the cultural-historical process, to develop a lower ‘I’ that is devoid of substance, whereupon the question arose: how can one endow it with being?

As the fruit of objective evolution, the ‘I’ that has been given by the spirits of Form cannot become individual in the human being, for, thanks to this evo-

lution, the possession of the Hierarchies, the ‘I’, cannot shift over to the side of otherness-of-being. At the same time, the effect of the ‘I’s working is always to individualize. It therefore came about that the human being, as soon as he acquired a lower ‘I’, began to fall out of existence, to die in the process of perception and thinking, in the form that can be recognized as their bearer. In reflective thinking, *consciousness and form enter into the same connection as that which existed on Old Saturn*, but earthly conditions are incomparably more material than those on Old Saturn, which had a highly spiritual character.

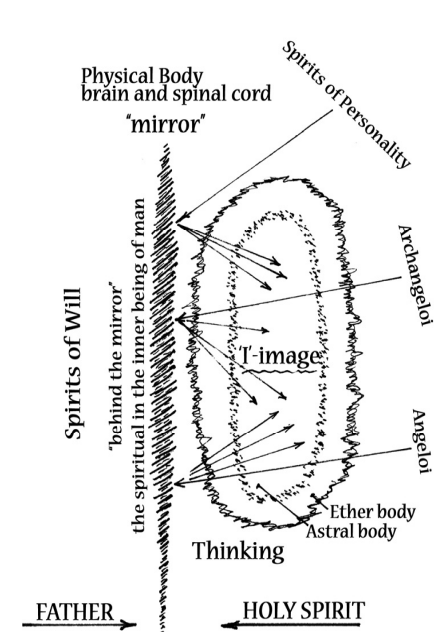


Fig. 16

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The mirror-reflections that are caught up by the astral body – and it learns how to do this under the influence of the sense-perceptions – are summed together, brought to a synthesis by the lower ‘I’, which itself is also formed out of the material and after-effects of the perceptions and inner representations.

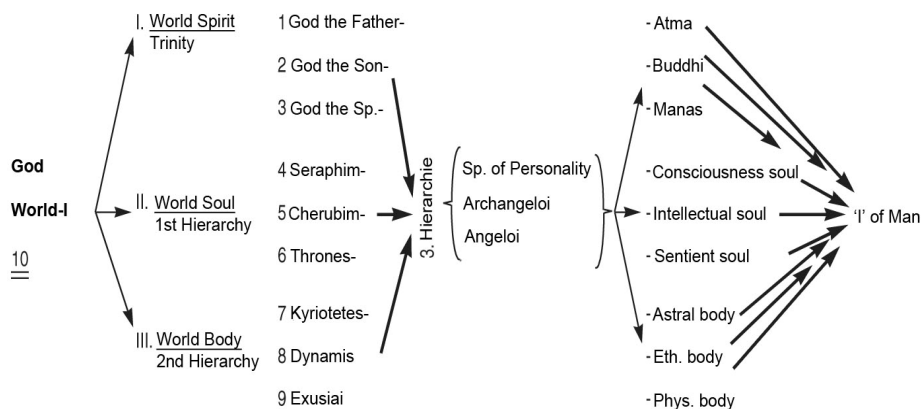
Thus we have established that the law of mirror reflection is one of the most fundamental laws of development. As every single activity of the Hierarchies is a creative and (in a higher sense) thinking activity and is always personified, so is the activity of mirror-reflection also personified, but as a secondary activity – in the processes of development: We have, so Rudolf Steiner said, “generations of Gods (Hierarchies – G.A.B.).... which are originally in their reality through themselves; and we have others, who are simply the real inner representations of the Gods who are directly connected with Saturn, Sun or Moon (the three aeons – G.A.B.).... Thus we have two generations of Gods – The one generation of Gods is the other’s inner world of representation; it truly stands in the same relation to the other, as our thoughts stand to our real soul-existence.... The original Gods had the need to represent themselves to themselves in self-knowledge. They therefore placed the Luciferic beings over against them as cosmic.... thought-beings, just as, today, his thoughts stand over against the human being” (GA 129, 25.8.1911).

It was as though the Gods in their forward, progressive movement, left behind them something into which they could look, as into a mirror, like a substance that had flowed out of them and remained behind. Every human being now bears within himself the image of this macrocosmic division. As a consequence of this, the support of his self-consciousness in the sense-world (the brain) began to fall out of the process of development. It does no more than reflect the true macrocosm back to him. This is why the everyday consciousness of man is *Luciferic*, and one must rise out of this and ascend to the true Gods. The ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’ shows us how this can be achieved.

In one of his lectures Rudolf Steiner explains the nature of the task that is fulfilled by the human being when he treads the path of the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’. He says, “We ourselves are not real when we think A mirror image cannot be a cause. If you have before you a mirror image, something that is a mere picture, and you let yourself be guided by it, it does not determine your action. If your thinking is a reality, it allows you no freedom. If your thinking is picture, then your life between birth and death is the school of freedom, because there is no cause contained in your thinking. And a life that is a life in freedom must be free of causation Through the fact that we have pure thinking and develop out of pure thinking the will to accomplish the free deed, in pure thinking we grasp hold of reality by the outermost tip. But where we ourselves lend reality to the picture from out of our own substance, there the free deed is possible” (GA 205, 7.7.1921).

Our thinking is ‘pure’ when every step is willed by us. The substance of this willing (not thinking) is mirror-reflections of the thought beings which

have been freely made conscious by us. They themselves possess a will-nature. In order to reach through to their reality, it is necessary to turn to the will of the Father, which, since the beginning of the world, has been mediated by the spirits of Will. In other words, it is essential that we should do what was done by the spirits of Personality at the time of Old Saturn. And Saturn itself, in the last resort, stands at our disposal, or, rather what the retarded Gods have made of it – the Luciferic, but also the Ahrimanic (the Gods of matter): that is, our head as a mirror. This must be overcome; then our thinking becomes pure will. Its overcoming is a deed of sacrifice. When we overcome the lower ‘I’ with its reflection, unreal thinking, we attain to ‘beholding’ (Anschauung) – a characteristic possessed by the true Gods. They breathe in and out, as we recall, the life of the world. The life of the world is Christ and it must become the life of our ‘beholding’ thinking. Thus, having begun at the stage of the universal individual, we have now arrived at the many-membered being of man which has been formed through the evolutionary process. He has involuted this (many-membered being), and now he is setting about the task, at the world periphery and in the non-being of thinking, of consciously metamorphosing his own soul and spirit, in order gradually to ‘live his way into’ the system of the universe as an individualized being. Let us draw the results of our study into a unity (Fig. 17). In our opinion, Nikolai Losky, when he is describing his views on the nature of the system-object, gives a noteworthy explanation of what is represented in this diagram. In his introduction to philosophy, where he is considering the concrete-ideal foundations of being, Losky writes as follows: “If one is investigating cosmology, it is necessary above all to examine the question of the concept of the whole and of the parts which belong to the whole. The relation between the whole and its parts can be construed in such a way that the elements (the parts in their relation to the whole) which belong to it are, in the final analysis, something of an original and fundamental nature, while the whole is something secondary, which is derived from these elements. Such a doctrine could be described as *non-organic*.”¹⁰³ This is actually not just a doctrine but an entire world-view, with which the fault lies for the fact that systems analysis has only borne fruit for materialism. In direct contrast to it stands the organic world-view, or understanding of the fact that what is fundamental is the whole, upon which the single elements depend.



III The Seven-Membered System of the World and of Thinking

1. The Esotericism of the Mathematical Method of Thinking

The character of the world as a system requires that one take hold of it in a many-sided way; of fundamental importance in this connection are the macro and the microcosmic aspects: the cosmological-theistic and the anthropocentric. In the process of developing these aspects, movement from the one to the other that is free of contradiction, a transition conditioned by the unity of the world, serves as a yardstick for the logical rigour of research.

The evolutionary totality of the world is likewise a system-object, and the connections between its elements determine the structural connections between all the objects subordinate to it, on a universal scale. Our evolutionary cycle has seven elements (aeons) and six connecting links between them (Pralayas). Such is the basic structure of everything that is in a process of becoming. The unity of the evolutionary cycle of the universe is constituted by the absolute 'I', or the unitary God – the All-Ruler. God reveals Himself as a triunity: this is the *enduring* reality in the world. For the microcosm it is the revelation and the plan of the world, the trans-temporal, eternal. As He brings about the process of becoming, the triune God calls into being the triune relationship of past, future and present. Of these, both the past and the future are triune. The present is unitary; it is the expression only of becoming, of the transformation of the past into the future. Thus arises the system of the seven aeons. Concerning the place of man within this, Rudolf Steiner says the following: “With regard to the great number-relationships, the future, as created by the human being, will be the same as in the past of the cosmos, only on a higher level. Human beings will therefore have to give birth to the future from within themselves out of the element of number, as the Gods formed the cosmos out of number” (GA 107, 12.1.1909).

Thinking with the help of numbers enables one to recognize the supersensible in the sensible world. It was not by chance that the Gnostics followed the principle: Understand mathesis and you will understand God. This means that the thinking of the esotericist, basing itself upon the principles of mathematics, on its method, develops the ability to calculate the sensible, and also the abstract, as something that is *rooted in the supersensible*. The fact that we can count is – so we are told by Rudolf Steiner – intimately bound up with the fact

Fig. 17: (GA 136, 7.4.1912)

For such an understanding, so Losky continues, “the entire world is an organic whole. Indeed, all substantially creative beings (human individualities – G.A.B.) share a single essential nature, i.e. through a certain side of their being they are joined together to form a single totality or wholeness. For this reason, they are so closely connected with one another, that all the states experienced by each one of them do not exist only for him, but for all other creative beings. From this it follows that each creative being passes through, in his experience, the life of the whole world. In this sense, the entire world is constructed in such a way, that *all is immanent to all*, i.e. all beings have within them, consciously or unconsciously, the life of all others.”¹⁰⁴⁾

It is precisely these conclusions of Losky that we have attempted to present in the language of the pure esotericism of Anthroposophy in their supersensible reality, in the reality of their essential being. But for the present we are still only at the beginning of our path. The reality of what has been described still has to become self-evident for us.

that we ourselves are counted, are organized in accordance with number. “Outside us, numbers become gradually a matter of indifference. Inside us they are not indifferent, within us each number has its own particular quality” (GA 204, 23.4.1921). The ancients always took unity as their starting-point. Two was obtained by dividing the number one into two parts, etc. When they had before them a ‘two’ they experienced how each ‘one’ within this number was not firmly fixed and that they could separate off from one another in different directions. But the number three can draw together into a unity. Let us take an example from life itself: man and woman – that is 1 and 2; the relation is open to the outside. Now a child comes into the world, and the number is closed. (ibid.). The principle of the three was experienced by the Greeks in the syllogism, which served as a step preparatory to dialectics:

All rational beings are men (1);
This is a rational being (2);
Therefore this is a man (3).

The first and the second premise are open, they can go their separate ways; a conclusion leads them into a triunity. In dialectics thesis and antithesis constitute a battle, mutual rejection which can be continued ad infinitum. The synthesis provides a positive outcome: the birth of the new.

Other possibilities for an esoteric way of thinking are opened up by geometric conceptions. We know, for example, that two parallel lines meet in infinity, whether they travel to the left or the right. From this it follows that space is both infinite and, at the same time, self-contained. Rudolf Steiner explains this conception as follows: “A sphere is an entity that rests enclosed within itself. Space is a sphere. The limits of space are a point that has been expanded on all sides, i.e. a point that has become a spherical surface ... Just reflect how point and spherical surface are one and the same – the one is entirely within itself, the other entirely outside itself; the one is entirely subjective, the other entirely objective; the one only creating, the other only created; the one only spirit, the other only sheath or covering. Everything else is a mixture of the two” (Beiträge 114/115, p.43 f.).

All the laws of development underlying Anthroposophy – polarity, enhancement, metamorphosis (inversion) etc. – are in their essential nature connected with mathematical conceptions and share with them a common source. These conceptions represent an essential part of their methodology. But in using them there is a risk of falling into an abstract nominalism, which exposes the esotericist to the possibility of losing the, albeit mediated, but nevertheless real connection with the spirit which they provide. There exist entire occult societies where for centuries the interpretation of symbols and manipulation of

numbers has been cultivated, yet on account of the abstract way of dealing with these things no results worthy of mention have been achieved. Nothing in methodology works by itself, without the human being’s living participation in it. In his book ‘Theosophy’ (GA 9) Rudolf Steiner enumerated, so to speak, the ninefold human being. The latter emerges as such as an outcome of the working of the law of tri-unity in evolution – in other words this human being is an entirely real phenomenon; nevertheless, Rudolf Steiner remarked later in one of his lectures that he had presented this in the book in question in an altogether abstract fashion, and that in the book sevenfold man had been derived from threefold man in a far more organic way (see GA 204, 23.4.1921).

Sevenfoldness can only be derived from threefoldness. It has been determined thus at the fundamental level, where the sevenfoldness of the aeons develops out of the Divine Trinity, and was determined in two different ways: “Sevenfoldness without this reference back to threefoldness can only lead one astray” (GA 262, p. 51). In his book ‘Aurora’, Jakob Boehme derives the world from seven nature pictures which arise from the absolute Divine unity; the unity itself is viewed by him in the spirit of the Christian Trinity. Boehme is thinking in accordance with the principle we have described, but expresses himself in the language of alchemy.

In evolutionist methodology the importance of the symbol of number cannot be emphasized enough. Rudolf Steiner says in this regard: “*The connections in world evolution will never be found if one does not apply the principle of number as a method in one’s investigations* (emphasis G.A.B.); if you bring number into connection with what is happening, you find your way into apocalyptic* thinking, you learn, so to speak, to read the universe apocalyptically...” (GA 346, p. 193/4).

We have already mentioned that the main principle of methodological work with number is based on a series of natural numbers from 1 to 13. Used in this way they can be compared to philosophical categories. They can also be expressed geometrically (the Platonic bodies, Cassini curves) whereby the method of ‘beholding’ thinking receives greater effectiveness and clarity of vision. Particularly for the transformation of consciousness, for the realizing of its highest potential, the penetration of thinking consciousness behind the veil of the sense-world, operation with numbers and with geometric figures and constructions proves to be extremely helpful. They came into being before phi-

* One describes as apocalyptic, thinking about the future, not merely in the sense of catastrophes that await the human being.

losophy, developed into a whole system of knowledge and played their part in the preparation of conceptual thinking.

Through meditative concentration on the 'one' or on a point, the human being can attain to experience of the All-unity, but he can also direct his thoughts to the beginning of all things, the all-encompassing unity, by contemplating its symbol, and rise in this way to 'beholding', for, as Rudolf Steiner says: "The one is the revelation of the absolute, of Divine being!" (GA 266/1, p.500). Out of the One develops the Two – "the number of revelation" (ibid. p. 539) – In the Three the absolute returns to itself. The higher tri-unity is reflected in the lower, in creation, in the tri-unity of measure, number and weight. God created the world according to measure, number and weight, "... according to the creative, qualitative, analytical order of the numbers" (GA 343, p. 527). We could call the number Four the system-forming principle of the triad; it leads this beyond its limits and metamorphoses it to a triad of a higher order. The Four, which is the unity of the Three, cancels and preserves it, just as the antithesis cancels and preserves (aufhebt) the thesis. One can therefore regard the Seven as a more complicated dialectic of development; in the Seven there arises on the way from one triad to the other an opposition between the Five and the Four. In the Mysteries of antiquity the view prevailed that wherever in the universe the number five rises up against the number four, "mighty decisions follow, which have to do with the ascent to the Six, in either a good or an evil sense" (GA 346, p. 99). Geometrically, the number five is expressed in the form of a pentagram. It is the symbol of the human being as microcosm, of the Third Logos in the human 'I'. Turned upside-down, it expresses the principle of the Fall from Paradise, original sin, evil and even black magic.

Seven is the number of development and thus "the sacred symbolic number" (GA 8, p. 131). In the ancient Mysteries the candidate for initiation had, as one of his first tasks, to achieve an experience whereby his spirit, his entire soul constitution, was imbued with the "significance of the sevenfold cycle of the development of the world cultures" (GA 346, p. 88). Such an experience is *fundamental also for one who wishes to unite with the essential being of Anthroposophy*, in which one recognizes the sevenfold principle as the prevailing element in the entire structure of the evolutionary cycle – i.e. not only in culture but also in organic life and in all forms of being. "For all occultists," says Rudolf Steiner, "seven is always the most perfect number ...; it is actually an axiom of occultism: Seven is the most perfect number ... this revelation of the number seven is extraordinarily complex. Everything imaginable in the universe is ordered according to the number seven, less so to the number twelve, and less so again to other numbers ..." (ibid. p. 181 f.).

Throughout the further course of our research we will be mainly concerned with the search for this "everything imaginable" (or possible) which is organized out of the number seven and out of which the central core of spiritual-scientific methodology receives its structure. Once recognized in its many sevenfoldnesses, this central core is then assimilated organically into the principle of twelvefoldness which in this case – i.e. after the necessary preparation for it – reveals itself as the "sacred number which lies at the foundation of all things", and sevenfoldness is then recognized as that which underlies 'action' (cf. Beiträge 67/68, p. 24). For example, the physical planets with their manifold workings constitute a seven, but in a higher sense they are subordinate to the number twelve.

The number thirteen is the system-forming principle of twelvefoldness. In the system of the aeon there work not seven but twelve leading spiritual beings (five of them have 'the other' tasks). The thirteenth "brings the whole planet (aeon – G.A.B.) into a condition like that at the beginning, only a higher one" (Beiträge 67/68, p. 23). The relation of the thirteenth to the twelve can be compared to that of the eight to the seven; it is as it were an 'octave', but that of another principle; and of course the spiritual content within it is also different.

That the principle of number in Anthroposophical methodology is no abstract symbol but reveals through itself the supersensible reality, has been shown by Rudolf Steiner with the help of many examples. One of these will suffice for our purposes. In one of his esoteric lessons he explains that the astral body that is enclosed in its sheath is referred to in esotericism as nil (zero). For no strange being can then enter it, and for this reason for the rest of the world it becomes a nothing, a nil. But "through the fact that the astral body had separated itself from the totality of astral material and enveloped itself in a skin, it had become a 'one' (and also oneness in itself – G.A.B.), and this is referred to through the placing of the one before the zero: 10 (The Pythagoreans regarded the ten as an especially important number; they arrived at it through the addition of the number series 1+2+3+4 – G.A.B.). Then come the numbers which indicate the future stages of development on Jupiter and Venus (aeons): six and five, and thus arises the mystical number 1065 – Dzyan – which is referred to in the 'Secret Doctrine' of H.P.B. (Helena Blavatsky)"* (GA 266/1, p. 464).

* Rudolf Steiner does not explain why the numbers 5 and 6 are switched in this figure.

2. 'Counting' Man as an Evolutionary Being

The definitions we have given of the character of the numbers in esotericism enable us to move on to practical work with them and thus get to know their new qualities and meanings.

The Anthroposophical evolutionary teaching derives its sevenfold cycle from the triune primal act of positing, the revelation of the Divine. As within the universe everything is personified, God's unity and His revelations are also parts of the world-individual, which is unitary, threefold, sevenfold, ninefold and twelvefold. In its ninefoldness it has as system-forming principle the tenth: The absolute world-I at a certain stage of its manifestation. In the image and likeness of the ten-membered world individual, tenfold man is also structured. In his essential being he differs from the Creator by virtue of his structure and also the level of his consciousness. As to the Creator, the Absolute, all the members of His being are creative, substantial 'I'-beings. But, high as the sphere of their being and consciousness may reach, they are, as co-creators with the Divine Will, primal phenomena and regents of the many-membered being of Man. The foundation which they share in common with the human being is the world-consciousness as such; and it is this which, already in the forms of its manifestation, also determines the differences between the 'I'-beings.

The answers Rudolf Steiner gave in a letter, to questions put to him in 1906 by the French playwright Édouard Schuré, have been passed down to us. In them he gives a classification of the stages of consciousness through which development takes place within the entire evolutionary cycle, and which the human being bears in him, in the members of his being, though for the most part unconsciously. The world-individual posits these stages through his triune, primal revelation. On these stages the world and its beings are structured, and in the human being they are manifested in the tri-unity of: his subconscious nature, his waking, object-oriented consciousness, and his superconsciousness. As tri-unity pervades the universe as a fundamental law, each of these forms of consciousness is also, in its turn, threefold. This gives rise, overall, to nine states, or stages, of consciousness, which then give rise to the ninefold being of Man. His system-building principle is the 'I' – the lower, initially, which nevertheless stands potentially in a reciprocal relation to the World-'I'.

The World-'I' is, as we have seen, the system-building principle of the world individual which manifests itself on different levels in the course of evolution. One of these revelations embraces the entire many-membered being of

man, his evolution in its totality. Within the structure of this individual the human being knows no contradiction between himself and the world (Fig. 18).

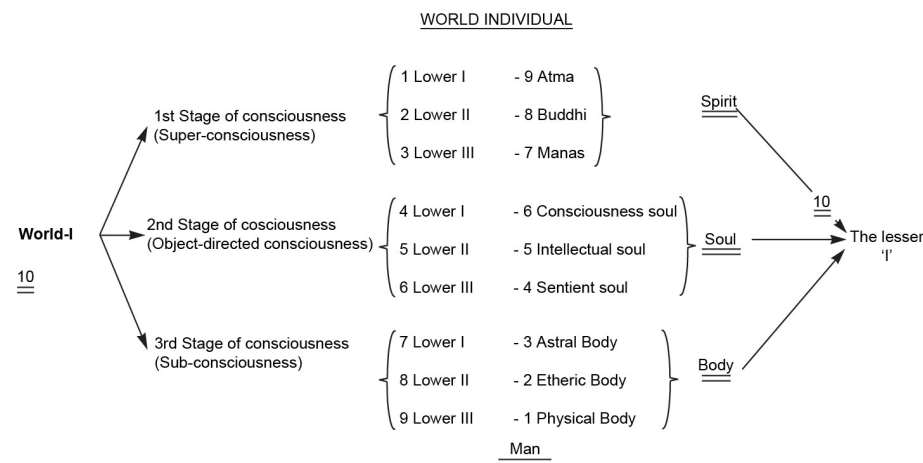


Fig. 18: (left half corresponds to B.14, p.2.)

In his answers to Édouard Schuré's questions Rudolf Steiner gives the nine stages of consciousness presented here, without connecting them with the many-membered being of Man. But this connection exists, and if we find it, we are led to an aspect of this overall view of things, which is the opposite of the one Rudolf Steiner has in mind. Both aspects are correct. It all depends upon one's standpoint: are we looking at the descent of world-consciousness as the stages of the aeons, or are we seeing its entire structure in relation to earthly manifold man? In the second case, universal super-consciousness is present in the tri-une body of the human being, which he is not aware of in its spiritual reality. It remains within his subconscious. The human being involuted the first stage of world-consciousness and it became his body. In the course of his individual evolution, at some stage he rises with his higher 'I' into the sphere of super-consciousness, which in the present phase weaves around him as higher spirit.

Forming a connecting link between the highest and the lowest stage of consciousness, is its second level, which the human being can experience in his triune soul. This consciousness works in the course of cultural-historical phylogenesis. Through bringing it to realization as triune soul, the human being leads the evolutive and the involutive principles to a unity within himself. The soul became that place where the human being developed the lower 'I' and, using it already, now tries to accomplish deeds of creation out of nothing, i.e. to reunite himself individually with the higher 'I'. In this sense, the second level of consciousness became the central member of the threefold metamorphosis, the focal point of becoming, which takes its course between the being of superconsciousness and the non-being of the subconscious. The middle member of the threefoldness of the second consciousness became in addition the system-building principle of world-consciousness, that is emerging within the otherness-of-being. This phenomenon can be illustrated in the form of a hexagram in which the direction of the forces of conscious working within it is oriented in the way shown in Fig. 19.

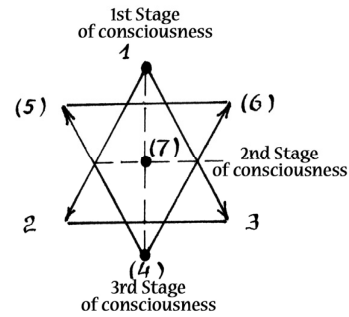


Fig. 19

The hexagram has in its centre a seventh element, which differs qualitatively from the other six, and is therefore not drawn in, but only thought. This is the system-building principle we described – the individual 'I' which begins to germinate in the intellectual soul. Thus the human being, through the fact of individualization, transforms the world-principle of triunity into a sevenfold structure, whose final expression is the sevenfoldness of 'beholding' in thinking. But for this to emerge, the indispensable conditions had to be crystallized out in the objective evolution of the world.

In the more recent phase of earthly evolution, already in the period of cultural-historical development, the third stage of consciousness appeared in man in his mythological, semi-clairvoyant consciousness, the picture-consciousness of the sentient soul. The second stage of consciousness unfolded in conceptual thinking and in the intellectual soul. And to the first stage of consciousness there corresponds the development of the power of judgment in 'beholding' and of the consciousness-soul (cf. Fig. 5). 'Beholding' in thinking takes on again a pictorial, half imaginative character, but compared with mythological thinking it appears, so to speak, from the other side. And so we can say the

following: If the one consciousness was half dreaming (as a result of the partial withdrawal of the astral body from the physical body), then the second is more-than-waking; it results in a conscious, partial withdrawal even of the ether-body.

This, so one could say, is the human side (nature) of world-unity. From the Divine aspect it is revealed that behind the first stage of world-consciousness there stands originally the principle of the Father-God; behind the second, that of the Son-God or the World-Soul; and behind the third, that of the Spirit of God, through whom the being of consciousness is endowed with forms.

At the beginning of the evolution of the individual human spirit an inversion of the highest principles takes place. The universally descending development of the world gives way to an ascending development (Fig. 20). World-consciousness becomes the consciousness of reflective thinking (in conceptual, logical form). With the transition to 'beholding', the human being brings life into conceptual thinking. And this begins to give birth to real forms.

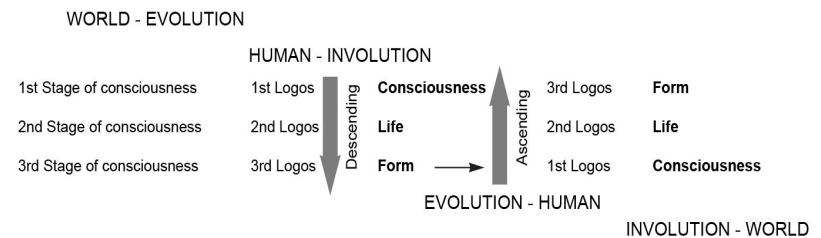


Fig. 20

It need scarcely be said that this entire metamorphosis was prepared within objective world evolution. From the very beginning, world-consciousness is creating the form of the human body as bearer of the individual consciousness. The human being involuted this activity, whose substance stems from the First Logos. In the course of time individual life appeared germinally within the human corporeality, and finally a self-consciousness, but then the life began to withdraw from the body. A highly complicated world-collision begins to take place, a contradiction between consciousness and life. The reason for this lies in the change in the general direction of world development (cf. Fig. 20).

This contradiction cannot be resolved until the human being has developed the capacity to give birth, from within himself, from his own number, to the number of the cosmos. He begins to do this by taking as his point of departure the form of individual thinking consciousness. But this is devoid of substance

and essential being. According to the words of Rudolf Steiner, the law of this form, like any other form in the world, shows itself to be “birth and death” (Beiträge 78, p. 31). A thought-form is born, and the body through which it is born dies. It is therefore necessary to change the law of thinking: “The law of life is rebirth” (ibid.). It becomes necessary to be restored to life, to resurrect, in thinking, and ‘beholding’ helps to make this possible. It leads us from the forms of thinking to experience of the thought-beings. Then the conscious human being becomes an integral member of world-consciousness. In him the trinity of consciousness, life and form undergoes metamorphosis. This metamorphosis takes place in him continually in accordance with the laws of rhythm, polarization, enhancement, inversion etc; in short – according to the laws of life itself.

Before they began to work in the material world, these laws unfolded in the spiritual world and worked there (but in a different way than in the physical); in the spiritual world there took place the development of the beings of the third Hierarchy, who form the connecting link between our own evolutionary cycle and that which went before it. Substantially, they came into being before the aeon of Old Saturn, but they developed the individual ‘I’ in our own cycle. At the beginning of the earthly aeon the being of the Divine Hierarchies became ninefold. The Divine Trinity is the system-forming principle of the entire universe, the absolute ‘I’, and at the same time it reveals itself in three hypostases. This very highest level of the world is repeated by the human being within himself when he develops his microcosmic ‘I’ in the triune soul. In this process, as we have described above, he makes the transition to sevenfoldness, and the world-individual to twelfoldness. In the macrocosm the world-‘I’ is revealed as the thirteenth. The human being as ‘I’ experiences himself within the twelfold Zodiac, in the first place thanks to the directions of his thinking, the world-views and religious orientation. But in the sphere of the first and also the third stage of consciousness he is likewise structured in a twelfold manner: in the system of the twelve sense-organs which he has mastered only to a partial degree, and in the twelfoldness of his physical body.

The development determined by the twelfoldness is that of the Mysteries. When human beings wish to enter into a relation with them consciously, and place themselves in their service, they form twelfold communities. The Knights of King Arthur, the Grail Knights, formed a community of this kind. The Mystery circle founded by Christian Rosencreutz also consisted of twelve members. Jesus Christ gathered around him twelve disciples. In order to be able to take upon himself so holy a service, the human being must become a

more highly developed being. The “mystery of the all-pervading number seven” assists such a development (GA 266/7, p. 63).

If one wishes to serve the highest aims of the spirit in the external world and be active in all its spheres, then one must orient oneself according to the number seven. The Divine Triunity, who posited the new universe as an activity external to Himself, unfolded His sevenfold archetypal phenomenon. For the sake of this, the three stages of consciousness we have referred to assumed, already within the Trinity itself, both a predetermining and also an active character. And one can say that, at the very beginning of the world, the Father sent the Son into the world, for “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him [i.e. takes upon himself the task of higher development – G.A.B.] should have everlasting life” (John 3, 16).

The process of mutual mirroring – of sacrifice within the three hypostases – took on a permanent character (cf. Figs. 9a and b), because the hypostasis of the Son created the basis for a relation between the Father and the Holy Spirit. Within the three levels of world-consciousness this came to expression in the fact that its second stage overlapped the first and the third (Fig. 21). In this way there arose within the world-consciousness the seven-membered archetypal phenomenon whose symbol we have shown in Fig. 19.

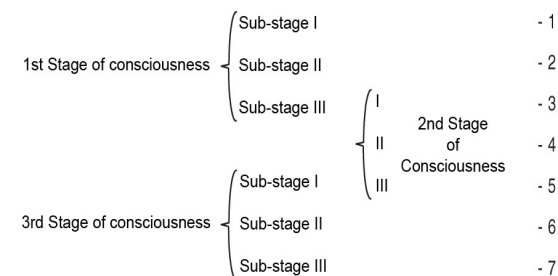


Fig. 21: (see B. 14, p.3)

The transformation of the ninefoldness of world-consciousness to a sevenfoldness had the consequence within the human being that the combined working of all three bodies developed into a distinct phenomenon. Its bearer became the soul-body, in which the quintessence of the physical and etheric bodies became manifest in the substance of the astral body, whereby the conditions were created for the development of the sentient soul. To the present day the latter forms a unity with this complicated astral structure, with the result that the life of sensations, of sense-perceptions, remains in close connection with the organic processes and the structure of the physical body. The second

unity came about – like the first, on a half-conscious level – between the consciousness-soul and Manas, thereby enabling the lower ‘I’ to grow upwards towards the higher ‘I’. In the seven-membered structure of the human being the conditions were created for his transition from involution to individual evolution. In his new constellation the human being has the following structure:

1. The physical body.
2. The etheric or life-body
3. The sentient soul-body (and the sentient soul – G.A.B.)
4. The intellectual soul
5. The spirit-filled consciousness-soul [Manas]
6. The life spirit [Buddhi]
7. The spirit-man [Atma].

(GA 9, p. 57)

In this structure of the human being the subconscious nature of his astral body is illumined by a conscious experience of the sense-perceptions and sensations. On the other hand, superconsciousness begins to shine into the consciousness-soul of the human being. The path leading through the connecting links (3 and 5 – see Fig. 21) of the threefold stages of consciousness is the path to freedom.

In future times the human being will permeate all three bodies with his individual ‘I’, he will be fully conscious of them and transform them into the substance of the triune spirit. Thus he gives birth from out of himself to the future cosmos. In this sense the seven-membered being of man is integrated into the cycle of evolution in the following way:

Aeons	
a. Old Saturn	- 1. physical body
b. Old Sun	- 2. life body
c. Old Moon	- 3. astral body
d. Earth	- 4. ‘I’ as the central core of the soul
e. Fut. Jupiter	- 5. Spirit-self as transformed astral body
f. Fut. Venus	- 6. Life-spirit as transformed life-body
g. Fut. Vulcan	- 7. Spirit-man as transformed physical body

(ibid., p. 60)

In the course of future aeons the human being will bring about within himself, by virtue of his higher ‘I’, the unity of Manas, Buddhi and Atma and will thus become, in an incomparably higher sense than was the case at the beginning of Creation, the image and likeness of God.

3. The Three Logoi and their Interrelations

If the entire nature of the human being is connected in so thorough and precise a way with the stages of the evolutionary cycle, it is hard to avoid the question: Is freedom at all possible in this case? Yes, it is possible, because on the level of world development the human being is predestined to become a free spirit; this is what he is intended to be since the beginning of the world. In order to understand why this answer contains within it no contradiction we must move on to a detailed study of the whole structure, the overall development of the thoughts in the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’ and prepare ourselves in a fitting way for this work, as we have actually been doing from the very first lines written in this book.

We have already spoken of the fact that all seven aeons are simultaneously present (ur-phenomenally) in the universe, while at the same time their development is taking place within it in successive stages. We have seen that, as an outcome of the development which took place through the first three-and-a-half aeons, the mirroring on the level of essential being which is characteristic of the Hierarchies metamorphosed to the shadow-like reflection of the human intellect. The true ‘I’ of man was mirrored in its threefold corporeality. This originated in the processes whereby: the first Logos revealed himself ur-phenomenally to the second Logos and was mirrored in him; the second Logos revealed himself to the third, and the third Logos gave back to the First his primal revelation or *is giving it back to him*, if we turn our attention away from the sphere of the eternal to the sphere of development.

In one of the notebooks of Rudolf Steiner to which we have already referred (cf. Figs. 9a, 9b), seven kinds of mutual relationships between the three Logoi are described which, as real personified forces, are ur-phenomena of the seven aeons of our evolutionary cycle. For the sake of simplicity, Rudolf Steiner uses abbreviations in the form of letters of the alphabet; in our study of them it should not be forgotten that, in such cases, mathematics appears in its original, sacred nature.

These mutual relations are as follows: ab, bc, ca, ac, ba, cb, aa (cf. Beiträge 67/68, p. 13). Here it is crucial to bear in mind that the direct working of each one of the Logoi also takes place in each of the aeons; moreover, they remain

fundamental: a, b, c. It is from this that all sevenfold structures arise, and they all return to it again. Thus in the totality of the entire evolutionary cycle there work on the macro-level 3 x 7 forces: The three hypostases of the Divine Trinity and the seven modes of their creative reciprocal relationships which, within development, are mediated by the Divine Hierarchies. Rudolf Steiner gives a description of these relationships that is rich in content. It is an esoteric unveiling of what is succinctly expressed in the opening sentences of the St. John's Gospel. *This is the Christian esotericism of evolutionary theory. First Relation* (ab): "The Father reveals Himself to the Word." Such is the *omnipotence*, the Divine Will – the essential nature of the aeon of *Old Saturn*.

"Omnipotence consists in the fact that the Father reveals Himself to the Word. This is referred to as the first creation, or chaos" (B. 67/68, p. 21). It arises also from the Divine resolve (decision), which the human being, only on his own level, learns to master; and then he makes the choice between the path to God and the path that leads into matter.

Second Relation (bc): "The Word reveals Himself to the Spirit." "After omnipotence has accomplished its task, *universal wisdom* rules, orders everything according to measure and number." This is the aeon of the *Old Sun*.

Third Relation (ca): "The Holy Spirit reveals Himself to the Father." Such is universal Love. "After universal wisdom has accomplished its task, *universal Love* rules, brings into the whole of creation the principle of sympathy and antipathy." Such is the aeon of *Old Moon*, where the monads are endowed with sensation of their own.

Fourth Relation (we will represent it as: ab → c): "The Father veils Himself in the Word and reveals Himself to the Spirit." *Universal Justice* arises, "it holds sway, bringing in Karma, that is to say – birth and death." This is the *aeon of the Earth*. It is precisely because the Father has veiled Himself in the Son and reveals Himself to the Holy Spirit, that *knowledge* of the Christ impulse becomes possible and necessary – a central concern of Anthroposophy. In this connection one should read Ch. 10-17 of the St. John's Gospel with renewed understanding.

Fifth Relation (bc → a): "The Word veils Himself in the Spirit and reveals Himself to the Father." This is the *universal redemption* from original sin. Everything is taken hold of by the redemptive process. Such is the "last judgment" (the 'Day of Judgment'). It takes place (but is not completed) on the *future Jupiter*.

Sixth Relation (ca → b): "The Holy Spirit veils Himself in the Father and reveals Himself to the Word." *Universal consecration* will pervade the crea-

tion in the aeon of the *future Venus*, when the 'Day of Judgment' has been fulfilled.

Seventh Relation (abc → a): "The Father veils Himself in Word and Spirit and becomes manifested to Himself." Such is the character of the aeon of *Vulcan*, the aeon of *All-Blessedness* for the creation, which has attained the stage of Universal Consecration.

Thus is described in Anthroposophy our evolutionary cycle as it exists within the Divine plan and in Divine revelation. Practically the entire labour of human thinking, from its very first beginnings, was oriented towards an understanding of this mystery of the world in which, with full justification, human beings hoped to attain knowledge of the meaning of their existence. Anthroposophy brought this quest to its completion, by rejecting the absolute claims of reflective thinking, and recognizing, thanks to other qualities of consciousness, the ur-phenomenal plan of what philosophy inquires into only indirectly, with the help of categories, of the 'Organon' of Aristotle.

Someone may well ask: Why has this only been done by Rudolf Steiner? He was himself asked this question, and his answer was that there are others who consciously experienced the supersensible worlds, but they did not want to clothe what they saw in concepts which could later have been communicated to other human beings who do not see the supersensible. "Because this requires that what has been perceived spiritually must be brought down into the brain, and this is a sacrifice which no-one else was able to make."¹⁰⁵⁾

Rudolf Steiner made this sacrifice and it is our task, after we have travelled the path of his thinking, to raise ourselves to what he beheld and recognized supersensibly. This requires of us, too, the sacrifice of a number of things: First of all our attachment to the abstract, and then also our entire conceptual thinking, after which, in the emptied but fully waking consciousness the perception of ideas can arise. Through this act one can say that the fulfilment of the third sacrifice begins, which the Holy Spirit makes to the Father through the human being.

The main definitions passed down to us by Rudolf Steiner, of the seven relationships with the Divine Tri-unity, belong to the category of quality and are at the same time *supersensible realities*. In their totality as a system of the seven cosmic Intelligences they embody the World-Soul – the Christ. The Father principle works in this case as a force which draws them together into a unity; the hypostasis of the Holy Spirit leads them to manifestation in the macro-forms of the aeons of evolution.

Whoever wishes to think about the supersensible must continually bear in mind that every phenomenon, every relationship, within it is personified. This is the world of the cosmic Intelligences. They embody the reality of everything that the human being develops through conceptual work, be it in the field of philosophy, ethics, aesthetics, natural science or religion. For this reason, it is possible to build up a system of knowledge if the conditions in which it exists within the universal system are understood.

The unity of the world is held together through the universally conditioning activity of the first Logos, which is personified within creation by the beings of the nine Hierarchies. They also personify the activity of the second Logos, who is revealed by the first Logos as the World-Soul. The boundlessness of the first Logos is given limits, through being endowed with form, by the third Logos, who is also mediated in his activity by the Hierarchies, and forms, through them, the ‘chalice’ of the seven aeons. The second Logos continually overcomes this limit by way of metamorphosis, as he fills with life what has become, what has assumed a fixed form. The first Logos endows everything with substance (see Fig. 22).

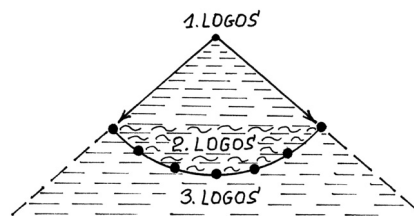


Fig. 22

Rudolf Steiner says: The working of the first and second Logos “has come down to us from earlier world-developments”. The third Logos “began His development with our Saturn (the aeon of Saturn – G.A.B.), and it will be completed with the Vulcan incarnation...” (GA 266/7, p. 187, 190). It is evident from what has been said that it was only in the development of our world-cycle that the unitary Godhead revealed Himself as a tri-une being, this representing the chief peculiarity and structural law underlying this cycle. From it arose other basic structural laws: that of the number seven, and of mirror-reflection, which was apparently also unknown to the universe that went before.

The working of the other two Logoi is broader in character – they condition one another in freedom and self-sacrifice through the specific quality of our cycle.

In order to overcome the conditioning that is not intrinsic to them, the first and the second Logos must mirror themselves in the third and permit an unfolding of the entire seven-membered cycle to take place. They could also have begun the creation in some other way, but having begun it in the way they did, they must also bring it to completion in a way that corresponds to this

beginning. At the same time, they are also present beyond the bounds of the cycle, in the realm of the unbounded. Christ therefore descends from a world that is still higher than that of the fixed stars, into the planetary system of the earthly aeon. From the realm of the ineffable he enters that of sevenfoldness, passing through the world of the twelvefold. He has His throne in our Sun, which is both planet and star.

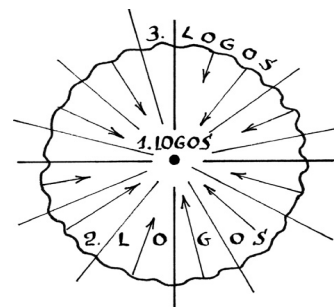


Fig. 23

The role of the third Logos, which sets up the boundary, is in a fashion also universal, as one may not think of this boundary in spatial terms. What we have shown in Fig. 22 can be represented differently, in the form of a circle from whose centre radiate the emanations of the first Logos (Fig. 23). The third Logos created the boundary in the form of a circle which in our imagination can be a straight line stretching into infinity in one direction and returning from the other, or also the Möbius strip. This boundary is the limit of the mirror-reflection of the primal revelation of the first Logos to the second, which returns from the third Logos. The second Logos, the Son, acts as the foundation for the relationship between the Father and the Spirit. He mediates their interrelation. But the third Logos sets a limit to the primal revelation in yet another way: He gives it a beginning and an end. If in Fig. 23 we see represented the primary phenomenon of space, Fig. 22 gives us a picture of the phenomenon of time with its three components: past, present and future. In the primary phenomenon they remain a unity and for this reason time actually flows in two directions: from the past into the future and vice-versa. Thus Rudolf Steiner says that on the highest level all seven aeons exist unchanged, though periodically now the one, now the other of them dominates.

What we see in Fig. 23 also represents a combination of the three fundamental categories of Anthroposophy: consciousness, life and form, which can also be spoken of as eternity, life and boundary. At the beginning of each aeon creation, proceeding from the Pralaya, begins as it were anew. In the aeon of the earth this beginning is described in the Book of Genesis as follows: “And the earth was without form, and void.” The Ancient Hebrew for “without form, and void” is *tohu-wa-bohu*. Rudolf Steiner explains these words as follows: “The sound here which may be compared to our T evokes a picture of a force bursting forth from a central point in all directions of space.” And then we can imagine all these forces being held back by the surface of a great, hollow

sphere and being reflected back into themselves, from all directions of space inwards. That is ‘bohu’ (GA 122, 18.8.1910). In the realm of being, this found its expression in the elements of warmth, air, water. The archaic memory of man, his subconsciousness preserves within itself these processes, through which the human being himself was created. It comes to expression in the age of materialism through the hatching of astronomical theories of the ‘Big Bang’, the ‘primal explosion’ of the universe, which periodically expands and then contracts again. Ultimately, this is all pure esotericism which is turned, by way of materialistic interpretations, into an unsustainable metaphysics.

In the esotericism of the New Testament the boundary is a symbol for the ‘Kingdom’, for the kingdom always occupies a territory, a space. And it is a certain life-condition. It can come into being if it has force, power. The force must be located at the centre of the kingdom and pervade it entirely. “The force that radiates out from the centre ... and controls the kingdom, is power” – says Rudolf Steiner (GA 342, p. 193).

In order that all of this should not remain ‘being in and for itself’, but should also reveal itself to other creatures, the forces radiating from the centre of the world, after they have reached its limits, the boundary of the kingdom, must shine on further. They then become ‘Glory’, grandeur – the world of created beings (forms) of our visible universe, which reveals God’s majesty through forming the outer sheath of the kingdom. Thus we can rightly assert that in the sense-perceptible universe no true life exists; here, everything is gleam, appearance, maya and also reflection. One must be able to penetrate beyond the veil of appearance and recognize, through the revelation of form, the ur-phenomenal – the being of the true spirit (Fig. 24).

If we consider all that has been described here, which can be thought in the ideas of the kingdom, the power and the glory, it is possible to lead it over “into mathesis, into visual thought-pictures” (ibid. p. 194). And this became the “mathesis” of the most important Christian prayer, the Lord’s Prayer, which was given to man by God to enable him to penetrate behind the veil of Maya. (The exact nature of the mathesis of this prayer is described by Rudolf Steiner in another lecture. We will return to this in later chapters.)

All that radiates out into the world of otherness-of-being becomes the multiplicity of forms which arise in the course of each aeon. The spirit interiorizes

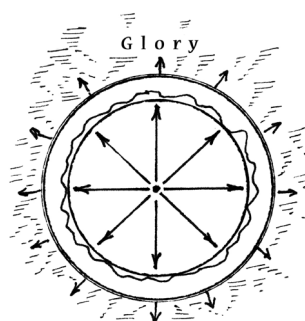


Fig. 24: (GA 342, p.194)

itself within them; they are its involution. As the world-system they constitute a twelvefold circle, within which is interiorized the glory of the world, right through to the centre of the Father, the focal point of power, where the forms of human consciousness arise. They reach through to the boundaries of the visible universe, but their radiant appearance (Schein) is not the true glory of the world, but its illusion, its untruth; and as such it is generally and wholly – evil. The evil of reflection consists also in its separation from the Kingdom. But man’s thinking unites himself in his ‘I’ with the kingdom. It says in the Gospel: “Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom” (Luke 12, 32). The strength to attain this can be drawn by the human being from the word of the apostle Paul: “Not I, but Christ in me”. If he follows this path, he begins sooner or later to spiritualize the forms, and then there rays out from them the glory of God. The Divine revelation begins then to return to itself – through the human ‘I’. The glory of God was extinguished as it descended into the lower ‘I’ of man, the being of which is reflective thinking. All this began in the aeon of Old Saturn. At that stage, it was necessary for the emergent glory of the new world, the new revelation, to enter into a connection with time. And for this reason the spirits of Personality acquired the individual ‘I’. The non-materialized Divine Glory entered into them, and they became an integral part of the world Individual. But its highest members, the beings of the First Hierarchy, in conformity with the plan of the highest Trinity to create a boundary for itself, sought first of all “a spherical form in universal space, and said: Here let us begin. And now the Seraphim receive into themselves the aims of the world-system, the Cherubim elaborate this aim, and the Thrones let flow out of their own being the primal fire into this spherical space” (GA 110, 14.4.1909). This was the beginning of our world-system. To understand the nature of this space in which it emerged, we must attend to another statement of Rudolf Steiner’s, where he says: “For space is not emptiness without end, space is original spirit. And we ourselves are condensed space, we are born out of space” (GA 284, p.83).

But before this happens to the human being, time, personified in the spirits of Personality, is condensed out of space-spirit: *time as an intelligible being*. It arose in the middle of the Saturn aeon, whose earlier periods one must try to imagine as spiritual-spatial and eternal in nature. The first period is described by Rudolf Steiner as a manifestation of essential spiritual being, which is complete and perfect in itself and needs no external mirroring in order to become self-conscious. Then followed the manifestation of pure spiritual light, which outwardly is darkness, and this was followed by soul warmth (see GA 13, p. 169). And it was only after this that outer warmth and time came into being.

The latter arose as an independent entity thanks to a special ‘environment’ which was created by the sacrifice offered up by the Thrones to the Cherubim. Rudolf Steiner compares its birth to a process whereby a word is uttered in the air and becomes time as a being (see GA 132, 31.10.1911). It is interesting to compare this explanation with Kant’s characterization of time: It is “the true form of inner ‘beholding’. Thus it has subjective reality with respect to inner experience.... It is not attached to the objects themselves, but only to the subject who beholds them”.¹⁰⁶⁾ From this Kantian definition it is only a small step to the determination of *time as personality*. Only it is necessary to accept personality in its sensible-supersensible, and even its purely hierarchical, reality, and ‘beholding’ as a form of thinking which stands higher than reflection.

But let us see what happens to the world individual upon his contact with time. When one says that the Seraphim “*receive into themselves* the aims of the world-system”, this must be understood to mean that they identify with the third Divine hypostasis. In addition, the spirits of Wisdom – the highest beings of the second Hierarchy – identify with the lower beings of the first Hierarchy – the Thrones. As a result of these deeds of mediation, a union arose in the warmth monads of Saturn between the Divine will and life, and this gave rise to the first quality in otherness-of-being. This quality was a mirror-reflection: “The will which had hitherto been entirely without characteristics.... gradually receives the quality of radiating life back into celestial space” (GA 13, p.161). This was without doubt the decisive moment, the first act of the Mystery of evolution, in which otherness-of-being revealed the glory of God for the first time; the fulfilment of the final act will be the task of the human being after he has acquired the faculty of ‘beholding’ in thinking. Thereafter begins the great Mystery of the reuniting of the human being with God.

We have shown in Figs. 14 and 17 in what way the human being is led towards the fulfilment of this task through the objective evolution of the world within the unity of man and world. We would like to take these considerations further by illustrating a few of the developmental stages of the world individual through which the Divinity passes as it returns to itself from the outer revelation within which the human being has become a necessary and integral part.

We emphasized earlier that the significance of the human being in our evolutionary cycle is in a certain sense decisive. But it is subject to change and also to the general laws of development within the cycle. The principle of mirror-reflection became the decisive factor in this cycle for the development by the various beings of an ‘I’ of their own. Its forms of manifestation, however, differ no less in, let us say, the aeons of Ancient Saturn and of Earth than the real human being differs from his mirror-image. When in the aeon of Saturn

the spirits of Personality were developing their ‘I’ with the help of human monads, these constituted overall no more than the inert principle of the otherness-of-being of a mirror. One can say that the human being at that time did not yet belong to the structure of the world individual, who then extended, on the side of otherness-of-being, as far as the ‘I’ of the spirits of Personality, through whom time was personified (Fig. 25a).

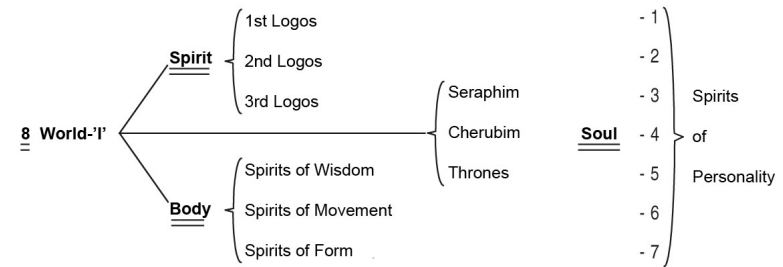


Fig. 25a

What we see represented in this figure unveils for us that reality which underlies the structure of the three stages of consciousness referred to earlier. This is the Hierarchy of the nine categories of hierarchical ‘I’-beings. It is they who constitute the real, essential being of the world. Its all-encompassing personality character receives in the aeon of Old Saturn a certain, potential mirror-reflection in the first beings of the new (third) Divine Hierarchy, the spirits of Personality, who emerge within our cycle as a result of the formation of otherness-of-being. Their ‘I’ was then no less far removed from the ‘I’ of the Hierarchies than the human ‘I’ is far removed from it in the aeon of the Earth. This was the identity ‘I’ = not-‘I’ in its emergence under the conditions of Saturn. The significance of the small unitary nature of the ‘I’ of the spirits of Personality at that time lay in the fact that it had a relation to the emergent material world which, on account of its immediacy, was inaccessible to the Hierarchies, and that this ‘I’ was even able to act upon the material world at its own discretion. From a certain moment onwards, says Rudolf Steiner, the spirits of Personality stopped changing all the outer warmth into an inner warmth, and began to leave a portion of it outside, in order to be able to attain to self-consciousness. They had to distinguish themselves as individualities, as ‘I’, from the outer world (see GA 110, 13.4.1909). But in so doing, they laid the foundation for an eighth element, an eighth member in the system of the seven-membered world individual in its orientation towards the world of *otherness-of-being*. This principle extended further across the entire evolutionary cycle. In the Earth aeon this came to expression in the fact that this aeon

received a *twofold* development (it is reflected within the solar system), for which reason it is possible to regard the aeon of Vulcan as the *eighth* element, which extends our evolutionary cycle to the octave. This also means that Vulcan becomes the beginning of another universe. But we will be returning to this question later.

In the aeon of the Earth the world individual became ninefold (we are not discussing here its connection with the Divine Trinity). The 'I' through which it acquires a relation to 'this side of the world' is now human. It differs from the 'I' of the spirits of Personality (on Old Saturn) in that it has immersed itself totally in sense-reality and undergoes its development within the materiality of the world, whereas all the beings of the third Hierarchy have not descended lower than the imaginative plane (Fig. 25b).

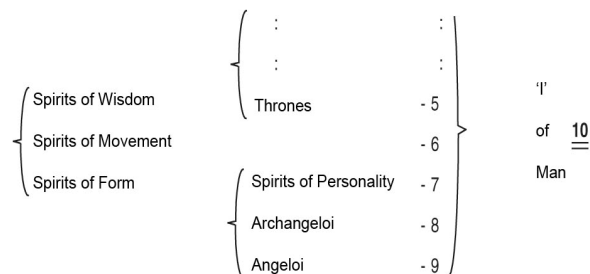


Fig. 25b

In the human being the world individual attains the farthest stage of materialization that is necessary for development. And therefore the restoration, through the human being, of its twelfoldness, with the inclusion in it of the entire structure of otherness-of-being, is posited by the absolute. This goal will only be attained completely at the end of the evolutionary cycle. The human being will then acquire the individual triune spirit: Manas, Buddhi and Atma will become members of his being. The animal kingdom will then ascend to the Life-Spirit, and the plant kingdom to Manas. The mineral kingdom of today, whose group 'I' rests within the womb of the first Hierarchy, unites with this 'I', just as is now happening with the human being. It becomes, within this 'I', object-oriented consciousness, but under entirely different conditions.

It is probable that the first Logos will become the World-I (of whose personification we can, at the present time, only form a figurative conception in the form of the 'all-seeing eye' within a triangle), since everything in the universe is engaged in development and ascent. It is quite clear that, by virtue of this fact alone, the structure of the universe in its entirety will undergo a radi-

cal change. Time will merge with the space of the spirit. But it would appear that something of otherness-of-being will persist beyond the limits of our cycle. This follows from the logic of the ascent of the natural kingdoms. By the end of the cycle the mineral kingdom can only be personified to the stage of the consciousness-soul. But the principle of mirror-reflection will then come to an end. In what will this last realm in the sequence of creations be mirrored? We have no answer to this question (Fig. 25c).

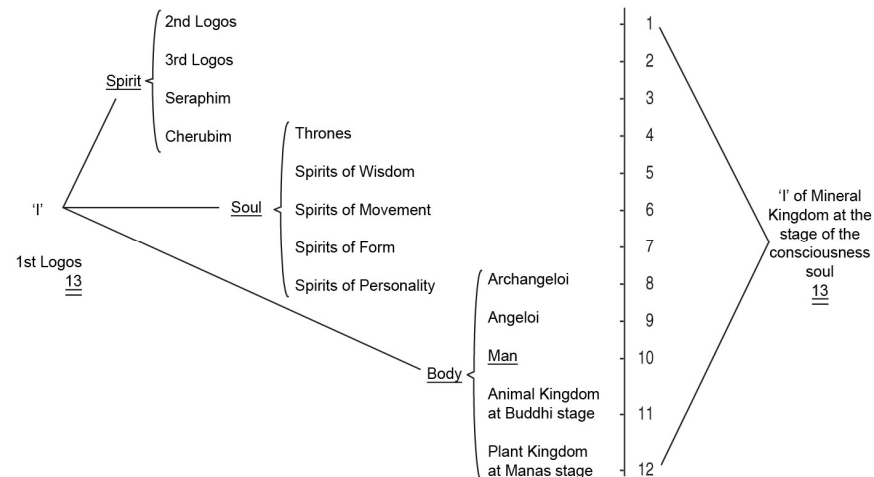


Fig. 25c

This is the difficult complex of personified relationships which have been engendered through the tri-hypostatical revelation of God. The numerical method allows us to come close in knowledge to phenomena of an unbelievably high spiritual level. And knowledge of this kind shows itself to be not only justified but also necessary for the human being now.

4. Manvantara and Pralaya

The evolution of the seven aeons progresses through the course of time and remains continually within the twelfoldness of the 'everlasting'. It pulsates, as it were, between the everlasting and the temporal. The spatio-temporal conditions of development proceed along the 'horizontal' axis of evolution. The impulses of the creative spirit stream into it 'along the vertical'. The line of real development emerges as the combined result of the spatio-temporal metamorphoses and the impulses of the individualizing spirit which fructifies them. The 'vertical' of development arose on the ur-phenomenal level

through the revelations within the Divine tri-unity. In all its working it is not spatially conditioned and it remains connected only with the moment of the present. In this 'triangle' of relationships which is enclosed within eternity (we spoke of it in Ch. II), the basis for the emergence into the realm of time, of becoming, arose as between the hypostases of the Spirit and the Father, and that, if one may express it thus, from both sides simultaneously. It is thanks to this fact that the 'horizontal' of development came into being, and as a result of its interaction with the world-'vertical', real evolution assumed the form of a chalice (Fig. 26).

Through the hypostasis of the Holy Spirit there arose the self-revelation of the Tri-unity outwards, and its glory shone forth. There extended from the Father to the Son the building up of the new Kingdom of God – the universe of our cycle –, which is filled with the life of the Divine Son. All three hypostases together create according to the following principles: "1st Logos: Revealer; 2nd Logos: revelation, activity; 3rd Logos: revealed mirror-image" (Beiträge 67/68, p. 20). The Spirit 'reflects back', carries the fruits of evolution from the future, or rather from every point of the present, back to the beginning of the world where, for the first time, the Father revealed the Son.

The idea conceived within the spirit of the world individual moved him to the act of self-revelation. The triune Logos imbued the Hierarchies with the consciousness of the new creation. Their orientation within, towards their own being, was transformed into orientation outwards, a process comparable to an awakening. The Seraphim were the first to receive the plan of the world. They became the foundation for a relationship between the Trinity and the beings of the Hierarchies. The relation of the hypostasis of the Son to the world was at first only mediated by Seraphim and Cherubim, and thus did not unite with materiality. Only in the aeon of the Earth did Christ descend through all the levels of the Hierarchies down into matter. In this way He was the last of the souls to be incarnated on Earth, and this was *the soul of the entire world*. The connection of the Holy Spirit with the world was mediated by the Seraphim alone; for this reason, He bears out of the future and out of eternity the plan of the entire world, but only mirrors back to the beginning of the world that which is accessible to self-consciousness, to the 'I' – the reflected image within it of the Glory of God (Fig. 27).

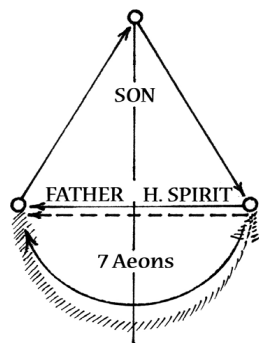


Fig. 26

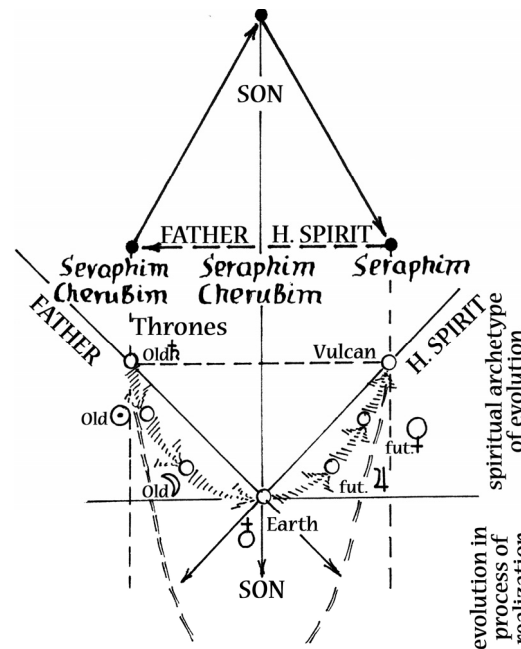


Fig. 27

The creative activity of the three Logoi is simultaneously intelligible, ethical and aesthetic. It endows all religions with content. What Rudolf Steiner says in this connection, taking into account the conditions of the earthly aeon, is shown in Fig. 28. The preceding diagram explains to us why the second Logos reveals Himself in the aspect of eternity: He is the Regent of the 'vertical' of the spirit, and *in this sense He is the unitary God*. He carries over the moment into eternity; therefore if he 'tarries'* in the moment, the human being risks, as Goethe so impressively describes in 'Faust', losing his connection with eternity.

But the Father carries eternity into the moment, the boundless into the bounded. The bounding, limiting activity of the Holy Spirit is expressed in the blessing of what the Creator has created: "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God" (Matth.5, 9). Through the Holy Spirit the human being acquires self-consciousness, becomes an 'I'-being, an integral part of the world individual, a son of God. But he must first go through the separation from God, through doubt (Ger. Zweifel), through dualism. Rudolf Steiner characterizes the working of the Holy Spirit with a word that is not found in a German dictionary – 'Zweit-

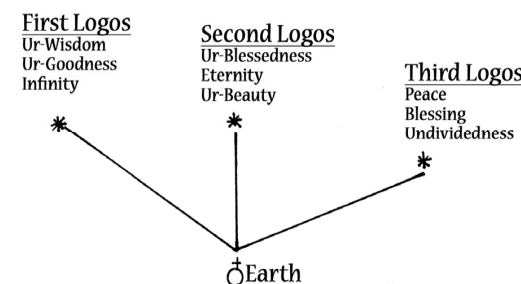


Fig. 28 (GA 266/1, p. 192)

* "If to the moment I can say: Oh stay, thou art so wondrous fair!"

losigkeit', which means the absence of division. For in the Holy Spirit all antitheses in the world reach a synthesis. This is why Rudolf Steiner wrote a *philosophy* and not a religion or an aesthetics of freedom. The problem of freedom, like that of dualism, arises within consciousness and demands a rational demonstration (Begründung) of monism.

Through the working of the Holy Spirit in the human being, the sense-impressions, perceptions and feelings were individualized and, thanks to them, conceptual thinking developed. In the aeon of the Old Moon, whose Regent was the Holy Spirit, the etheric-physical human monads were endowed with an astral body and established within otherness-of-being as autonomous entities gifted with the capacity of sensation. This occurred through the acquisition by the monads of a psychic life of their own. Such are the evolutionary consequences of the revelations of the tri-hypostatic God. Regarding what is shown in Fig. 27, we are fully justified in saying that God remains transcendent with respect to his creation. His immanence in the world begins at that stage in development where no more than one single quality possessed by the real spirit crosses over to the side of otherness-of-being. The first sensations awakened in the human monads in the earthly aeon were also the beginning of the development of such qualities. From that moment onwards, the human being began to be the centre of attraction on the earthly plane, for many forces and phenomena of development, above all for the natural kingdoms, whereby their existence was radically transformed, and the world began, as a result of development, to undergo a transition to unity, in such a way that otherness-of-being and the laws of evolution merged together into a unitary system.

* * *

Two concepts have brought us closer to an understanding of the world as a system. They are 1. the world individual and 2. the main organizing principle of development: namely, the world cross, which – as we will express it from now onwards – is formed by the horizontal of being and the vertical of consciousness. If we bring the two concepts together, we are attempting to fill with richer content our idea of the unitary picture of the world which is simultaneously in process of becoming and in universal stasis.

The Divine Tri-unity, in the course of the aeons, provides the creation of nature not only with impulses, but also with laws. In that higher world we can recognize indirectly, thanks to our knowledge of its manifestations in the structural laws of development, a certain fivefoldness. It is called the world of the Great Pralaya. Each aeon (Manvantara) does not emerge from the past, but from above, from the Pralaya, descends into otherness-of-being, and then returns to Pralaya. Since, between the descent and the ascent, there lies a period

of development which has to do with materialization, with space and time, that which descends acquires new qualities, with which it later begins the ascent. We have already tried to characterize the process as a whole by using the picture of the chalice. But ultimately we have here to do with a circle, of which the chalice of the Manvantara is a constituent part.

The Manvantara descends and ascends through four stages. Together with the Pralaya it forms a circle. The Pralaya descends and rises again through three stages. The universal totality of the world can be expressed as a twelve-fold system. The world of the Pralaya stands higher than all the aeons; it is the domain of eternity. It exists both before the aeon of Saturn and after the aeon of Vulcan. Its spheres stand outside the spiritual Zodiac and are known in esotericism as the 'Crystal Heaven'. Already in ancient times human beings clothed their knowledge of it in three concepts, with which three of its spheres are defined. The first, on the lowest level, is called Nirvana; the second, lying in the middle, is called Paranirvana; the third and highest, Mahaparanirvana. There, the Divine Trinity is revealed directly. In these three spheres something of a decisive nature happens for the formation and transformation of the laws of development, and this comes to expression in the Manvantara in the reciprocal positions, interactions and relations of the Hierarchies. The world individual dwells, when the Manvantara comes to an end, as pure, triune spirit in the Crystal Heaven. When it inclines towards development, it descends as a personified impulse from the one universal source of the world, traverses the two lower spheres of the Pralaya, realizes its aims in the Manvantara and then returns to its origin. Thus arise the seven conditions of Manvantara and the five conditions of Pralaya (Fig. 29).

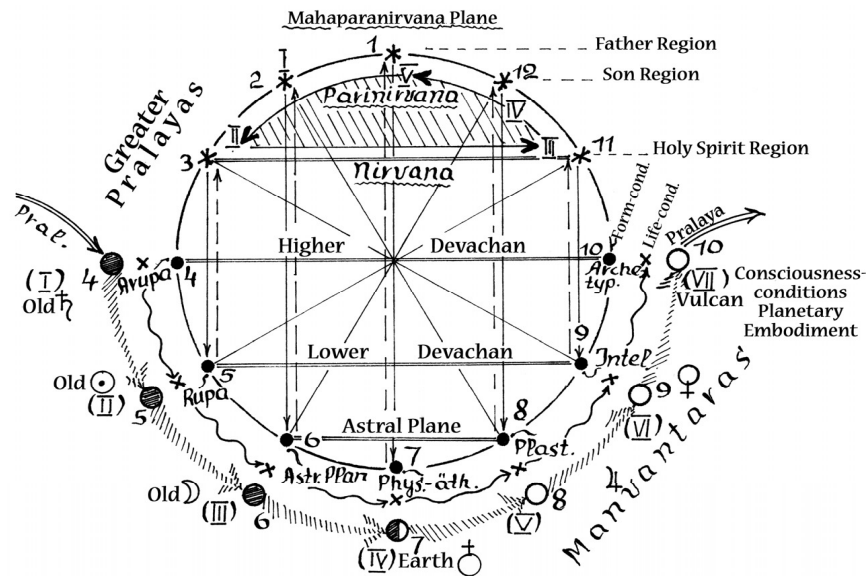


Fig. 29: The World System

In the world of the Manvantara the first three and the last three conditions form a mirror-like reflection of each other. Here too one can justifiably speak of a *symmetry* of world development. The middle, lowest condition (which corresponds to the fourth stage of the Manvantara) is our space-time continuum. For the spheres of the spirit this represents a point-like object (atom) and the extreme antithesis to the point-like nature of the Mahaparanirvana, whose reality one may imagine as the presence of the *entire* universe in *each one* of its points. The point-like structure of being in the world of the senses is its *moment* in time. Reality here lies only in the *moments of transformation*. Their fruits, as pure spirit, leave the physical-material plane once they have come into being, and exist further in the human spirit or in higher spiritual beings. Apart from these fruits, everything in our world is Maya. Its three-dimensionality within which the three natural kingdoms develop has a meaning and a purpose only to the extent that it serves the manifestation and the becoming of the individual human spirit. It is this which gives value to otherness-of-being, to the earthly Manvantara.

Above the physical-etheric plane there extends the astral plane, the world of play and of the existence of the desires, sympathies and antipathies; these build up its forces, which are at the same time its 'substance'. It is also known as the plane of imaginative consciousness. The world conditions on this plane

differ in the descent and the ascent of the higher impulse of development, but, as we have said, they are also symmetrical. And it is thanks to these two characteristics, similarity in the one respect and difference in the other, that the astral and the two other planes which lie above it acquire a relation to time and have both a past and a future.

Above the astral plane – the 'soul-world' – there extends Devachan or 'spirit-land', the world of archetypes which are creative beings. They are the creators of all that comes into being in the physical and also in the soul (astral) world. There is a lower and an upper Devachan. Lower Devachan is the world of inspirative consciousness, of the 'harmony of the spheres', for here everything sounds, but not with earthly tones. The flowing, continually changing life on this plane is made of the 'material', the substance, of thought. In upper Devachan, the world of intuitions, there dwell the creative forces of the archetypes themselves. Here the 'intentions' are manifest, which underlie our world. The thoughts of the physical plane are mirror-reflections of these seed-thought beings. In upper Devachan there is revealed to the initiate the 'spiritual word' through which things and creatures communicate their nature 'in words', make known their 'eternal names' (see GA 9, p. 83-113). This is the sphere to which one turns in one's practice of the mastery of 'beholding' thinking, and in it there unfolds for the human being a unique opportunity to enter into contact on the earthly plane with so lofty a sphere of the spirit.

When all four stages of the Manvantara are completed (in the fourth globe), an activity occurs which pervades them all in the vertical dimension. It creates the conditions for the ascent, of all that is created and is undergoing development, through the stages of individualization, and within the realm of spatio-temporal becoming it manifests in the form of the developmental laws of nature. The four stages represent different form-conditions and are called globes. Three of them exist and work in the aspect of the past, and three in that of the future. The fourth globe lies in the middle; through it the three globes of the past are metamorphosed into those of the future.

The full cycle of development of the seven form-conditions embodies as a totality the life-condition of an aeon, or a Round. The seven Rounds form a unity, the system of the planetary incarnation, of the aeon, of the Manvantara. If we imagine this picture in its entirety, we see that an aeon attains its greatest densification or materialization at its mid-point, and this is the fourth globe of the fourth life-condition, where world-evolution is at present. Here the most essential thing is taking place – the creation out of nothing in the world of otherness-of-being, a process which will have the greatest influence on all future conditions of the earthly Manvantaras and of those to come.

In its ascent into upper Devachan, the world loses all modes and attributes of manifested being; for this reason, the series of seven globes (the Rounds) are separated from one another by the smaller Pralayas. After completion of the seven Rounds, the Great Pralaya occurs. Then everything of which the human being can form any conception disappears. The world enters the hidden condition of non-manifestation. It once left this condition for the first time for our evolutionary cycle, and thus the Pralaya of Saturn does *not* belong to this cycle. The future Vulcan also has its Pralaya, which takes leave of our cycle. Thanks to this fact, the cycle can be transformed into something new (see Fig. 29).

In Fig. 29 we have given a kind of overall scheme of the entire evolutionary cycle. The reader can ‘open it out’ chronologically and thereby gain an overview of its individual stages. What must be borne in mind, however, is the principle of the number seven which is repeated on different levels, and the system-forming principle which ascends on the levels of the Hierarchies.

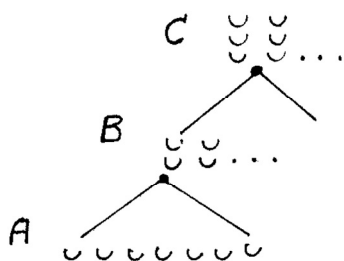


Fig. 29a

With regard to the universal system as a whole, its system-forming principle must be sought at the centre of the circle. In each aeon one of the Divine hypostases fulfils the role of such a universally organizing centre. It is then the Regent of the entire aeon, as the combined totality of the Manvantara and the Great Pralaya. Christ is the Regent of the earthly aeon. He is for us the unitary God. He speaks always of the Father and of the Holy Spirit. He indicates in this way the great, all-embracing connection of the world, and the sequence connecting its parts, the aeons. With the completion of the evolutionary cycle the centre of the universe changes its character.

The Regency of the three hypostases in the seven aeons is shown in Fig. 30. In the 13th century A.D. it was reflected in the Rosicrucian formula, which expresses the fundamental esoteric core of Christianity. This is also contained in the diagram.

This diagram helps us to understand in what sense God the Father is the Alpha and Omega of the world – namely, as the beginning and the end of the entire evolutionary cycle. Christ proceeded from the Father and returns to the Father. In the sense of the Apocalypse of St. John He is the Alpha and Omega of the earthly aeon. But high above the aeon, on the level of the Mahaparanirvana, all three hypostases are one in their essential being. Especially significant is the fact that Christ is the Regent of three of the seven aeons, namely of

those which have special importance in evolution – thanks to their connection with the ether-substance of the world and also with the human ‘I’.

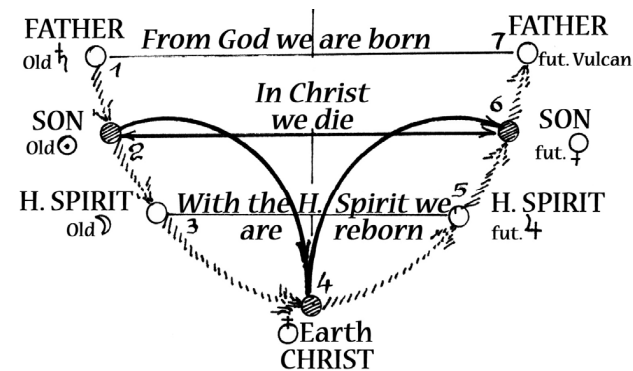


Fig. 30

5. The Macro-Anthropos

The human being, viewed as a totality, is ‘counted’ in such a way that, through the course of aeons, he must develop seven conditions of consciousness. Each of these conditions unfolds in the course of seven life-conditions (rounds); while the life-condition passes through seven form-conditions (globes). Thus we arrive at a total of (7 x 7 x 7 =) 343 evolutionary conditions of the world and man. Our present point in time has already passed beyond the first half of this total number. During this first phase human being was a passive element of development; during the second half of the conditions, development will depend to an increasing degree on the actions of human beings, who will become free and at the same time correspond entirely to universal harmony. The human being will know how he must ‘number’ the world, as he will have perfect knowledge of how he himself was ‘numbered’. The striving of the human being for absolute knowledge is therefore natural and an inherent part of his being. It is not for the sake of a ‘globalization’ of knowledge that we now turn our attention to the macrocosmic phenomena. In order to attain a complete understanding of the everyday, one must rise to the greatest height accessible to knowledge. Human freedom arises and develops in the everyday affairs of man, and is at the same time the absolute which has been ‘pressed down’ within the framework of this everyday existence.

Law, and causal necessity are conditioning factors behind even the most insignificant human action, whether it be on the level of memory, emotion, thought, deed. And a long and painstaking search must be undertaken, in order

to find a sphere within the human being where the free deed can arise. This sphere must correspond to the highest levels of being and consciousness, where world necessity can begin to germinate. The universe is a highly conscious super-being whose constituent members all work upon one another in the Manvantara in accordance with the law of cause and effect. But this being is conditioned within himself, is self-conditioning, and therefore engenders the motives of his activity himself; he is free. And one must comprehend how in the being of the universe freedom and necessity weave together, then one will also see how this takes place in the human being.

Behind every phenomenon of the sense-world there stands a supersensible ur-phenomenon. This consists of one or more intelligible beings – their position and their mutual relationships, which come to expression in the phenomenal world in the form of the laws of nature and of the spirit. It is therefore the striving of Anthroposophy to join together into a single wholeness knowledge of sense-perceptible reality and the knowledge of both the great and also the very smallest processes and changes in the world of the spiritual beings, though it does this in the sense of an extended natural science and not of transcendentalism or mysticism. The changes in the highest spheres of the spirit can be compared with a flywheel in a complicated mechanism, whose half-rotation causes the rapid turning of the small cogwheels. A further analogy can be found in the genetic structures which are microscopically small in the form in which they manifest materially, but whose modifications, taking place almost invisibly on the molecular level, bring about radical changes in the whole physical, soul and spiritual organism of the human being.

Thus the human being succumbs to relativism and everyday existentialism, because he is unable to make the connection between the minor events in the world and their spiritual archetypes. In the existence of the world the elements do not form a system. Therefore an element can only be known once one has found the system to which it belongs. Therein lies the principle by which the element is conditioned. It is, in the first place, triune, since all true phenomena and objects in the world are triune. This is a very lofty principle, and yet its phenomenology excludes freedom. All that is subject to it is real, but in it the higher 'Bedingtheit' (state of being conditioned) is dominant. More supple, more mobile than this is the sevenfoldness. Thanks to it, the higher unconscious, the superconscious is metamorphosed into the self-conditioned nature (Selbstbedingtheit) of the organic and soul-being of man, whose consciousness ascends to introspection. But this is not yet the sphere of freedom.

The spirit in the world individual is free; it dwells in the realm of Pralaya. The true spirit of the human being can only be understood in its relation to the

world-spirit. The sevenfold nature of man – the fruit of development in the Manvantaras – merely provided the foundation for the repetition or the creation anew within it of that which directs all sevenfoldnesses in the world: namely, *the fivefold Great Pralaya*, which within itself is also threefold (see Fig. 31).

Rudolf Steiner tells us that it is the mission of the human being to become, in time, the *tenth and entirely special* Hierarchy. It will be called the Hierarchy of free – that is to say, purely spiritual – love, which is not conditioned by inheritance or physiology. In nothing that is conditioned by the laws prevailing within the limits of the Manvantara do we find a sufficient basis for the emergence of such a Hierarchy. Here it is only possible to create the necessary preconditions for it. The union of freedom and love belongs only to the world of the Great Pralaya, of the Divine Triunity, which conditions everything (according to His 'image and likeness') and is, Himself, conditioned by nothing. But within this Divine Triunity a development is planned, through which new beings are to arise. They stand lower than all the Hierarchies, and yet are endowed with the attribute of the highest Triunity. In this way the highest Divine glory is present in 'the other'. It begins to shine forth towards the universal wellspring of forms from the moment when a free action is performed, done out of pure love for the deed itself. This must not lead us to the false conclusion that the Divine Hierarchies exist in a state of slavish subjection. No, so grandiose are their experiences that it is not given to the human being even in the moments of highest spiritualization, of pure ecstasy, to share in the least significant of them. Many of these beings reached long ages ago what the human being will only attain in the aeon of Vulcan, and have even progressed beyond this. For us, they are all Gods, Creators. They experience the highest will as their own. But, as Rudolf Steiner says, what we call freedom of choice, above all freedom of choice between good and evil, is foreign to them.

Ultimately, the reason why evil arose was that the highest God, in order to begin a new cycle of creation, had to bring about a phenomenon of mirror-reflection, of duality, which in time became an antithesis, a polarity of two worlds: that of matter and that of spirit. Its appearance became the precondition for the emergence of the human Hierarchy, which has the capacity to unite within itself freedom and love. This it can do, because the antithesis of two worlds exists only in and for the human being, and is finally resolved only in acts of creation out of nothing, in an activity that is carried out purely out of love for the deed, which from the beginning of the world is a characteristic of the Divine. The stupendous nature of the task that is fulfilled by the human being also bears eloquent witness to the grandeur of the ur-phenomenon by

which it is conditioned. In the eastern tradition it was given the names which we have indicated above (see Fig. 29), and which do not reflect the essential character of its personification. Christ, in His Gospel, gave them other names: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We can say nothing of the Divinity in Himself until the moment of His primal revelation; from this point, however, when the evolutionary cycle was inaugurated, the processes of descent and ascent began. They revealed the relation between the three hypostases, the dynamic of the Absolute. Movement within the unconditioned remains a unity; then it takes on a triune character, and finally a unity within the fivefoldness. *The fivefoldness within the womb of the unitary Divinity is the ur-phenomenon of human freedom.* In esotericism this is expressed in the form of a pentagram and is called Microcosm, or the Third Logos; meaning that the human being in this form is a small reflection of the macrocosm, a reflection of the higher Divine plan brought to the creation by the Holy Spirit. This plan is represented to the 'beholding' faculty in the fivefold symbol of the human being. The Holy Spirit is therefore the ur-phenomenon of the human 'I'-consciousness; he unites the individually thinking human being, particularly when he thinks in 'beholding', with his great ur-phenomenon, the macro-anthropos, who is preserved within the world of the Great Pralaya and, working from there as a 'plan', fructifies (fertilizes) being, which justifies us in speaking of the anthropocentrism of world-development (Fig. 31).

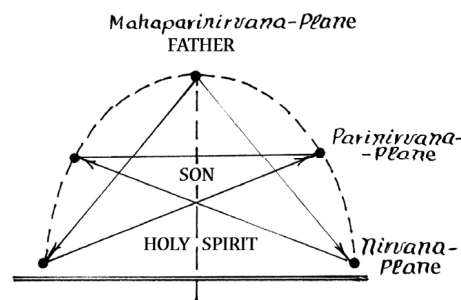


Fig. 31

The movements of the forces in the pentagram are of many different kinds, and each has its own significance. Through their activity the pentagram is oriented in space: it has an 'above' and a 'below', though in a spiritual, evolutionary and ethical sense. It is the five-membered principle of unity 'made visible as an object' (because of the human being) in the aeon of the Earth, through the solar system. In this sense, the pentagram expresses the *planetary unity*, borne within himself by the human being, and is a symbol of the system-building principle of the planetary system (see the figures of Agrippa von Nettesheim). The pentagram in the human being is an expression of the repetition within him of the entire planetary system in miniature.

Before it became the system-building principle of earthly man, the pentagram, as his highest ur-phenomenon, underwent a series of mediatory processes, which led it to embodiment within the human being. The first stage in

such a process in the aeon of the earth was the planetary system. This was condensed out of the universal astrality during the transition of evolution from the third to the fourth etheric-physical globe. This system was at first an indivisible unity. It is the system referred to when we speak of the primal nebula of Kant and Laplace. Within the unity a structure was potentially contained – the sevenfold structure of our cycle of evolution. This gave rise to the sevenfoldness of the planets: Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, Moon. The Earth forms the octave within the planetary cycle.*

All the planets are subject to the guidance of lofty cosmic intelligences. The seven-membered earthly human being is in continuous contact with them on a super-conscious level. The planetary system is the Macro-Anthropos of all seven aeons: past, present and future. The human being dies 'into the planetary system' and is born 'out of it' (onto the Earth). It is the Pralaya of the Manvantara of his incarnation. A completed cycle of a human incarnation is the image, on a small scale, of the aeon. It consists of an earthly human life and the spiritual evolution after death, in which the human being encompasses with his existence the entire planetary system. This is interiorized completely within the incarnated human being; as the human becomes discarnate, he is 'turned inside out' spiritually: into the planetary system. The reciprocal relation, with the quality of essential being, of these two aspects of the cycle of human life is also expressed in the figure of the pentagram, as shown by Agrippa. This picture is also subject to development, but only in the transition from one root-race (these are constituent parts of a globe) to another, or from one aeon to the next.

The human being can be beheld imaginatively in the form of the pentagram. This is the form of his ether-body, which only received this form with the earthly aeon, as the human being was then endowed with an individual 'I'. Through the 'I', the archetype of man – preserved hitherto in the Great Pralaya – received the possibility of incarnation. (It was thanks to the laws at work here, which were respected and not bypassed, that Christ became Man).

So long as the human being is in the involutive stage of development, his life *between* two incarnations fulfils the role of the Pralaya, as we have already seen. But the entire world-constellation of the human being is fundamentally changed when he begins the evolution of his own 'I'. From this moment onwards, *the Great Pralaya descends into earthly man, and from now on he has his Manvantara in the life after death* – i.e. in the spiritual planetary system.

* Uranus, Neptune and Pluto did not develop within the solar system, but were incorporated into it (as visitors) from the outer cosmos.

The beginning of this transformation is a significant moment in the evolution of the world as a whole. It is not an easy thing, even for one accustomed to spiritual thought, to conceive that the earthly human being is able to become the *lawgiver as to the existence of the solar system*. But precisely this is the case. And it can be grasped, once one has understood the principle of freedom. Why is it, actually, that the human being can become free? Because in his individual higher 'I' he unites with his great ur-phenomenon, which was planned by God from the beginning of the world. The conditioning to which this ur-phenomenon is subject is on a higher level than anything that can be imagined within this evolutionary cycle. This conditioning (Bedingtheit) is, therefore, in reality universal *self-conditioning* (Selbstbedingtheit) – *i.e. freedom*.

Thus the World Pralaya begins to harmonize with the earthly life of the human being. He emerges within this earthly life as a seven-membered being in harmony with the fundamental law of the Manvantara (in which development takes place via sevenfold metamorphoses). But of greatest importance for the individual evolution of man is the *five-membered nature* of his being. In fact, the sevenfoldness of the planetary system is subordinate to this, as can be seen in the figures of Agrippa.

On the earth the human being unites the sevenfoldness of his involutive being with the fivefoldness of his evolutive being, through progressing on the path to freedom. This connection will remain long into the future, but the moment when it enters consciousness is of extreme importance, for this is when the human being begins, through the power of the 'I', to bring about, himself, all the changes in his fivefold nature. And he gains mastery of his sevenfoldness, of its unfolding on all levels, from the material to the spiritual. In this case, he begins, also after death when he ascends into the planetary spheres, out of his 'I' to posit his own being within them, consciously. And in the future it will become ever more decisive for the existence of the human being after death, what he makes of himself upon the Earth, and to what extent he becomes a free spirit here. The five-membered being of man began its development before the emergence of the planetary system. It was not yet connected with the number seven, and represented the real revelation of its higher ur-phenomenon. It can always be beheld in sufficiently high spheres of the spirit. John describes in the Apocalypse how, after he had received from Christ Himself – the Alpha and Omega of our aeon – the messages from seven Churches, in which the human being is given the task of developing in his spirit the sevenfoldness – or, to express it in figurative terms, of uniting the glory of God with His Kingdom, *i.e. consciousness with being* (the symbol for this is the hexagram with a point in the centre) – he was raised up into a higher sphere,

and there the ur-phenomenon of the human being was revealed to him in supersensible experience. He saw the 'Throne', *i.e. the primal substance of the spirits of Will*, which forms in all aeons the Divine foundation of being (which appears from above) and on it sat the Christ as almighty God – *i.e. in unity with the Father and the Holy Spirit*. Christ says of Himself that he is the Alpha and Omega, and this means that, on that spiritual height, past and future are not separated by time; there, the past can also appear in the form of what is to come. John beholds the Throne of God at that boundary where the Pralaya passes over into the Manvantara. The earthly aeon will at some time in the future ascend to that boundary, and then descend as the aeon of Jupiter, the 'New Jerusalem'.

One can say that, at any given moment of the earthly aeon, the great ur-phenomenon of man is revealed to supersensible vision at that boundary. John describes this revelation as follows: He saw "in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne" four beasts, and the first beast was "like a lion, the second beast was like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle" (Rev. 4; 6-7).

It is in this form that the ur-phenomenon of the human being enters the earthly Manvantara. In its descent from the Great Pralaya (and also in the ascent into it), it is led by Christ Himself. John says that in the midst of these four beasts he saw a lamb. Thanks to the Christ, the human being unites his earthly phenomenon with his ur-phenomenon and attains his Pralaya during earthly life – the Pralaya being the world of the Divine Tri-unity. So long as the human being has not overcome, has not lived out his Manvantara (his inherited nature, the lower 'I', and finally his Karma), his participation in the Pralaya remains potential only. In order to be able to 'partake of the Christ' we must attain the strength to offer up in sacrifice the fruits of involution, pass through the Goethean 'dying and becoming', or follow the advice of the Apostle Paul: Do the same as the Hierarchies and sacrifice that which stands at his full and free disposal: the lower 'I'.

John uses the puzzling expression "in the midst of the throne and round about the throne". He wishes in this way to indicate the dual aspect of the ur-phenomenon, which is on the one hand within the womb of the Divine, and, on the other, enters into evolution. As we recall, the Seraphim receive the plan of evolution from the Divine Tri-unity and transmit it to the Hierarchies below them. In this plan it is supersensibly revealed that Christ leads the ur-phenomenon into evolution 'from above', whereby he takes upon Himself the task of reuniting with it in the human being on the earthly plane. John experiences the Seraphim in the form of 'beasts' (*i.e. in the Zodiac*) with six (twice

three) wings. Their ‘six-winged’ nature is the idea, or the law of creation, to which we have already referred in connection with Fig. 19. The Seraphim are the personification of this law. They were “full of eyes”, John says, because all the members of these beings possess the higher ‘I’. This is the entire scale of the Hierarchies.

The Seraphim do not reveal themselves to John in their essential being, but in the way they approach the creation – i.e. not in an intuitive but in the inspirative state of consciousness. The Crystal Heaven* also shows him its ‘outer side’ as the Zodiac. This circle of constellations is the projection of the Divine Tri-unity onto the sphere of being. Within it are revealed the ‘World Cross’ – the ‘horizontal’ of being and the ‘vertical’ of consciousness, but also the twelvefold unity of the world, and much more besides. Through this circle, it can be said, is revealed the way in which the world and man are ordered according to the principle of number.

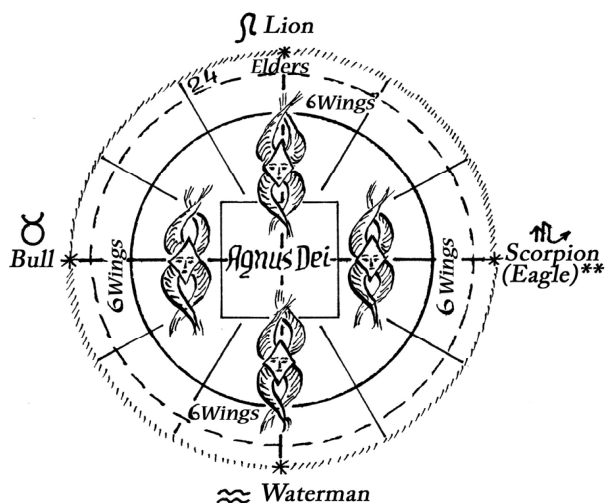


Fig. 32

The Cherubim are given the task of ‘working on’ the universal aim, which comes to expression in the *world cross*. Hence they are *four-winged*. Their mission places them in the ‘four corners’ of the world and of the human ur-

* This symbol has many meanings.

** In the far distant past, the constellation of Scorpio was called the constellation of the Eagle. At that time man’s thinking was imaginative. The faculty of understanding (Verstand) was in a certain sense the reason for the ‘fall’ of this sphere of the Zodiac.

phenomenon, the Macro-Anthropos, who bears within himself the three future systems: the nerve-sense system, the rhythmic system and the system of the limbs and metabolism. As the fourth appears the ‘I-being with human countenance, in the Apocalyptic seal of St. John.* This fourfoldness is formed by the principal signs in the four zones of the Zodiac; the others merely give them support. John sees the ur-phenomenon enter into temporal development and, as we explained above, emerge from it again. Its connection with time is, as described by Rudolf Steiner, expressed with the help of 24 elders, who incline before the One who is seated on the throne. In his lecture-cycle on the Apocalypse of St. John (GA 104), Rudolf Steiner says that in them we have to do with guides of the universe, the world-regulators of time, ‘the world-clock’, and he explains why there are not twelve, but twenty-four of them. The number expresses here a complicated relation between Pralayas and Manvantaras in the evolutionary cycle; but a closer examination of this question would lie beyond the aims of our research.

6. The Aesthetics and Ethics of Evolution

As a pupil in the upper classes of the grammar school, Rudolf Steiner was already studying Kant’s ‘Critique of Pure Reason’ intensively. He said later, in his doctoral thesis, that if one approaches the study of epistemology not from the standpoint of the history of philosophy, but on a purely factual level, “one will hardly miss any phenomenon of importance if one takes into consideration no more than the time since Kant brought out his ‘Critique of Pure Reason’. All that had previously been achieved in this field is repeated during this period” (GA 3, p.25). There is no doubt whatever that Kant must be acknowledged as a key figure in European philosophy, with respect both to its strengths and to its weaknesses. In him there came to expression not only the inability of philosophy to attain knowledge of objective being (das Seiende), but also the foundations that had come to maturity towards the end of the 18th century, which enable Goethe to achieve the breakthrough to his ‘power of judgment in beholding’.

Kant was convinced that he had created a transcendental philosophy of the fundamental principle of human cognition, wherein was concealed the possibility of attaining pure knowledge a priori. It is transcendental also because it builds up a system of concepts that is not based on any sense-experience. He

* This ur-phenomenon, as it is described in Anthroposophy, has been known of in esoteric Christianity for many centuries, as we see, for example, in its depiction in icons.

thereby admits that human knowledge has two sources – the sense-perceptible and the intellect – which perhaps “spring from a root that is common to both, but remains unknown to us”.¹⁰⁷⁾ Anyone who has studied Rudolf Steiner’s theory of knowledge with sufficient seriousness can give the appreciation that is due to the quality of genius contained in this intimation of Kant and also to his attempts to develop it on the level of content. These attempts on Kant’s part are twofold (he is, after all, a born dualist). On the one hand, one can discover in them a correct intimation of the true nature of cognition as it was brought to light by Rudolf Steiner, while on the other we observe how the mind of the philosopher, working with its usual subtlety and finesse, acknowledges the existence of two main stems (Ger. tree-trunks) of knowledge but, instead of seeking their synthesis, simply hews one of them down.

In the cognizing human mind (Geist) Kant finds two original characteristics: the ability to receive impressions, and the spontaneous appearance of concepts. The first of these two characteristics arises through the fact that all knowing begins with an effect of a certain kind exerted upon our soul by the objects (i.e. experience is the beginning of cognition), and as a result of this the soul develops inner representations of (Ger. about) them. The ability to acquire inner representations of the objects is called by Kant ‘Sinnlichkeit’ (operating with the sense-world). It is our own capacity, but at the same time it is produced (determined) by the objects. ‘Sinnlichkeit’ allows us to have perception of the objects. But the intellect has the ability to generate concepts (by) itself. And here (in agreement with Fichte) Kant asserts: “Thoughts without content are empty; perceptions without concepts are blind Only through their joining together can knowledge arise.”¹⁰⁸⁾ This is, so to speak, the Goetheanistic end result of the Kantian theory of knowledge, but Kant did not draw the conclusions to which it unavoidably leads. He took a further step which brought him close to Goetheanism, but unfortunately this also remained an isolated peculiarity of his view of things.

When he spoke about representation (Vorstellung) as it arises in the process of perception, he was not thinking of that real structural entity which emerges as a result of the union of the observation with the concept which is, indeed, spontaneously called forth by the observation. No, Kant inquires into the possibility of ‘pure perceptions’ – i.e. the possibility of an experience before experience – in other words, a priori perceptions. Pure perception contains, so he says, “no more than the form within which (Ger. under which) a thing is perceived...”.¹⁰⁹⁾ The science of the principles of sense-experience of this kind is called by Kant *transcendental aesthetics* – not to be confused with what is

known as the critique of (artistic) taste, which is full of psychologism and has nothing in common with the setting up of the a priori laws of knowledge.

Kant goes on to explain with the help of examples what he means by such an aesthetics. Let us, he says, remove from the object everything that the intellect thinks about it: substance, force, divisibility into parts etc., and also everything that is given us by sense-perception (sensation): hardness, colour etc. Now, all we are left with is extension and image. These belong to pure perception. But this is the nature of space and time – “two pure forms of sense-perception as principles of knowledge a priori”.¹¹⁰⁾

If we try, from the standpoint of spiritual science, to solve the riddle of the Kantian aesthetic of pure perception, we discover in it a relic of ancient imaginative perceptions. These provided nourishment and support for the entire aesthetics and ethics* of the approach to art and life in antiquity, and they did so in the form in which they manifested directly, which, before Socrates, had never come to expression cognitively in the world of ancient Greek culture. Still more: when conceptual thinking arises, one banishes from the ideal State that has been established with its help (we are thinking here of Plato’s ‘Republic’) the poets, because one can no longer find a place in it for them.

A thousand years later, the imaginative aesthetic, which had already died out in Roman times, re-emerged in the Christian art of icon painting in indissoluble unity with transcendental ethics (to borrow the terminology of Kant). The pure, a priori quality of the visions represented in the icons is accounted for by the phenomenon of the direct contact of the human spirit or soul with intelligible beings.

Just such a contact is spoken of by spiritual science, which understands it in terms of the *pure a posteriori* – i.e. *under the aspect of the individual ‘I’*, which the Greeks did not yet possess. It is exactly in this sense that one should take the statements made by Rudolf Steiner concerning Figs. 28 and 32. The human being of today finds it difficult to relate to the thought that one can perceive ideas directly, but it is precisely in this form that they reveal themselves to his ‘beholding’ in the guise of aesthetic and ethical experiences. There is no doubt whatever that these experiences are significantly extended, enriched and even brought to completion when we see the world of ideas in the ‘I’. We then reach through to spiritual science, which shows us that art, science and religion have, in reality, one and the same origin – share a common root. Their primal source was concealed by the coarseness of sense-perceptions.

* At that time aesthetics was inseparably bound up with ethics. Only with the coming of Christianity did the two strive to become independent of one another.

These, however, are affected by supersensible contact with real spirit. And the entire world of perceptions is nothing other than condensed imaginations. It is for this reason that they now reach us along the path of perceptions and also along that of thinking. If we draw both together into a higher unity, we find an individualized relation to the revelation of this unity in pure ethical and aesthetic ‘beholding’.

The aesthetic of pure ‘beholding’ in philosophy begins with the development of the *sense of thought*. It is precisely this that Kant was describing, in foreknowledge of the fact that the foundation of thinking is of a sensible, *perceptible* nature. Hegel possessed a highly developed sense of thought. He made the attempt to let science or knowledge (Wissenschaft) begin with pure being; he characterized the latter as “the unmediated, simple and indeterminate”.¹¹¹⁾ It is “indeterminate” in its relation to reflection and in this sense it is a priori; and it is perceptible, it is pure ‘beholding’, the transcendently aesthetic, but since the coming of Christ and the development of ‘I’-consciousness it is also the immanently ethical. If we are acting in the spirit of Hegel, so Rudolf Steiner says, we would do best to interpret all that he said from a different standpoint (see GA 192, 29.6.1919), namely in the spirit of the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’. (We would add here that, without doubt, the same is partly true of Kant.)

The possibility of attaining pure ‘beholding’ really exists. Reflection, too, is ultimately a form of ‘beholding’ – one form only, of course. When he spoke of transcendental aesthetics, Kant had a foreboding of that turning-point in the form-condition (the globe), where the glory of the thinking spirit must unite with the kingdom. Such is, beginning with philosophy, the path of the human being to God. And there is no path to Him that is more perfect and more in keeping with the spirit of our time. Kant was alarmed at the fact that the path of philosophy becomes, by way of ‘beholding’, the path to God. He set limits to knowledge. If we overcome these, we rise from formal logic to the *logic of thinking as ‘beholding’*, which is just as knowable as the first. In the history of culture the human being followed the opposite path: from ‘beholding’ to the logic of intellectual thinking. This enabled him to attain a free relation to the world of intelligible beings and to develop within himself the picture of the true ‘I’. And now the time has come to go the opposite way, the way that leads to insight into the intelligible world as an organism, to a becoming conscious of one’s own ether-body, the actual bearer of thinking: of world-thinking in an individual form. The world of intelligible beings is also the source of all our aesthetic and ethical experiences, but the immediate supersensible reality of the latter is so great that they can only be revealed to the feeling. The concepts

‘ethics’ and ‘aesthetics’ actually only point to a certain reality, but do not really express it.

The situation is different with the world of thinking that is revealed in beholding. Here, the moral principle is inseparably connected with the thinking principle, and they can be made directly accessible to the beholding spirit. At present an ethic of this kind is unknown to the human being, and he cannot delight in its beauty because the life has been lost from his thinking. In the Addition to chapter 8 of the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’ Rudolf Steiner says the following: “Whoever turns towards thinking in its essential being, will find within it feeling and will, and both of these in the depths of their reality....” (GA 4, p.143). In these objective cosmic ‘depths’ the human being must learn, in devotion to thinking “in its essential being”, to draw forth for himself the moral goals of action. This is why Rudolf Steiner, in the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’, lays the foundation of transcendental ethics as a possibility of attaining ethical judgments of an a priori synthetic nature – i.e. containing new knowledge - : *moral intuitions*. His position in this question is diametrically opposed to Kant’s and culminates in the thesis that “monism.... in the sphere of truly moral action (is) *freedom philosophy*” (ibid. p. 179). A considerable effort is necessary if we are to grasp this central nerve of the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’. But the Book of Genesis also speaks of the reality of the existence of world unity on the level of ethics, aesthetics and thought: “And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good.” “Good” means in this case both beautiful and moral: The creation was beautiful and good. For the Greeks this was an axiom.

We have already seen what the creation was like at its very beginning. The Divine Tri-unity inaugurated it in seven absolute qualities. Through the course of time, these were transformed into the seven creative qualities of man, the a priori, God-given ethics and aesthetics of his becoming. They themselves remain as the esoteric foundation of the categories: seven creative living (i.e. endowed with Buddhi) spirits who lead the human being periodically down into an incarnation and, when this is ended, lead him up to the higher Devachan. On the lower levels of being, where the forms of conceptual thinking arise, they merely touch the ether-body of the human being, whereby they are at the same time reflected back by his physical body, to be taken up by the astral body in the form of the concepts before experience, in experience and after experience. These concepts have both an abstract and a universal character. In the first case, when the nature of the astral body is revealed in them, their universal aspect – the higher Tri-unity and the triune structure of the world arising from it – descends to the dialectical, autonomous movement of the ideas. In

the second case, they assume, by virtue of the character of the ether-body, the form of a seven-membered structure. Research into this structure shows that it is, in its own way, the special case of a macro-phenomenon of the seven aeons. We can therefore claim without reservation that the first three aeons are the universals ‘before the things’ (ante res) and the last three are the universals ‘after the things’ (post res), while the earthly aeon is the universals ‘in the things’ (in rebus); this repeats the role of Christ within the Trinity and forms the basis for a relationship between the three past and the three future aeons. Following the law according to which the qualities of higher being are imprinted on all the lower levels, the relation between the three universals receives, within the polarity of spirit and matter, a whole series of evolutionary forms of expression, the dominant one at all times being the formation of the human consciousness with its capacity to arrive at a monistic picture of the world.

Thus, within the fourth (the etheric-physical) globe, the universals were reflected already in the three stages of the forming of human speech. Hans Erhard Lauer presents these relationships in the following way:

1 st half of Atlantis*	2 nd half of Atlantis	1 st half of post-Atlantis**
universalia ante res	universalia in rebus	universalia post res
gesture language	sound language	conceptual language
limbs	rhythm	head
will	feeling	thinking
spoken sound	word	sentence ¹¹²⁾

At a later stage, during the fourth and the fifth culture-epoch of the fifth – the post-Atlantean – root-race, the universals are experienced by human beings on the levels of mythological, conceptual and beholding thinking (see Fig. 5). In the course of the seven aeons, seven conditions of consciousness are developed. These are acquired by the beings of the third and in part also of the second Hierarchy, and then by the human being. Viewed as a whole, the development of the conditions of consciousness takes place by way of metamorphosis within universal All-consciousness. For the world-totality, which includes within it the human being and the kingdoms of nature, the conditions of consciousness of the first three aeons undergo metamorphosis through the consciousness of the earthly aeon into the consciousness of the three future aeons. This is the *full* reality of the world evolution and of man. The seven-membered system of the conditions of consciousness which belong to the aeons, and the seven-membered nature of the human being form an inseparable unity in evolution, and as we have to do here with world-conditions, this is unavoidably permeated through and through with the ethical principle (Fig. 33).

For the sake of simplicity the types of metamorphosis which are undergone by the aeons are shown in a separate diagram (Fig. 33b, c). They are all taking place continuously and simultaneously, as there are beings who possess all seven conditions of consciousness. The earthly aeon is therefore present simultaneously on four levels of consciousness: the object-oriented level, where only the human consciousness is undergoing metamorphosis (33c 1); the imaginative, the inspirative (33c 3); and the intuitive (33c 4).

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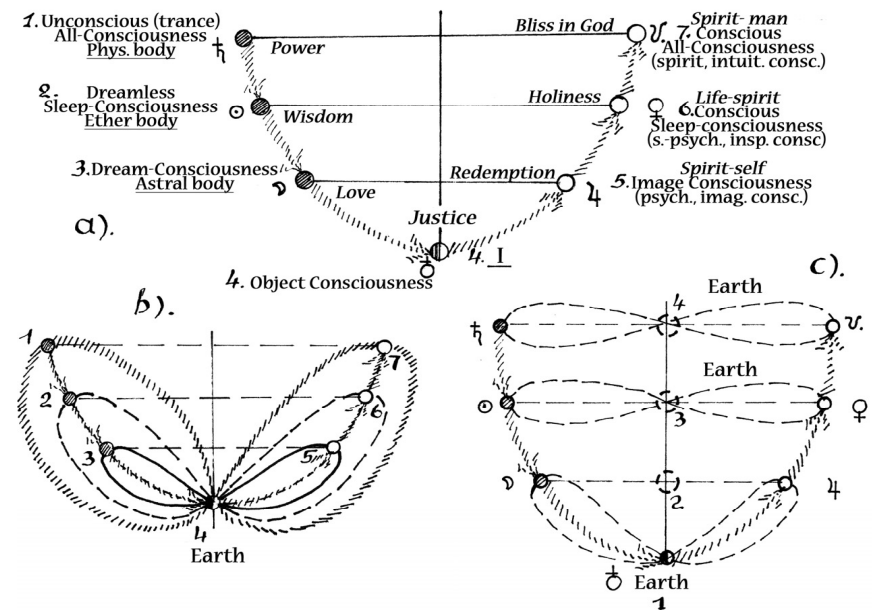


Fig. 33

The ethical content ‘filling’ the aeons can help to deepen our understanding of the conditions of consciousness and their emergence. Thus the force – or All-might –, the will of the Father (see discussion of the 3 Logoi in section 3

* The fourth globe consists of seven periods, which are called the root-races.

** A root-race consists of seven sub-races. In the fifth root-race they are called culture-epochs.

of this main chapter) becomes, by way of metamorphosis through the All-righteousness of the Son, All-blessedness in Vulcan man, who will be imbued with this as with a conscious All-consciousness. Whoever treads the path of initiation can already now, in anticipation, come close to this blessed state (if only ‘from without’, as it were), after he has attained intuition on the path of initiation.

The metamorphoses of consciousness are not possible without metamorphoses of the soul-life. In the aeon of the future Jupiter the human being will be confronted with the task of undergoing redemption and completely overcoming original sin. This will be made possible through the fact that he will begin to think imaginatively, outside the physical body. But this requires him first to imbue with love and cleanse of desires the astral body which he received in the aeon of the Old Moon. The strength to carry through this metamorphosis is given him by the object-oriented ‘I’-consciousness of the earthly aeon, in which he must learn to do actions out of pure love for the object – in the first place, acts of cognition.

The wisdom of the ether-body that is imbued with individual consciousness is transformed into the sanctity of the Buddhi of the future aeon of Venus. Saturn and Vulcan are the Alpha and Omega of our cycle of evolution. Strength (or force) as a will-impulse, arises in us unconsciously; on the level of the world as a whole it is universal, as the will of God. Through the Thrones it gave birth to our physical body. When he attains immortality in the physical (not the material!) body, in the resurrection body of Christ, the human being also attains blessedness in God. In this sense, conscious All-consciousness and blessedness in God are two expressions with one and the same meaning. We must now ask ourselves: Why does righteousness (or justice) have such a decisive part to play in the metamorphosis of the qualities of consciousness? The reason for this lies in the fact that we are looking at the cycle of evolution from the standpoint of the earthly aeon which does, indeed, play a decisive role within it, as it is the centre of global metamorphoses. There are other standpoints from which one can view evolution. In them the relationships upon which our present discussion is based assume another aspect. In the past when, on the earth, life began to develop in matter, the emergence of the first cell was perhaps its central manifestation. The central manifestation of *life* at the present time is the *conscious* human being.

It must be said that the world, from its very first beginning, is created through virtue, and virtue is also the fundamental instrument in the self-creation of the human being. When conceptual thinking arose, Socrates and Plato came forward with the idea that virtue can be learnt. Its former way of

working through the blood connection and through religion and mythology has come to an end, and from now on one can find an individualized relation to it, as also to thinking.

Plato speaks in his works of the four virtues. They served as an instrument for the Gods in their creation of our fourfold being, the fruit of four aeons. The connections are as follows:

‘I’ – wisdom
 astral body – courage
 ether body – prudence
physical body – justice (GA 170, 6.8.1916).

Universal justice (righteousness) has a special relation to the primal substance of the world, the sacrifice of the spirits of Will.

There are, therefore, the four virtues which, in the course of the *earthly* aeon, formed the human being in such a way that an individual ‘I’ could dwell within a triune body. Further light is thrown on these relationships by Rudolf Steiner when he says that, through the sphere of morality, the aesthetic sphere and the sphere of wisdom (religion – art – science), we are connected with the forces of the spiritual world in such a way that in the physical body, through the brain, spiritual beings of a lower order, which are born of the Hierarchies, exert an influence on us and serve them in their workings on the earthly plane. They are known as elemental beings; they fall into four main groups, which are graphically described in Greek mythology, but in reality there stands behind every soul-expression of a human being, every soul quality, a spiritual elemental being of a good or evil nature. When we have aesthetic experiences a swarm of elves gathers about us. We are constantly surrounded by the beings of morality and by others (see GA 170, 6.8.1916).

The elemental beings are mediators between the human being and the Hierarchies. Many of them are conjured into existence by the human being himself. Higher elemental beings pervade the kingdoms of nature; thus man is not only bound up organically with the nature cycle of the year. At different times of the year he experiences now an intensification, now a weakening of his own soul qualities, tendencies, capacities of thinking and feeling, as there are different elemental spirits who exert an influence on the human being in connection with the rhythm of nature, which, in addition to this, strongly influences the relation of man’s sheaths to one another. Thus at Midsummer, around the time of the St. John’s Festival (24th June), the human ‘I’, so Rudolf Steiner

tells us, departs from the Earth and perceives the cosmic wisdom in spiritual heights. Justice (righteousness) is experienced by the human being with particular intensity in the springtime, in connection with the Easter Festival. He ‘transports’ himself at this time into the sphere of (the restoration of) ‘balance’. There works here the first Hierarchy, the impulse of the Mystery of Golgotha, the Mystery of the physical body, of death and of resurrection. In Rudolf Steiner’s notebook there is the following remark: “Sun of righteousness = the phys. body” (Beiträge 19, p. 2).

Since it is connected with the physical body, the virtue of justice (righteousness) acquires fundamental importance for us; it determines the constellation of the human being within the entire evolutionary cycle and has a decisive effect on our Karma. Rudolf Steiner explains that the forces which underlie our transition to the upright gait in childhood continue working in later life. They are still there, but they are active in the virtue of all-embracing justice. “Whoever really practises the virtue of justice puts every thing, every being, in its rightful place It is justice that we practise when we develop the forces through which we are connected with the entire cosmos, but on a spiritual level. Justice is the measure of a human being’s connection with the Divine. In practical terms injustice amounts to godlessness, it is the human being who has forfeited his Divine origin” (GA 159/160, 31.1.1915).

The virtue of justice is closely bound up with the middle, rhythmic system of man, with the breath and the blood circulation. Through the system of the metabolism he is more connected with the All-might of the Divine. This is the constellation of Christmas. In the depths of winter a consolidation of the intellect takes place, the temptation of evil approaches us. Agnosticism, relativism, the antinomies of the intellect and the contradictory, dialectical character of thinking are experienced with particular intensity at this time of year. Working out from the ‘I’, we must put everything in the right place. Whoever devotes himself to a task of this kind at Christmas receives, when he experiences righteousness (justice) at Easter, the healing forces for both soul and body. Such a person will then not lose himself in the welter of sense-impressions at the time of midsummer. And in the autumn, at the feast of the Archangel Michael, he will draw a step closer, with the growing strength of his ‘I’, to the cosmic intelligence. His consciousness becomes more spiritual; it is imbued with the forces of movement, of will (GA 223/229, 1.4.1923). Under the guidance of Michael, the ‘Countenance of Christ’, the conscious (not instinctive) forces of love are strengthened. Justice transforms them into forces of salvation, of redemption from original sin, on account of which we sank into abstract cleverness, fell away from God, and thus became burdened with the sin of *injustice*

(unrighteousness). The power of atonement for this sin was brought to the Earth by the Christ. When he suffered the Mystery of Golgotha, he reinstated world justice and restored everything to its rightful place. He set limits to the power of the Adversary and gave the human being his new task: The transforming of involution into individual evolution. Because of the imperfect character of the translation the call of John in the Gospel is to “Repent!” But what John really wants to say to us is: Change the way you perceive and understand the world! (Metanoete!) – change your attitude of mind!

7. The Dialectic of the Macrocosm

We have viewed, if only in bare outline, the whole panorama of world evolution in its ur-phenomenology of number. Using this method of thinking, it is possible to solve the greatest riddles of the human spirit. One of them, unquestionably the most important, is the riddle of Christian monotheism with its belief in the tri-hypostatic God. As we have already mentioned, a great deal was done towards the solving of this riddle by the Russian religious philosophy of the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century and by Sophiology, of which Nikolai Loski was the last prominent representative. Loski came forward with a solution to the riddle which is very close to Anthroposophical gnoseology. Perhaps more in this thought-complex – of the intellectualized mysticism of Russian Sophiology, and spiritual-scientific gnoseology – than anywhere else, one can feel the logical necessity to complement the speculative method of research into the key question of the Christian faith, with the Pythagorean method of number. We must therefore imagine the absolute, which is the unitary God of the world, in the form of a circle. Everything that exists in the world is a constituent part of it. This is, of course, not some concrete circular line, but simply the idea of a circle whose limits are at infinity. But there is a relation between the centre and the periphery. This is the first Logos. Then one can conceive the second Logos as a duality within the unity. It arises through the fact that the possibility of relation was already contained in the original unity. The third Logos arises within the unity as a further potentizing of the principle of relation.

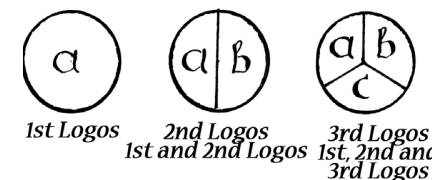


Fig. 34

If we again abbreviate with the help of letters of the alphabet, the statement above can be represented in the form of a diagram which we find in Rudolf

Steiner (see Beiträge 78, p. 33), but we will give it a somewhat different interpretation (Fig. 34).

In each of the three cases represented in the diagram we have before us a unitary God, who reveals Himself, however, in three different hypostases. Within His unity, He reveals Himself in three different ways. In a similar way to God, the human being also experiences himself within his earthly 'I' as a triune soul, being identical now with the first, now with the second, now with the third aspect, while remaining their unity and, as we have already described on various occasions, also their system-forming principle. Are the hypostases of God the same with respect to their revelation and existence? No, they are not the same, but in their essential being they partake of a unitary nature. Their content is called into being by the creative, conscious All-consciousness; but they work with it in different ways.

If, for once, we do not allow a departure from the basic conception of Hegel's Logic to disturb us, we must say here that the *absolute principle* is the first Logos, which reveals itself as absolute consciousness in-and-for-itself. This has intentionality, and on the grounds of this characteristic alone one can affirm that neither the concept nor the meaning was at all significant – all this came later – only the sound. Sounding speech, which at that time still had the power of natural magic – a survival of the creative power of the Logos, of the sounding, Divine Word – expresses in this way the all-pervading universal 'before the things' (ante res). After God had become man it became the universal 'in the things' of the human spirit (or mind), and after His resurrection it was both 'in the things' and 'after the things' – i.e. in the I-spirit of the human being who frees himself from his earthly dependency. What we see represented in Fig. 34 united itself first with the world and then with the human being on the path of individualization, after it had become the tri-hypostatic God of his religious faith.

The second Logos 'in the things' (again those of the human spirit) is the essential unity of concept and percept – i.e. reality. The third Logos 'after the things' is the ideal 'I am', born of the experience of thinking and of perceptions, yet in its existence already independent of them – i.e. it is also reality. The surrogate 'I', the lower 'I', remains in its position between the 'in the things' and the 'after the things'; for this reason it contains within itself neither substance nor reality. Rudolf Steiner says of Descartes that he only had the right to say 'I think'. To infer from this – 'I exist' is not at all permissible, as we have here to do with the lower 'I'.

We will be considering at a later stage the key question regarding the evolution of the world and man. In the middle of the earthly aeon or, to be more

exact, in the last two to two-and-half centuries there arises within this process of becoming, with increasing intensity, a colossal contradiction which is entirely concentrated upon the relation between the lower and the higher 'I' of the human being. Basically speaking, the human being is enclosed within a triangle consisting of three 'I's: the lower, the higher group-'I', and the higher individual 'I'. The higher group-'I' was imprinted upon humanity in the Earth aeon by the spirits of Form. Like the three bodies it is a *fruit of evolution* and therefore, just as they are, a gift of God to humanity. Let us suppose, for the sake of argument, that nothing further had happened: then the higher 'I' of humanity would, in the course of the next three aeons, have transformed the three bodies into Manas, Buddhi and Atma – i.e. it would have reunited them with their great archetypes, which had already come into being on higher levels during the first three aeons. Mankind with its 'I' would have united with that higher unity, but a single, individual human being would not have emerged at all. This would have robbed the entire evolutionary cycle of its meaning, as the human being would have had no value in himself, remaining no more than a mere consequence of higher activity.

But this did not happen, and it cannot happen, because the activity of the 'I' is always of an individualizing nature and also gives rise to an 'I', sooner or later, in the object that it influences. When the three bodies of the human being, which were already bound up, through their evolution, in a reciprocal relation with the world of otherness-of-being, became an object of this kind, the activity of the group-'I' of humanity oriented itself in the same direction: from above downwards. The three bodies stood in the way of the 'I' – in the form of a 'densification', through which it was destined to return to itself 'from the other side'. In the course of this remarkable process, the 'I' began to transform the triune body. The more direct its working grew, the deeper the body was 'driven down' into matter. The working of the 'I' assumed, as time went on, a cultural-historical character, thereby engendering in the human being, in joint activity with the evolutionary process, the lower 'I', which thought in concepts, but had no true existence. The 'I' of humanity was pressing forward towards the spirit, but in the (lower) 'I' it fell out of the realm of being and even grew hostile towards it. On the traditional path of evolution there was nothing further that could happen. There is no single Hierarchy that is able to bring its 'I' into a space-time continuum, just as an ideal cause cannot be brought sense-perceptibly into a material effect. In order to fill the lower 'I' with being and with life and thereby raise it to a higher, hierarchical level it was necessary to *reverse cause and effect*. The evolutionary process, which is driven forward by the Hierarchies, is not able to do this. Here it is necessary, as it were, to begin

the evolutionary cycle *anew and in a different way*. This only the Divine Trinity can do.

And this is exactly what Christ did when He passed through the Mystery of Golgotha. Through identifying with the 'I' of humanity on the path of His evolutionary incarnation, He brought down to the Earth *the life of the 'I'*, which knows no limits and has the capacity to identify with the 'I' of the universe. And he brought it to the individual earthly human being who possessed a lower 'I'. Thus a remarkable possibility arose for earthly man: in his lower 'I' to merge with the life of the higher 'I', and to make the group-'I' of humanity into his individual 'I'. The metamorphosis which has here to be accomplished is expressed in the words of the Apostle Paul: "Not I, but Christ in me". And for the human being there is no other path into the future. However deeply the group-'I' may work into him, thanks to which he bears intellectuality as a genetic inheritance, in his lower 'I' he will increasingly stand in opposition to God, to the world and to other human beings, and fall out of the life of the world. But a direct appeal to the group-'I' ("the collective is higher than the individuality" etc.) will reverse evolution and thereby abolish the human being as a monad altogether. This is the greatest contradiction into which evolution has come, and only Christianity has the key to its solution.

In view of its special importance we will complement what has just been said, with a diagram (Fig. 35). In it we see that the three bodies and the three higher spirits constitute three unities. And if we ask ourselves: What, in this case, is the higher spirit of the 'I' that has been bestowed on mankind? – then we discover that it is the World-'I', which Christ brought down to the Earth.

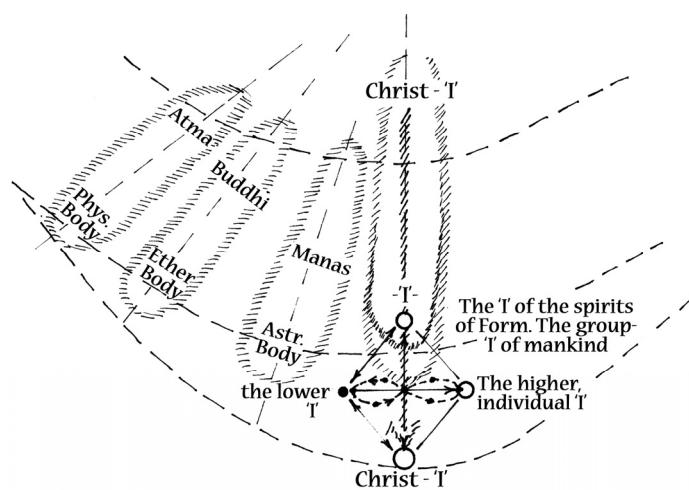


Fig. 35

In the triangle of the three 'I's, which is formed by the spiritual constellation of the human being today, there arise three kinds of contradiction (shown as arrows in the diagram). Through these, all the evils of modern civilization can be explained, from the crisis of cognition all the way to the conflict between conservatism and liberalism. They can only be brought to an end by the individual human being who is able to draw *consequences* for himself from the Mystery of Golgotha. These are reached most easily if we start out from the given fact of the lower 'I'. Here it is actually less dangerous to overestimate its importance than to underestimate it. We need first to accomplish within it an act of self-knowledge which leads us to the logical conclusion: When I think, I do not exist – in the sense in which the Manvantara exists. And then in a certain sense we raise ourselves above it and remain on the pure sense-perceptible level in the pure actuality of our simple 'I am'. Thus it is the destiny of the human being, in the endless, abstract separation from the first Logos, to experience within himself His presence in reflected form, as the higher 'I am' 'after the things', brought by Christ to the Father; this is also the higher 'I' of the human being which, according to the general law of development (see Fig. 9b), is received into the hypostasis of the Holy Spirit. Relative to the higher 'I am' the everyday 'I', which lives thanks to reflection and perception, is a 'not-I', although the two are potentially identical with one another. The philosophy of Fichte and Hegel is concerned with establishing the grounds of their identity.

The first Logos is that which dwells in absolute Being, and in which all that is determined and finite is lacking. Absolute Being comes, through reflection into itself, to revelation – as life of the world-consciousness (ab), as consciousness which works from the centre to the periphery of the Absolute. In the third Logos the creative life of consciousness inwardizes itself (abc). The consequences of this are twofold. Firstly, on the higher level, in the realm of duration, the first Logos returns to itself through the third Logos (this happens instantaneously, with no passage of time), coming to knowledge of itself as it were from within in the form of identity: absolute 'I' = mediated 'I'. Thus arises in the world the relation between the outer and the inner, which is also an anticipation of the relation between subject and object. Secondly, there appears in the evolution of the world, where the first Logos returns to itself, after it has undergone objectification in the course of time, inwardization in the guise of the multiplicity of the forms of existence, as the being of consciousness in the manifoldness of created beings, in which an inversion of the world-subject takes place.

In the second Logos the first Logos ‘shows itself’ to be, reveals itself as, a single unity with its manifestation. And in its return to itself in the third Logos, the first Logos becomes the being of the world, all that exists, whether or not it possesses the attribute of life (e.g. the mineral kingdom, thought), whether it be reality or illusion (e.g. hallucination); in the end it becomes the concept a posteriori. Together with this fact the problem arises, how such a concept can acquire real being – i.e. life. Descartes’ “I am, when I think” is only correct from the standpoint of being as form. But the ‘I am’ means real life of the ‘I’: of “the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father” (John 1,18), who *became Man* – that is to say, united himself forever with human destiny. The thinking ‘I’ is the reflection of the ‘I am’ (in feeling, the relation between them is more real but it has the quality of dream), which is mediated through the process of development, whose final result was the higher nerve activity; in the trans-temporal sphere ‘I am’ is mediated continually by intelligible beings.

The concept in the (lower) ‘I’ is form and limit. But out of being-for-the-other (mirror-reflection) the concept is able to pass over into being-in-and-for-itself, and thus attain essential being. This fact leads one to conclude that thinking possesses an identity of its own (Selbstidentität). Precisely this is revealed by logic, which can only in a conditional sense be separated from ontology. The ontology of the Tri-unity is the ultimate truth of the dialectic of thinking. However, reflection must be understood as the *becoming* of being, as well as the existence of thinking consciousness. In reflection being and thinking are identical: it is the unity of form and content and at the same time – nothingness. Thus we arrive at the Hegelian identity ‘being = non-being’ at the outermost limits of the phenomenology of spirit (mind). The right-hand part of this identity is at the same time the world in its manifestation as a sense-perceptible or simply material universe. In the human being it is represented by the threefoldness of physical body, ether body and astral body, since for the physical body alone there does not exist a sense-perceptible universe. All three bodies together correspond to the unconscious (subconscious) All-consciousness, which is identical to the conscious human being. In the ur-phenomenal realm the non-being of his reflection is identical with the All-consciousness of the world. Indeed, the triune body also represents with its evolutionary aspect the *life* of the world, which the second Logos received as a sacrifice from the first Logos. He gives it back to the first Logos through a further sacrifice, in which the relation between the second Logos and the first Logos is reflected to the third Logos. In the first relation there is as yet no inwardization; it is absolute identity. But an identity-relation arises: by this

means, the first and the third Logos are united. It gives rise to inwardization, becoming the being of consciousness in man.

Thus, to begin with, world-consciousness creates in the human being the life of the soul: sensations, sense-perceptions. Gradually soul-life, after it has acquired conceptual thinking, raises itself to a higher level where the creative activity of the All-consciousness, reflecting itself in the combined activity of the rhythmic and the nerve-senses system, attains its culmination in the realm of otherness-of-being: In its return to itself it gives rise to no organic processes in the human being – on the contrary, it even extinguishes them. Thus, pure thinking arises. It rests entirely on the negation of otherness-of-being. And now the question (of development) lies only in ensuring that negation should become, not rejection, but the transformation of otherness-of-being. Dialectics is helpful here as a temporary measure. But its possibilities are limited by the fact that it is only present in what is conceptually thinkable. In order to take the step from the dialectic to the life of thinking, the absolute ‘I am’ descended and entered the human being. A relation to Him can only be attained by the human being if he develops the strength of his own ‘I am’ – i.e. the pure actuality of consciousness, in which both the dialectic of thinking and the lower ‘I’ itself are superseded (*aufgehoben*).

The superseding of the dialectical form is the inversion of the subject into himself, whereby the being of reflection is *transformed* into real being (life) of the absolute being (Wesen), whose constituent members are intelligible beings (Wesenheiten). In other words, the overcoming of dialectic means the birth of thought-beings in the human spirit, who fill the picture of the ‘I’ in man with real content. In this way we overcome the closed circle of abstract thought. It is absolute, like the circle of the first Logos of which we spoke above and, like this, a mere idea. It can therefore only be overcome through the superseding of the conceptually thinking subject. Mirror-reflection then becomes life in pure beholding. We move across from the first hypostasis, whose mirror-reflection in us is brought about by the third hypostasis, to the second hypostasis. In fact we tread a path that is the opposite of the one followed by Kant, after we have gone through the school of his dualism and the school of dialectics in the broadest sense of the word. For without them our emptied consciousness, instead of attaining pure actuality, will simply sink into unconsciousness.

It must be stressed again that the highest laws of world development are effective on all levels of being, from the primal Divine revelation right down to thinking consciousness. The character and criteria of their working changes, but they themselves remain. Therefore the inductive method of cognition allows us to infer their highest nature from their manifestation in the realm of the

thinkable. If we think in accordance with this method, we do not wish to maintain, of course, that in the world of the Great Pralaya, too, the relationships are built up according to the laws of dialectics. We are merely assuming, since it is permitted to us to think through in concepts everything to which they have access,^{*113)} that on the level of Mahaparanirvana the first Logos will contain within itself, as cancelled and preserved (*aufgehobene*), both the second and third Logos. When God reveals Himself out of the world of the ineffable, His hypostases are seen to be not created for the first time. The unity of the primal revelation contained them already, in some way, within itself. For the plane of Paranirvana it is characteristic that something is present there that can be compared to the duality of the worlds which stand below it. This primal duality is the relation between Father and Son, All-consciousness and its manifested life, Atma and Buddhi.

If we go on to say that the Father reveals Himself to the Son, the Son to the Spirit, and the Spirit to the Father, then this is, to express it in the language of Hegel's philosophy, "the return from differentiation to the simple relation to itself".¹¹⁴⁾ It is with these words that Hegel begins the first paragraph of his 'Science of Logic', entitled 'The Doctrine of Being'. Esoterically, we have to do here with the plane of Nirvana.

The metamorphoses of the Tri-unity preserve their wholeness through the absolute character of the unity. And since every act brings about both a relationship and a mediation, the return to a relation to oneself can no longer be the same original unity. The principle of absolute unity (All-unity) in each cycle of "return to oneself" acquires a new existence (*Dasein*). This is of necessity present in the 'positing of oneself' through unity at the beginning of the following cycle. Thus the principle of unity in development becomes the principle (the power, the law) of *transformation*; hence it is not simply the being of the Absolute, but the 'I'.

In the real evolution of the world the first three revelations (ab, bc, ca) gave birth, three times, to the principle of unity in the other – though this other was not of the sense-world, but that of the spirits of Personality, the Archangels and the Angels. At the beginning of the Earthly aeon the sequence of the Hierarchies becomes ninefold (3 x 3). But the World-Individual acquires a twelve-fold fullness. It becomes *four times* threefold. And this signifies a turning-point in evolution. It gave expression to the fact that earthly man was, from the beginning, created as a *fourfold* being; that is to say, into the eternal laws that

* Hegel: "Since to define God metaphysically means to express His nature in *thoughts* as such."¹¹³⁾

reach back beyond the aeon of Saturn, there was incorporated a macro-law which came into being in the course of our evolutionary cycle. And this is the law of the human 'I' – of the *Hierarchical principle in the realm of the sense-world on this side of the threshold*. Through it, the principle of the tri-unities is grounded in the 'Other', the world of the senses. And the principle of the higher Tri-unity is obliged to follow it into this 'Other' realm of sense-perceptible being. Thus the Mystery of Golgotha was predestined to take place.

The higher 'I' of the human being (initially the universally human group-'I'), which functions as a unity, led the human race through the evolution of species in a different way to the animal kingdom, which also has a group-'I', though this is not destined to incarnate during the Earth aeon. It guided the development of the triune body of man in such a way that, from a certain moment onwards, its threefold cancellation and preservation (*Aufhebung*) made possible the emergence of the triune soul. The cancelling and preserving (*Aufhebung*) of the bodies means in this case their being raised, in part, to consciousness, a process that draws them out of organic activity and subconsciousness. The fact that they become conscious to the lower 'I' robs them of their existence in the structure of the higher world, the first level of consciousness – in other words: of their being in the consciousness of the first Logos.

There arises within the triune soul the picture (image) of the higher 'I', and it becomes the principle of unity of the conceptually thinking consciousness. Such a mode of thinking can, of necessity, only be triune, because it is subject to the law which brought it into being. In its three elements or structural parts – thesis, antithesis, synthesis – the following are contained in a cancelled and preserved (*aufgehoben*) form: 1. the first three aeons; 2. the three bodies; 3. the three souls (sentient, intellectual, consciousness-soul). We have no reason to question the conclusion that the Divine Trinity is immanent to these parts.

On all levels of the universe the triads repeat its very highest plane. On each one of them there is a positing that is, in its own special way, not conditioned, and which cancels (*aufhebt*) and negates itself by virtue of the higher system-building principle. The positing returns to itself as the synthesis of the object that has come into being. In the dialectic of life, synthesis means, as we have seen, the birth of the 'I'-endowed beings.

The unity of the higher world, says Rudolf Steiner, appears in the lower as a trinity (GA 343, p. 252). Triads form, if they are not abstract in character, sequences of inversions, metamorphoses, in which convex becomes concave, inner becomes outer, centrifugal becomes centripetal, winding inwards becomes winding outwards etc. And at the points where these polarities are con-

nected the conditions arise for new formations – syntheses. The soul-life of man is also pervaded by inversions of this kind. As they move in both directions, forwards and back again – this being a creative process and not a single, isolated transformation – the soul begins, thanks to them, to free itself from its immersion in the temporal. Its present is formed out of both its past and its future in their constant mutual transformations. Thus the dialectical principle reveals itself beyond the limits of the merely thinkable.

In the ancient Greek school of the Eleatics (Parmenides, Zeon of Elea), the awakened experience of thought was formed into a special art which was given the name dialectics. In this art, says Rudolf Steiner, “the soul learns to know itself in its independence and self-contained inner nature. The reality of the soul is thereby experienced as that which it is in its own essential being and as what it feels itself to be by virtue of the fact that it no longer lives, as it did in earlier times, together with universal world-experience, but unfolds within itself a life – the living experience of thought – that is rooted within it, and through which the soul can feel itself planted within a purely spiritual ground of the world” (The Riddles of Philosophy, Vol. 1). And the Greeks hoped that the human being would be able, with the help of the art of dialectics, to have a real existence in the spiritual sphere. But it was not long before, in their midst, opinions on this question began to diverge and sceptics started to speak out. This hope was finally shattered by the German classical philosophy of the 18th and 19th centuries, but on the other hand it was *realized* in the same period. Goethe realized it through pointing to the fourth element of human nature (the true ‘I’), which can not only reflect, but also behold. The fact that he was a poet helped Goethe as a philosopher. His science was poetic, and this ‘transcendental aesthetics’ was his element. This protected him from the, now entirely meaningless, marching on the spot at the periphery of the world, where mirror-reflections are the only thing that exists. These had a meaning, so long as they were able to fill the soul with self-existence. This is a fact of tremendous significance, of course, because, as we have already pointed out, within the dialectical triad the three previous macro-stages of evolution are actually present, though in a cancelled and preserved form (als aufgehobene). This triad is the final, limiting mirror-reflection of the highest Tri-unity in the Other. Its abstract personification in the human being represents the ‘moment’ of the turning of the Absolute towards itself. This is not a spatial, but a qualitative boundary. And it was to this quality that Goethe was pointing when he proved that the time for a change of consciousness was approaching. Actually, Goethe was renewing the call of John the Baptist for our cultural epoch. For this reason, the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’, which shows how this is done, is a pro-

foundly Christian book. These are the two sides of dialectics: the macro and the microcosmic. Through them, the present constellation of the human ‘I’-consciousness in the structure of world-evolution is defined. No-one, therefore, should miss the opportunity to understand this constellation, in order to come into a harmonious relation with it. It is our task to make it more easily understandable, and so we return now to Figs. 7 and 23. In accordance with what is shown in Fig. 7, we can view the process which takes place within the Divine Tri-unity as that which forms the lemniscate of development. At the very beginning (in eternity) its second loop is turned into the interior of the first (see fig. 36 below).

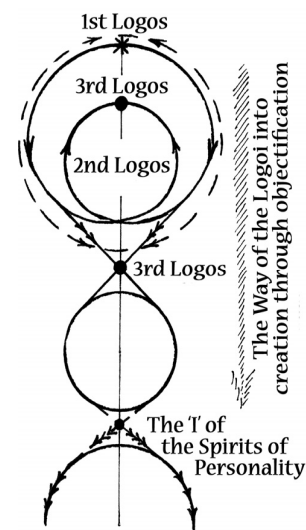


Fig. 36

Then it turns outwards, thereby bringing to birth the Time Spirits or the Spirits of Personality (fig. 36). And then a sequence of further, descending lemniscates arises, in the last of which the human being acquires ‘I’-consciousness. It is in these (lemniscatory movements) that development actually consists. When it begins to appear as a mirror-reflection in thinking consciousness, it is reflected there together with the laws that govern it, and which also constitute the science of logic. The chain of evolutionary lemniscates, the principle of whose first emergence is represented in Fig. 36, is repeated (becomes conscious) in the movement of thought in the form of the polysyllogism, and the principle of the lemniscate itself – as the dialectical triad.

When the physical-material world begins to reflect the thought-beings, the universal idea which is oriented towards existence manifests the tendency to return to the world-centre – i.e. to reverse its direction and free itself from the things. When this happens, dialectic shows itself to be the first form of being which makes possible the emergence of that new world-tendency which, in the course of time, dematerializes and spiritualizes the sense-world in its entirety. The further the world-idea moves away from the centre of the world, the more strongly it is negated by ‘being-in-the-other’, and it finally falls out of the centre altogether when it takes on the form of abstractly thinking consciousness. Indeed, the latter is the defining characteristic of the periphery of the world, and it is the emptiest form of being that exists. Let us try to illustrate this with the help of a diagram (Fig. 37). We arrive at this by bringing together Figs. 23, 36 and 7. What we have shown in Fig. 23 stands in correspondence to the fun-

damental dialectical triad of Hegelian logic. Within it the element of synthesis is *becoming*, as the dynamic basis for the relation between being and not-being. Thus it is firmly established in the primal foundation of the world. The lemniscate is a symbol of such a dialectical triad. Admittedly, only one aspect of the lemniscate corresponds to what Hegel is speaking of. Nevertheless, in its entire, many-layered character it reveals the essential nature of dialectics in such depth, that only a gnoseology (epistemology) that has become ontology is able to realize it in cognition, through the readiness of the latter to press forward to the threshold of the supersensible.

Two loops of the lemniscate express ‘becoming’, the two parts of which negate one another, thereby forming at their point of transition the force (power) centre of continuous transformation. In all cases, this centre is an intelligible being – the ‘I’. In the natural kingdoms they (the multiplicity of ‘I’-forms) work indirectly by way of the laws of nature; in the human being this ‘I’-centre descends directly to the physical plane. Through the spiritual working of the biogenetic law it arises within the ‘lemniscate’ of the human spirit. There emerge within it as opposites: *consciousness* and *form* in the one case, and *spirit* and *matter* in the other. A dialectic of the human spirit such as this, is in perfect harmony with the Goethean teaching of metamorphosis if we give emphasis to the dominant role within it, of *the personified vertical of the spirit, of the life of the ‘I’*.

The horizontal of ‘being’ is, if we imagine it as part of the structure of the world-cross, at right-angles to the vertical of the spirit, and, as we described earlier, it descends through three-and-a-half aeons, moving downwards from spirit to matter. After it has given rise to the form of thinking consciousness, it begins to ascend along this vertical. This brings with it a decisive change in the character of the becoming of the human ‘I’ at the point of intersection of the upper and the lower loop of the lemniscate of the human spirit. From its ‘involvement’ in the manifold workings which determine the development of the many-membered human being, the ‘I’ turns to an increasing opposition towards all forms of what has come into being in man, of non-individualized soul-spiritual nature, and also (more especially) towards the material support of the spirit, the human nervous system. Once the ‘I’ has begun to think, it is obliged, for the sake of its realization, to negate matter. God Himself bears witness to the fact that this process is objective, on the scale of the entire macrocosm. After He had revealed Himself in a human body, He rose in opposition towards everything in the human being that has a group character and does not wish to metamorphose itself in an upward direction. He said that the lower ‘I’ would become a hindrance to evolution if it were not willing to

change its way of perceiving and knowing the world – for the sake of which it would need to metamorphose itself into a higher ‘I’. The following quotes from the Gospel bear witness to this: “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross (the cross of evolution – G.A.B.) and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it” (Matth. 16, 24-25). “Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees!” (Matth. 16, 11). “But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first” (Matth. 19, 30). “And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force” (Matth. 11, 12). Thus speaks the Christ – even more decisively: “I came not to send peace, but a sword” (Matth. 11, 12) – the “sword” of evolution, not of revolution, under the conditions of an unprecedented shift of priorities in development.

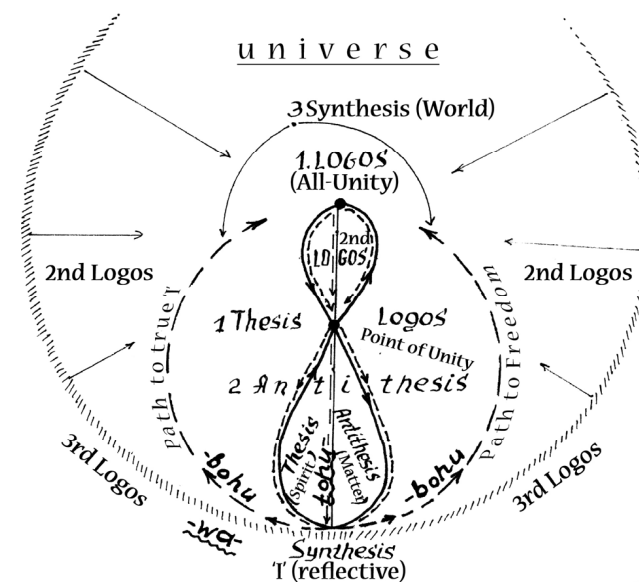


Fig. 37

From the standpoint of tasks of development already indicated in the New Testament a fundamental contradiction arises in it within the realm of otherness-of-being, between the ‘I’ and the world. And therein lies the essential core of dualism. From now on, all that individualizes itself will come into an unavoidable and growing contradiction with all the forms of being that have arisen, in order to transform them into living spirit – into *pure consciousness*.

This is also what the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’ is telling us. The individual ‘I’ experiences itself on the path to freedom as an antithesis to the world that has arisen – ultimately, indeed, to the entire Manvantara. It attains synthesis in the deeds of the higher consciousness, in beholding, in new imaginations. Thanks to these it returns to the Father-ground of the world; this is why Christ is so insistent in his attempt to explain to the people that he “goes to the Father”. Thus we come to an understanding of what is meant in spiritual science when it says that the concept of development itself is changing.

In Fig. 37 we have tried to reflect both of the aspects of dialectic we have discovered, which are conditioned by the change in the main direction of development. Each stage in the descent of the Logos into being gives rise in it to a continually increasing polarity within the unity. First of all, unity comes into contradiction with ‘becoming’; then a contradiction arises within ‘becoming’ itself. Every idea in the human being is a certain original unity. It stands in contradiction to the ‘thesis’ of the triune body of man. Thereupon, the idea-thesis begins to negate itself. The synthesis-judgment strives to overcome the shadow-existence and to become real being within the essential thought-nature of the ‘I’ (in der Ich-Gedankenwesenheit). These are the special features of the evolution of the individual spirit, which are conditioned by the transformation of the tendencies in the development of the universe which are centrifugal relative to the spiritual centre of the world, into those with a centripetal tendency.

8. The Structure of Seven-Membered Thinking

In the course of the present considerations we have used the concept of ‘being’ in a double sense. In the first place, we mean by ‘being’ the entire manifoldness of form-conditions. And, secondly, it is the life with which ‘being’ fills its own forms. On a higher level that ‘being’ is consciousness, which determines the being of the forms. Life is the revelation of consciousness. In this way, the structure of the world-edifice stands before us as 1. ‘being’ of the forms; 2. being of being – i.e. life; and 3. consciousness of the life of the forms. When we say of thinking consciousness that it is void of ‘being’, then we are referring to its forms which possess no life (corresponding to the mineral realm in nature); that is to say, the abstract forms of thinking, which are dead, but, logically speaking, can be traced out with ‘crystallographic’ rigour. This is, in the language of the Gospels, ‘the last’ which, in losing the life in its forms, becomes the ‘first’, because it stands closest to pure consciousness, to pure spirit. The ‘becoming’ of the forms, including those of consciousness, is an evolutionary process. The forms of pure consciousness in the individual spirit represent a synthesis of evolution and primal revelation. The past evolu-

tion in them is cancelled and preserved (aufgehoben), and this made possible the phenomenon of the ‘I’. The personification of revelation in the pure consciousness of the ‘I’ confronts the thinking subject with the necessity to overcome (aufheben) the lower, involutive ‘I’. Then the higher ‘I’ can begin its evolution in the individual. This kind of overcoming or cancellation (Aufhebung) is the new element of individualization to which we are led by dialectics when we overcome (aufheben) its triads together with the thinking – and also the perceiving – subject. This is the fourth element (following upon the three dialectical elements) of the metamorphosis of the individual spirit. It is in this element that the capacity emerges of ontologized gnoseology (epistemology) to approach the threshold of the spirit world.

The overcoming (Aufhebung) of the thinking subject is the beginning of ideal beholding. It can only be achieved if there is sufficient strength of pure thinking in the ‘I’, which in this case is no longer a lower, but nor is it yet a higher, ‘I’. The lower ‘I’ is filled with thoughts whose ‘facets’ and forms are created by the laws of logic. The process of pure thinking is grounded in the will-principle of the ‘I’. The overcoming of the subject, of the ‘I’, in the fourth element of the metamorphosis of the spirit is conditional upon the capacity of the thinking subject to maintain him/itself within the pure element of the will. This shows itself to be the higher consciousness, the consciousness *before* the forms. But as it is revealed, not before the beginning of the world, but in the Manvantara, it is identical with life. This is the true meaning of the word of Christ: “I and the Father are one.” It means that the human being in this stage of consciousness comes close to the World-’I’. If it is greatly intensified it is able to lead the human being up to the level of Nirvana, the first stage of the great Pralaya. Admittedly, the way to this goal is extremely long, but already of value for the human being is the first contact with it, the contact with a world that conditions itself and everything else, a world in which being can tread this path in full harmony with the new task of world-development. On the path that leads from the spirit into matter, the human being moved from the perceiving consciousness with a pictorial, group character, to self-consciousness. In the pictorial (mythological) conscious there was much of a supersensible, imaginative nature. It is the task of the human being to return to this anew, but to maintain his individual ‘I’-consciousness and raise it to a beholding of the ideas.

When we turn towards the ideal beholding of the idea*, this means the ascent to a new stage of evolution in which liberation begins from the fourth globe of being. In order to fulfil this task we must first grasp it in knowledge; but to know in the spiritual-scientific sense means to discover *the seven-membered character* of the object of knowledge. What we have found as the four elements of the new technique of thinking is the last individualized expression of the first four aeons and of the first four elements of the sevenfold human being. This question has already been dealt with in our book. It is quite clear that the holistic structure of the new way of thinking must anticipate the three future aeons and the three elements of the individual spirit – Manas, Buddhi and Atma. In this way the human being, through thinking not in a triune but in a seven-membered wholeness, begins to realize within himself the totality of the evolutionary cycle. This is the new path to Nirvana.

We bring the three bodies with us from the past. The triune spirit wafts towards and around us from the future. Between the body and the spirit there takes place the *becoming* of the ‘I’. This is the principle of transformation through which in the course of time the three bodies are metamorphosed into the three spirits. As an intermediary stage or connecting link in this process the triune soul is developed. It builds itself up in the form of a triune sheath of the ‘I’. The process of transformation of the bodies has, in the soul, an ethical and aesthetic character. Thinking consciousness strengthens and, most importantly, individualizes this process, removing its phylogenetic group character, and this is of course bound up with a risk, connected with the freedom of choice between good and evil, which arises unavoidably in this case.

In his transition from reflection to beholding, the human being eliminates the processes in the brain and begins to experience his thoughts in the etheric body. Then thinking identifies in an essential way with ethics and aesthetics. The ideas now bring to the human being moral motives. These ideas are the same as those which revealed themselves to us in the form of mirror-reflections, but now they reveal their imaginative and even intuitive nature. It is only the method of our thinking that must change – not its object. Rudolf Steiner says: “No-one could think abstractly and have real thoughts and ideas if he were not clairvoyant, for, from the very beginning, there lies within ordinary thoughts and ideas the pearl of clairvoyance ... one must only grasp the supersensible nature of concepts and ideas.... O man! – have the courage to regard your concepts and ideas as the first beginnings of your clairvoyance”

*Here one can speak of pure sense-activity, in which everything is set aside (aufgehoben) that fills sense-perception with content.

(GA 146, 29.5.1913). We would add to this the following: And you will lay the foundation stone of the transformation of your way (method) of thinking and, what is more, the transformation of the meaning, of the way you perceive and understand the world; you will change the very character of your consciousness. You will become a Christian in the true sense of the word and will, as Christ foretold, worship God in spirit and in truth.

What Rudolf Steiner advises us to do, this, the classicists of philosophy tried to realize. But they had no idea of how it is possible to change one’s way of thinking. Goethe, however, was aware of this possibility. He brought his consciousness, which was directed towards knowledge of the plant-world, to silence, and made it empty. This silence lasted for a number of years, thereby making it possible for Goethe’s *instrument of thinking to metamorphose into the instrument for ideal perception*. This brought him to direct cognition of the idea of the archetypal plant. In ‘The Riddles of Philosophy’ Rudolf Steiner says: “In the archetypal plant (Urpflanze), Goethe had taken hold of an idea which enables one ‘to invent plants ad infinitum’ He is therefore on the way to finding within his self-conscious ‘I’, not just the idea that can be perceived, that can be thought, but the living *idea*. The self-conscious ‘I’ *experiences within itself* a realm which can be recognized as belonging both to itself and to the outer world, because the forms that it contains show themselves to be reflected images (Abbilder) of the creative powers. Thus, for the self-conscious ‘I’, that element has been found which allows its character as a real being to shine forth. Goethe has developed a pictorial conception (Vorstellung) through which the self-conscious ‘I’ can feel itself filled with life, because it feels as *one* with the creative beings of nature. The world-views of more recent times attempted to come to terms with the riddle of the self-conscious ‘I’; Goethe places into this ‘I’ the *living idea*; and with this life-force weaving and working within it, this ‘I’ itself is seen to be a living reality” (GA 18).

In the power of ‘beholding’ within Goethe’s consciousness the pure percept was transformed into pure concept. They discovered their identity, and thus the abyss that lies between perceiving and thinking, between the ‘I’ and the world, was overcome. The universal ‘shift’ (Wendung) in world-development means the transition in the human being from reflection to beholding. As we showed in Fig. 37, reflective thinking is centrifugal in relation to matter, and centripetal in relation to the spiritual centre of the world. Thus, at the periphery of being there is nothing to hold reflection fast, apart from the thinking ‘I’. One needs only to set aside the ‘I’ (aufheben), and straight away the higher ‘I’ of the human being begins to reveal itself and unfold its activity. And if the question is asked: what in this case is the position of the natural kingdoms? – then

the answer is, that they are still on the way *to the periphery*. So far as concerns their group-‘I’s, these stand higher than the human being, but in order to attain self-consciousness in otherness-of-being, they too must descend into its nothingness. They follow the human being; but he it is, who opens the gateway for otherness-of-being into the second half of the evolutionary cycle. We have already spoken of the fact that the ‘Fall’ into sin in Paradise was a radical transformation of the evolutive-involutive process in man. The possibility opened up for him, to unfold an activity of his own in his own soul-spiritual world, to live through an individual evolution and thereby create a new, fifth realm of being – the ‘kingdom’ of human relationships, culture, civilization. As he travels this path, he begins (still by virtue of the lower ‘I’) to subjectivize the universal human ‘I’, to become ‘a species in his own right’, and he begins to show, in the phenomenon of his individual spirit, features of the universal man (Allmensch), of the new Adam who is able, from within himself, to determine the course of further evolution. This view of the calling of the human being should not be regarded as an exaggeration, if only for the reason that the abstract-conceptual boundary of the universe which passes through his spirit is ultimately a form of manifestation of the Holy Spirit, the aim of which it is to return to the Father His first revelation, to reflect it back to Him. At least at the periphery of the universal edifice, the human being becomes the most important active helper of the Gods. Not in a spirit of pride, but of humility and insight, Angelus Silesius writes in his ‘Cherubinischer Wandersmann’: “God cannot without me create one tiny worm: it would fall apart at once, if I did not help Him to sustain it.” To sustain it together with God can, however, only be done in the way we have described, of which the Apostle Paul was the first to speak: and Angelus Silesius continues as follows: “The more my ‘I’ in me declines and wilts away, the more the ‘I’ of God grows stronger and prevails.” This means nothing other than the setting aside (Aufhebung) of the subject in the ascent to beholding. It is achieved on the basis of *love* for the object of cognition, a love that is so strong that the cognizing subject (the ‘I’) renounces itself and is joined together with it to form a single, unitary being. Angelus Silesius knew of this, too, and he expressed it in poetical form (for this is, as with Goethe, a poetical, but also a profoundly religious, science) in the amazing words: “More than He loves Himself, God loveth me: if I love Him more than I love myself: then I give Him as much, as from Himself He gives to me.” One is forced to admit that the boldness of thought of this German mystic outstrips that of many a religious believer today, just as the boldness of Rudolf Steiner exceeds that of contemporary scholars. But what stands before us is simply an objective process of world culture, of the phenomenology of the world-spirit in the human spirit and of the human spirit in the world-

spirit. Anthroposophy lent to it an all-embracing, synthetic expression. In it, the Aristotelian entelechy reveals itself as the ur-phenomenon of the human being, and the fruits of the combined work of the intellect and the heart accomplished by the medieval mystics are organically assimilated into its doctrine of evolution, in which there is also room for the theories of Darwin and Haeckel, etc. But all this is merely one side of Anthroposophy. Its absolute novelty consists in the fact that it has, figuratively speaking, brought about a ‘mutation of species’ in the principles of cognition.

In Fig. 33 we showed, and explained with the help of statements of Rudolf Steiner, that the Earth aeon constitutes the central element of the all-embracing world metamorphosis, in the course of which the triune body of the human being is transformed by the ‘I’ into the triune spirit. This is a spiritual and a life process. According to the laws of its sevenfold structure, human consciousness also undergoes metamorphosis. In organic nature, the law of metamorphosis is rooted in the seven-membered structure of world-consciousness. In the new thinking of man, which Rudolf Steiner speaks of as ‘morphological’, the law referred to attains its purely spiritual expression, in that it leads the life-principle onto a higher level. While in the process of transformation into beholding, this thinking remains *at first conceptual, but nevertheless moves in accordance with the developmental laws of organic nature*. This is why it, too, can be called morphological. Its first three stages are dialectical. At the fourth the superseding of reflection or, to be more precise, of the reflecting subject takes place (see Fig. 38). For the ordinary human being this stage is both new and difficult to attain. When it has been achieved, we do not think, but we still remain within the thought-element. We renounce all thoughts, judgments, logical conclusions. All that remains within us is an effort of thought, which was developed in the crystallizing-out of the dialectical triad, and a certain disposedness to behold *that* content which was contained in the thesis, passed through the process of negation and was resurrected in a new form in the synthesis. As it is far from simple to enter deeply into true beholding, let us, for the present, carry out an exercise which involves leading the content of the triad through a thinking process, which is nevertheless passive, and in the course of which we will endeavour *to unite ourselves, to identify, with the world of ideas which belongs to and is related to it*. Here one can take as one’s material the history of this question, for example, or parallels, analogies, opinions of whatever kind. And thus we are learning how to pass through a fourth stage by working with the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’. When Goethe was applying his method of beholding to the plants, he did not at the same time look at the minerals, for example, and besides, he was very well aware of

all that was known to the botanists of that time. When he was looking at different species and forms of plants he refrained from making any thought-judgment about them. We must do the same when we are considering a thought-content. We remain intellectually passive, dispassionate, and wait to see what can come towards us from a certain 'other' side. When we work in this way, the idea must come like a flash of illumination. And by virtue of one's original disposedness, this 'illumination' must bring, again, an element of synthesis, though on a higher level. The process gone through on the fourth level *is identical with the experience of observation*. It consists in the act of ideal perception, to which the ideal, essential core of the object under examination must reveal itself on a higher level than its manifestation as concept in the element of synthesis. This is an a posteriori, not, however of the analytical, but of the pure judgment that is given to that pure sense-faculty of which Kant speaks and which bears no relation to our perception with the senses.

We set up conditions under which we will 'behold' the content of the synthesis. Like the object of a laboratory experiment, we subject this content to conditions under which it can reveal its secret more readily and quickly than is the case with analytical, logical thinking. And when the idea appears, this is already the fifth stage, the *fifth* element of that new logical cycle in which we are striving to ascend from reflection to the supersensible perception of the ideas. The five-membered structure that emerges is a wholeness in itself, within which the dialectical elements have a new character and are differently determined. It represents a holistic, though not complete, manifestation of the ur-phenomenon, which meets the criterion of the task we have set ourselves (Fig. 32). At the fourth stage we refrain from bringing into movement the will which we have developed in the three previous stages. It is already in us: the will in the thinking – and it frees itself. Then a new orientation of its activity begins. In pure activity that is, initially, in thinking, but which becomes, in time, an exertion of the intellect that is free of all content, *the will begins to transform the organ of thinking into an organ of ideal perception*.^{*} Quick results, we repeat, can be expected by no-one, since the process that unfolds within us in this way is of an *evolutionary* nature. And this process is – as the first in the history of our development – *brought about solely through our own efforts*. Here, nature can no longer help us.

It is important to realize that the metamorphosis in question (one can justifiably call it a *mutation* of the whole human being) does not take place in the

^{*} This alters the course of all deeper processes in the many-membered being of man, but this will be discussed later on.

course of special occult practice – meditation etc. We remain within the sphere of the object-oriented consciousness and we fulfil a gnoseological (epistemological) task, but within the structure of the whole human being. In this way, we make accessible to many people the principle of initiation which used invariably to be secret; that is to say, we make it into a contemporary principle of cultural life, and we show also the decisive significance that it has for any future development. This step became possible thanks to the fact that over the course of the last two to three centuries self-consciousness has grown to an unusual degree in the civilized part of humanity. For the latter, the metamorphosis of thinking consciousness described by Anthroposophy became an *inevitable* factor of development – one that will, if we begin to realize it, lead civilization harmoniously across the threshold of the supersensible world. Many symptoms indicate that it has already come close to this threshold. For example, it would be mistaken to think that the present spiritual crisis has called forth the unheard-of growth of parapsychology that could be observed in the second half of the 20th century, but that this crisis will pass and everything will return to good old materialism. No, such a return will never happen. In all spheres of science the question that will continue to dominate increasingly, will be that concerning the possibility of the transformation of consciousness which leads us beyond the limits of the reality given to us by means of the five senses. But disaster awaits civilization if it answers this question materialistically and not by way of the theory of knowledge and the methodology of science. This would threaten it with a more dangerous decline than the one it has suffered through the propaganda of immorality and anti-aestheticism. The degradation that is likely to follow will resemble the sickness of a person who has renounced logic and turned to hallucinations.

The transformation of consciousness is only possible if one has qualitatively altered thinking in the sole permissible way: through bringing into it, from the strengthened 'I', the element of will. This will endows our spirit with the highest accomplishments of the soul, which consist in the ennobling of the lower sense-perceptions and the development of the higher sense-perceptions, right up to ideal perception. This involves extinguishing in one's thinking everything of a sensual, passionate nature that excites the reflection in a way that cannot be controlled by the 'I'. In the depths of the organism the *process in the blood* which accompanies the thought-process must be separated from the *process in the nerve*. Then beholding arises. It need hardly be said that it is easier for a morally and spiritually strong person to carry out this procedure than for one burdened with cravings and desires.

When the 'I' turns to the activity of beholding, the brain continues to reflect, but stops actively thinking-through, and the will of the 'I' which works in the blood is not aroused. It begins in a certain way to reunite with the being of thinking, which also has a will-nature, but merely casts its shadow in our conceptual field. In its new relation to the 'I', this being shows itself within the element of pure will, as it does in the case of strokes of genius, where we say that 'intuition' has been at work.

The thought-being revealed in this way is not simply a judgment a posteriori. It is also an idea 'before the things', which has made its appearance 'after the things', and this is why the disposing of beholding towards a definite content was necessary. Even in its appearance this idea is real for the reasoning faculty, and it strives, therefore, in this new condition, to acquire individualized being. This is the *sixth* element of the seven-membered cycle of morphological thinking, or of the logic of thinking in beholding: *the individualizing of the idea*. The cycle is completed with the return of the idea with which it began, to all-unity, to the extent that the given framework will allow. This is the concluding, seventh element, or the seventh stage* (Fig. 38)

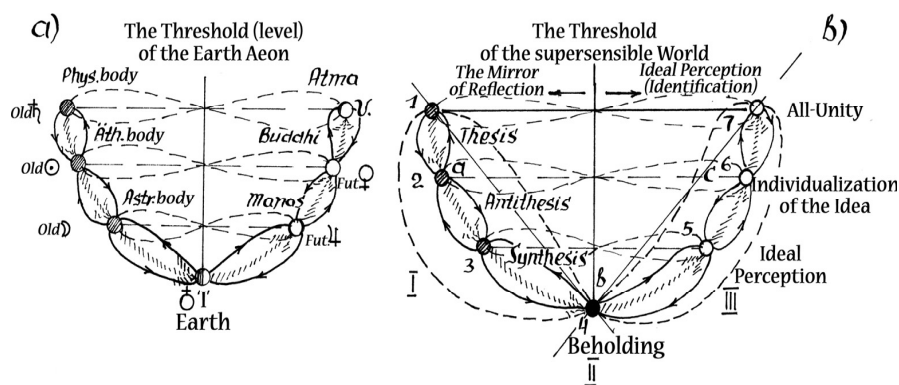


Fig. 38

As can be seen in the diagram, the system of seven-membered thinking is inwardly organized with great exactness. It is considerably reinforced by the principle of tri-unity which pervades it; from this it proceeds, and to this it returns. The dialectical triad within it shows itself to be a threefold triune metamorphosis. In a certain sense this is the world's *past*: the world that has be-

come, and is given in mirror-reflected form. With abstract thought one can only think-through what has become, and this is why Kant came to the cardinal question: Are synthetic judgments a priori possible? The three-membered metamorphosis which has its centre in the fourth element (elements 3-4-5) reflects the moment of the present, in which past and future, mirror-reflection and ideal perception impinge upon one another in the manner of a contradiction. If we have to do in the first lemniscate (elements 1-2-3) with the picture of the 'I', with 'I'-consciousness, then in the second (elements 3-4-5) we have to do with the pure actuality of the higher 'I', which is so powerful in its effect that it can even change the structure of the brain and bring its etheric body into a freer relation to it. Finally, the third lemniscate (elements 5-6-7) leads to a unity the triad of our future thinking, in which consciousness acquires real life.*

Thus the whole seven-membered cycle of thinking (the large lemniscate drawn with a dotted line in Fig. 38b) forms a great triad (its parts: I, II, III), in which the 'I' which thinks according to the new law, experiences itself within the (similarly dialectical) unity of the gnoseological and ontological principle of consciousness.

One day the human being will think in a sevenfold way just as naturally as he thinks today in a threefold way – dialectically. In this thinking the ur-phenomenal foundations of the world will reveal themselves to him directly. And he himself will begin in cognition to create new laws of being. But before he reaches such a stage of development, he must practise in the way described here: to remain fully and entirely in the 'here and now', in the conceptual and logical element and merely to extend the limits of the latter. In this case the thesis, which has passed through negation and has been resurrected in the synthesis, undergoes cancellation and preservation (*Aufhebung*) once more, after which it shows itself in its ur-phenomenal form in the fifth stage of the cycle. This is an enormously important moment for the unfolding of new, free imaginations, in which the human being will think in a super-individual way. The old imaginations came to him of themselves, just like the percepts of today. They were not guided and they were immanent to the group-consciousness.

The thinking that moves according to the laws of seven-membered logic transforms the temporal process into a two-dimensional space, which is normally a quality of the imaginative world. The activity of the 'I' in metamor-

* A more detailed discussion of this theme can be found in Chaps. II-IV of 'Das Mysterium Anthroposophie' by G.A.B. (not yet translated).

* Of this thinking one can say that – just like sense-perceptions – within it ideal perception first has the character of universality, then becomes individualized, and finally the individual element finds itself again in the universal (element 7).

phosing the thought-process forms, on the one hand, a certain ‘reflective surface’ in which the being of thought only reveals its shadow.* On the other hand, this surface has a threshold character; it divides sense-perceptible from supersensible reality. On the ‘other’ side the thinking process follows the laws of the existence and development of living organisms. The spatial conditions of the three-dimensional world play no part here. As we see from Fig. 38, the completed thought-cycle extends from the element of beholding (the threshold surface) in both directions: into both its past and its future. Seen from a higher standpoint, they are only a momentary reality (in them the ‘melody’ has been changed into a ‘harmony’). But in the coming-into-being of this reality we have moved consciously from element 1 to element 7; on a super-conscious level, in the imaginative space, another series of metamorphoses unfolded: that of the first element to the 7th, of the 2nd to the 6th; of the 3rd to the 5th. Here, the movements on these lemniscates can be imagined travelling from left to right and also in the opposite direction.

These are the new phenomena which appear in the thinking-process when we penetrate behind the ‘mirror’ of reflective consciousness, though for the present we are still within the conceptual element and yet at the same time within the ‘I’, which *brings to realization* within itself world-monism, pan-monism. Thanks to this work of the ‘I’ (which is being done in the period of thinking-activity and of spiritual ontogenesis), the unity of the world stands before the human being in the form of the stages of his spiritual ascent, the stages of consciousness-being. This ascent is not without consequences for the manifested forms of the world.

The same can be said of the two dimensions of the new thinking. They correspond to the directions of the world cross and constitute jointly with it a single system. In it the lower levels are overlaid by the higher, the micro-elements by the macro-elements. The same applies to the connections between the elements. In the seven-membered system of the thought-cycle, the connections between its elements are the laws of their transformation, of their metamorphosis.

We said earlier that the higher spiritual activity moves, as the idea of the creation, *from the future into the past*. Conditional upon (conditioned by) this activity is the striving of the ideas, as they free themselves from the things, upwards towards self-existence within absolute truth. But as the idea is bound up with sense-reality, it is compelled *to move from the past into the future*, on

* Interesting here is the reference to the picture of Plato’s ‘cave’, which 2000 years later becomes the ‘cave’ of Francis Bacon.

the path of the evolution of species in order, in the human being, finally to free itself from this evolution and acquire self-existence.

Through the uniting of the two movements of the idea, there is also built up the whole sequence of stages of the thought-activity, which repeats on the micro-level the entire evolutionary cycle. The seven thought-forms of the cycle constitute a phenomenology of the spirit, which one can compare, in one’s own experience, with the seven Manvantaras. The connections between the elements of the thought-cycle bear in this case the character of micro-Pralayas, since the metamorphosis of the elements means their exit onto the astral plane, after which they return to the world of phenomena. On the astral plane there merely takes place an *exchange* of the laws working between the elements, but *no alteration* of them. Subject to the working of a new law, the element changes. Philosophers with a highly-developed ‘sense of thought’ (Gedankensinn) *perceive* this process of transformation within the limits of the dialectical triads. Hegel makes this quite clear in the following words: “When I think, I give up the particular nature of my subjective being, I enter deeply into the matter in hand, let thinking follow its own course; and I am thinking badly if I add to it anything of my own.”¹¹⁵⁾

The laws which call forth the dialectical metamorphosis of the idea are well-known. The thesis is united with the antithesis by negation; the antithesis is united with the synthesis by negation of the negation. Thus in the plant world the soil negates the seed, and when its negation is negated, a shoot is formed together with a root: the synthesis of the seed and the soil. But the reason for the rejection of the seed is that, contained within it in a cancelled and preserved state (aufgehoben), there is the ‘heaven’ of the past growth and ripening.

In order to be able to move on further, from reflection to beholding, it is absolutely necessary to develop, in addition to the sense of thought, the sense of the higher ‘I’. This is what preserves the subject of thinking when it carries out yet another negation: the negation of itself as an ‘I’ that thinks in concepts. Then, in pure sense activity, the higher ‘I’ appears. It provides lawful structure to the thinking process on the other side, when continuous creative activity is taking place. The Goethean ‘dying and becoming’ describes, in its extremely laconic form, the relations between elements 3, 4 and 5. Moved by the force of identification, synthesis, love, the thinking subject rises up from the fourth to the seventh element (Fig. 39).

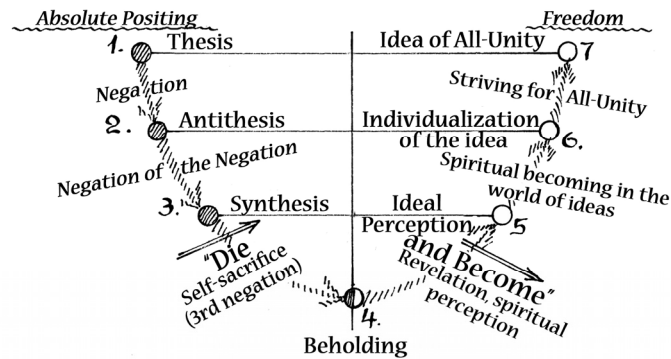


Fig. 39

If we think according to the laws of seven-membered logic, we create in each cycle on an astral level elementary thought-beings, and not shadows. These beings take on, if they are set firmly in the ether-substance, lasting existence and mediate our connection with the beings of the Cosmic Intelligence – i.e. the Hierarchies. The value for us of these elementary beings consists in the fact that, with them, the forming, the creation of our micro-universe begins, in whose centre we ourselves stand; we are its creators when we think according to the laws of imaginative logic, even if, of course, the world of our thought-beings will, for a long time to come, remain subject to the process of coming into being and passing away, as the strength of our working can scarcely reach the astral level of the fifth globe, to which at some point in the future, through a process of spiritualization, all sense-perceptible being will rise. But the time will come when, through our thinking, we will even be able to enter into communion with the higher Devachan. The great Initiates already have this capacity.

The thought-being created by us is seven-membered. As it is unitary in nature, it can be expressed with the help of the symbol of a heptagram. This is also the nature of the evolving human being. When he thinks according to the laws of imaginative logic (of 'beholding' thinking), the human being attains in its sevenfoldness an intermediate stage of being, in which he can grasp everything in consciousness, but does not yet realize within himself the stages of supersensible consciousness. They form above the sevenfoldness of thinking their fivefoldness (because the human being between death and a new birth and also in initiation *ascends and descends* on three levels of the higher world, maintaining his macrocosmic self-identity as he does so. Thus we arrive at the

twelfefoldness of spiritual man, who is a true micro-anthropos – a lesser image of the great world, and at the same time a kind of 'ur-phenomenon in reverse', as we can see from Fig. 40. The introduction of such a concept into the methodology of spiritual science accords fully with law and is indispensable if we wish to understand what constitutes the individual evolution of the human spirit.

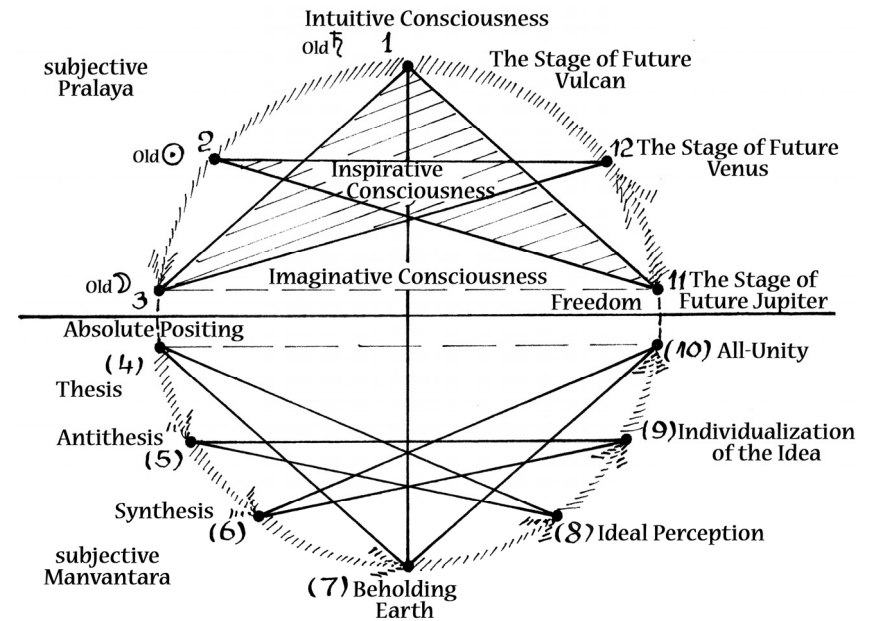


Fig. 40

Manifested evolution in its entirety has its ur-phenomenology. The same is true of the human being. His ur-phenomenological twelvefoldness, represented in Fig. 40, has absorbed into itself the totality of the three stages of world-consciousness, of which we already spoke in connection with Fig. 18. Out of them unfolds the development, as we know, of all the conditions of life (rounds) and form (globes). In the human being and through him the twelvefoldness of the three stages of world-consciousness returns to its *purely spiritual forms* in that it makes up the stages of the spiritual ascent of the human 'I'. A time will come when this 'I' will begin to create its life and form conditions independently. They will be simultaneously those of the world and those of the 'I' itself. But at the present time the human being has reached a point where, *directly and individually*, he has entered into a connection with his ur-

phenomenon. His consciousness on a conscious-superconscious level is structured by the three stages of world-consciousness in the way represented in Fig. 41, where the upper hemisphere of Fig. 40 projects itself, by virtue of spiritual ontogenesis, onto the lower. Then it is so, that behind elements 4 to 6 (as shown in Fig. 40), which the individual human being experiences in the second stage of world-consciousness (as shown in Fig. 18), there are working unphenomenally three sub-stages of the third stage of world-consciousness (sub-consciousness). Their interrelation is objectified in world-evolution in the form of its descent to the etheric-physical plane through the first three globes (Fig. 41). Behind elements 8 to 10 (see Fig. 40) these sub-stages are arranged in the reverse order: 11, 12, 1, which corresponds to the ascent of evolution on the three future stages of the form-conditions (Fig. 41).

All of the mutual connections shown in Figs. 40 and 41 are present as realities within the human being and create the conditions for the regular (i.e. in harmony with objective law) ascent of his 'I'-consciousness to higher states. Here the universe imprints its most sublime laws upon all its lower levels and stages of development. The individual spiritual ascent through these stages can be known in advance, because it repeats, albeit in a different form, *the past descent* of the all-encompassing process of world evolution. The path of the human being to the higher spirit is not simple – here, both time and the will to develop are needed. But in order to have this will, one must first know the web of world-embracing connections and laws into which man's being is woven. And he is woven into them not merely through the conceptual weaving of his intellect, but also in reality, so that already at the present stage of development all his soul-spiritual movements and processes find their echo in the being of the very highest levels of the edifice of the universe. Hence, there are very strong reasons why the human being should be self-conscious and moral.

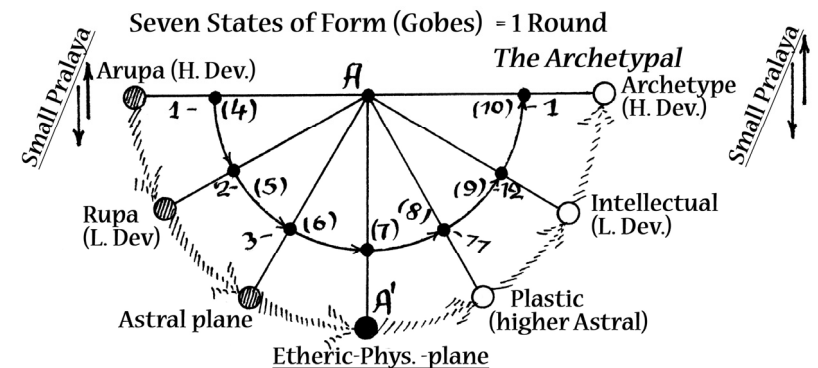


Fig. 41

- A – The system-building principle in all the rounds
- A' – The individual 'I' in the unity of consciousness and being
- 1,2,3 – The third stage of world-consciousness in unity with the first (superconsciousness = subconsciousness)
- 11, 12, 1 – The third (first) stage of world-consciousness in unity with the second, which is extended through the power of judgment in beholding.
- End result: a) 4-6, 8-10 – the second stage of world-consciousness in unity with the first and third.
- b) Element 7 – the individual form of consciousness, in which the (lower) 'I' = the (higher) 'I'.

* * *

Only if we turn to the great universal relationships are we able to understand the essential nature of the human spirit. Such an understanding has now become a *precondition* for its further development. If the human being can summon the strength to master a new spiritual faculty – the power of judgment in beholding – he brings renewal to himself, and also to culture as a whole. Rudolf Steiner wrote the 'Philosophie der Freiheit' as a collection of those exercises through which the reader, in carrying them out, can succeed on his evolutionary path in the sense of the task that lies before him, and can become the creator of a new culture. The investigations conducted above have the aim of laying the ground for the necessary understanding of the nature and character of work with the 'Philosophie der Freiheit'. Decisive in this work is the ability to stand entirely on one's own ground, which is not possible without mastery of the methodology of spiritual science. And one can only master it if one combines the knowledge (science) of freedom with its realization in practice.

If we work with the seven-membered cycles of thinking in which the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’ is written, and if we try to experience them as we go along, then, as it were according to the principle of induction, we transform our thinking spirit into one that ‘beholds’. So far as is possible, a perfect grasp of all the elements, connections and nuances of the present work should lie at the basis of this experiential approach. We will therefore continue our research into methodology, parallel to the analysis of the structure of the thinking-process whose fruit was the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’. The three chapters which the reader has already gone through are no more than a preparation for practical work with the text of the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’. From this point onwards we will present our further chapters alternately with the analysis of the structure of the thought-cycles of the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’. This will enable the methodological considerations to fulfil their practical purpose, and it will make understandable the essential aim of the practical exercises in which, together with the reader, we wish not merely to take note intellectually of the thought-cycles, but work through them in living experience.

The methodology of Anthroposophy can only become a living content of the human spirit if it is taken up into his purely individual spiritual ‘inheritance’ – that is to say, into his Karma and into the sequence of his further earthly incarnations. Rudolf Steiner says: “Pure law is the law of the cosmos, and pure human law, pure human spirit, is one day to become the destiny of the human being” (GA 88, 21.12.1903).

‘THE PHILOSOPHY OF SPIRITUAL ACTIVITY’

Part I

Freedom as an Object of Scientific Inquiry

- Ch. 1 Conscious Human Action
- Ch. 2 The Basic Drive behind the Quest for Knowledge
- Ch. 3 The Service of Thinking in our Quest for Knowledge
- Ch. 4 The World as Percept
- Ch. 5 Attaining Knowledge of the World
- Ch. 6 The Human Individuality
- Ch. 7 Are there Limits to Knowledge?

Chapter 1 **Conscious Human Action**

Before we launch into cognitive-practical exercises with the texts of the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’, we would wish again to indicate the nature of the tasks we are undertaking. Above all, we must continually bear in mind that the study, the thinking-through, of the methodology of Anthroposophy, with which we were engaged in the previous chapters, will find a direct continuation in our work with the texts of the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’.*

Only the present book will enable one to understand fully why one of the components of the methodology of Anthroposophy is *practical* work at the unfolding of a new way of thinking – i.e. that a mastery of it can only be sufficiently productive if the student really tries to change the nature and quality of his thinking consciousness in the way described in the previous chapter and repeatedly taken up again in those that follow.

Knowledge of the fundamentals of the methodology of Anthroposophy is of decisive importance for an understanding of its entire content and has, in addition, a value in itself, as Rudolf Steiner himself quite clearly tells us: “....

* Rudolf Steiner wrote a special epistemological prologue for this work. It was published in the form of a separate brochure with the title ‘Truth and Science’ (GA 3).

for the mere content of spiritual science is not really the essential and important thing. What really counts is the way that one has to think in order to recognize the truth of spiritual science” (GA 187, 1.1.1919).

Human cognition was confronted with a similar task, for the first time, in the period of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, when reflective thinking was starting to develop. The form of cognition that has unfolded since that time has its basis in the repelling, the reflecting (and this means also the negating) of intelligible beings who approach the human being when he thinks. As a result of their rejection there arise in the thinking subject concepts which are lacking in substance, but free. In Anthroposophy, however, the situation is different. Its concepts, as they approach the cognizing subject, do not want to be reflected; they want to *unite* with him on the level of essential being, but not to propel him into the state of group-consciousness as was the case with the Greeks of the pre-philosophical age. One can say without exaggeration that knowledge of Anthroposophy is both personalistic and ontological. And anyone who, while placing a limit on reflection, seeks to grasp it with the intellect alone, will receive at best a ‘rough idea’ of it. This is the difficulty we face, often without suspecting it, as we read the works of Rudolf Steiner. The human being of the present cultural epoch bears within his very instincts an inclination towards the dialectical type of thinking. And when, in the seven-membered cycles in which Rudolf Steiner thought, he discovers that one is meant not to reflect, but to ‘behold’, that one is supposed to simply identify with what one is reading, for a while, and wait for the judgment to appear, as it were, from a quite different direction – in short, when he sees himself suddenly confronted by a structure (holistic in character) and nature of thinking that is completely new to him, he feels as though he has fallen into a void.* He is prepared to think through the dialectical triads of the cycles, but what comes after them simply gets on his nerves. This happened to one of the greatest thinkers of the latter part of the 19th century, Eduard von Hartmann. One cannot say of him that he did not understand the philosophy of Rudolf Steiner (although he engaged in intense polemics with the author); he was simply unable to find a relation to it, because he only reflected it.

Rudolf Steiner said later in his lectures that, when the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’ appeared, many Europeans had the impression that it was written in Chinese. Admittedly, everything new is given an unfavourable reception by

* This happens to the reader with a trained thinking. Whoever thinks associatively or prefers when he is thinking to let himself be guided by the ‘voice’ of feeling, will probably not notice what we speak of here.

the human community, but here we have to do with an innovative deed of a special kind, where the cognizing subject is given the task of merging with the object of cognition so as to form a unity in which he himself is overcome and preserved (*aufgehoben*) for the sake of a higher existence. In order to decide in favour of such a metamorphosis and have the strength to carry it through, one must first have gained, in work with the structure and content of the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’, an understanding of the idea and the possibility of freedom. In terms of methodology, the process of understanding these things is, at the same time, the beginning of their realization, because, while we are doing exercises in the new method of thinking and cognition, we undergo certain changes in consciousness, which are necessary for the free spirit. Thus we have before us a tri-une task in our work with the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’.

Only through the transition to a beholding of the ideas can the human being become free, and begin activity *of his own* within the context of the world-totally. In order to unfold the capacity of ‘beholding’ the development of the ideas, and then the idea itself, one must practise in such a way that one’s sense of thought is strengthened, which (then) undergoes metamorphosis in accordance with the laws of the logic of beholding. But a fruitful exercise (in whatever field) can only be done if one has as clear an idea as possible of what one must do, and how, and why. We will take as the basis for our practical work with the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’ the final form which we arrived at in Fig. 40, as a result of what is shown in Figs. 37, 38 and 39. We know that all the connections that exist on the ur-phenomenal level manifest both in the phenomenology of the universal nature-process and in that of the human thinking spirit. Though the latter hovers above the conditions of space and time, it contains within it nevertheless the principle of autonomous movement, which is conditioned by the working in it of the laws of evolutionary process. In its shadowy, reflected being, it recalls the being of the world in the aeon of Old Saturn up to the moment when time arose. It is therefore characterized by both linear sequence (e.g. logic) in its manifestation, and *simultaneity* of the events taking place within it. This comes to expression in, for example, the prior determination of the synthesis in the thesis, which led Kant to raise the question concerning the possibility of synthetic (i.e. containing new knowledge within them) judgments a priori.

But not only in the dialectical triad, also in the seven-membered cycle of thinking the end result is predetermined by the thesis – but *not realized* in the thesis! And how it will be realized depends upon the activity of the thinking subject, since there are many possibilities of its realization. This is also the case in the organic world. The conditional nature of its development which is

contained in the seed meets up with a host of developmental factors; here, the natural environment is at work, cosmic influences, selection and finally genetic manipulation. Through their working, the plant does not cease to be a plant, but the form and even its species can change, and within a long period of evolution it is a constituent part of the evolution of species.

Similar things can be said of human thinking, only here it is the human being who is his own ‘breeder’ or perhaps ‘genetic manipulator’. The most important thing here is that he is a *species* in his own right and the possibility is given to him to command his own ur-phenomenon. In thinking consciousness the human subject as a species has the form of the following lemniscate:

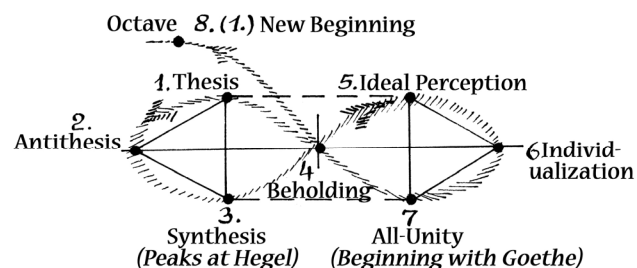


Fig. 42

We may speak of a ‘species’ in this case, because there exists a cultural-historical phylogenesis of the personality which every individual human being must recapitulate on the path of mastery of his spiritual ur-phenomenon – i.e. his higher ‘I’.

The lemniscate of thinking and the lemniscate which encapsulates the evolutionary cycle stand in a mutual relation of *phenomenon and ur-phenomenon*. In our analysis of the cycles of thinking in which the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’ is written, this knowledge helps us to grasp the organism of living thinking, which is without any question a totality; it is this which determines the overall structure of its elements, their character and the relations between them. There emerges in the general weaving of the thinking an ascending mutual conditioning of its cycles; from the element of All-unity the movement of thinking advances to a new cycle, whose first element leads the preceding cycle to an octave and is at the same time the beginning of a new cycle. As we follow this path, we move *from the less perfect knowledge to the more perfect, from the special to the eternal idea, from reflection to the organism of thinking*.

If the cycle were enclosed within the seven elements, we would arrive with its help at a thinking that is perhaps a little more alive but remains dogmatic, we would arrive at the ‘eternal recurrence’ to which the plant and also the animal world is condemned. But in thinking, such a thing is impossible so long as its cycle is not just completed in a relative sense and the seventh stage has actually been reached. In the evolution of the world its ur-phenomenon is the aeon of the future Vulcan – the trans-temporal realm of Spirit-Man. From above and from the future, it does not merely crown all that has become, it also negates it, thus bringing about at the same time a further process of becoming.

Towards this future moves the primal revelation of God the Father, who strives to press through the dense ‘layer’ of what has become, of the world of matter and the senses, to the realm of pure spirit. Like scales these arise and fall away from this impulse-process: forms, living beings, substances. And they are taken up by it again, to be transformed into something more perfect, which is able sooner or later to become pure being of the ‘I’ spirit. This is the course followed by development, and the logic of beholding in thinking works in the same way. When one has grasped its nature, its laws, one must enter deeply, with a new consciousness, into the realm of practical thinking as a process of becoming. So let us now embark upon our tri-une task.

First of all, we will consider the fact that the first two parts of the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’ each have seven chapters. Each part is a greater thought cycle, in which the chapters fulfil the role of elements. Therefore, e.g. in Ch. 1 all the elements have the character of the thesis; they have the clear-cut quality of the intellect and their form of expression is very incisive. In Ch. 2 everything is pervaded by the conflict of contradictions, polarities, opinions and stand-points. This whole chapter forms an antithesis to the first. In Ch. 4 even the theses have a beholding character, etc.

All three parts of the book (together with ‘The Consequences of Monism’) form a tri-unity, which has dialectical features only in part, since it stands higher than dialectics, as we will show in due course. For the cognizing spirit of the reader, the entire first part of the book has the aim of calling forth within it a special *involution* process. The second part is striving to become, within it, its *individual evolution*.

The first chapter of the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’ consists of five cycles. Through it the cognizing subject itself is introduced, which as a microcosm is five-membered. It would not be a bad thing if the reader would try, himself, to identify these cycles. But if he can’t quite manage to do it yet he can follow our analysis. It should be pointed out, however, that a *real result* of work with the ‘Philosophy’ is only achieved by one who learns to experience for himself

its structure as one of the expressions of the macro-processes of development and understand what gigantic relationships stand behind these cycles of thinking which, as a first glance will show, are not at all complicated (in their form). In working with them one must, above all, avoid trying to grasp their structures with the intellect alone, because here the whole aim is the development of a new soul-spiritual quality. Even its seeming simplicity is relative. One need only bear in mind that the dialectical autonomous movement of thinking is far more elementary than the Goetheanistic (movement of thinking), but that a careless way of operating with it resulted in the whole world being stood on its head.

In the course of the structural analysis we will give the content of all the chapters of the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’, dividing them into cycles, sub-cycles and elements. This will increase the length of the book considerably, but it will have the advantage that the reader will be able to acquire an overall (holistic) picture of the methodology of Anthroposophy, which can then be experienced in its *realization in practice* in the process of becoming of the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’. If the reader postpones this living experience ‘to next time’ he risks having to content himself with a collection of abstractions.*

We will be occupied mainly with the structural analysis of the book, and in this we will appeal to the reader’s *sense of thought*; the content of the book we will allow to speak for itself. We will present our own thoughts on this content in the chapters numbered with Roman numerals. But at the end of each chapter of the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’ we will give – in the first part of the book – a concluding summary and tables with brief formulations of the elements of content (1, 3, 5, 7) in all the cycles. In this way the cognitive work with the book will also be intensified.

So, now let us begin our analysis. It is by its very nature structured according to systems, as we will be dealing with a hierarchy of wholenesses (Ganzheiten) which merge together to form ever greater unities (units). And in no respect will we risk being over-zealous in our application of the dissecting intellect.

The first cycle in Chapter 1 begins with a clear and simple dialectical triad. Its thesis and antithesis negate one another in the most unambiguous way possible. The synthesis reconciles them. Since the book has only just begun one can, admittedly, not expect any spectacular results from the first synthesis. However, the contradictions that come before it have truly world-historical

* It is not without significance that the Russian reader possibly has no access to the ‘Philosophy of Spiritual Activity’.

significance. And one must give all due respect to this synthesis – it expresses an opinion with which, for the time being, both advocates and opponents of human freedom can agree. In short, it is simple but exemplary.

CYCLE I

- | | | |
|-----------------|--|------|
| 1. (Thesis) | Is the human being in his thinking and action a spiritually free being, | C.I’ |
| | | 1. |
| 2. (Antithesis) | or does he stand under the compulsion of an iron necessity of natural law? | 2. |
| 3. (Synthesis) | There are few questions on which so much ingenuity has been expended as on this. The idea of the freedom of the human will has found both fervent advocates and stubborn opponents in great numbers. | 3. |

There now follows the element of which we said that it is indigestible for people with a strongly developed instinct for dialectical thought. Now thinking must become as *passive* as it was active in the triad. Here it is a matter, not merely of refraining from the forming of judgments, but of eliminating, suppressing the need for them within oneself. When one is identifying as fully as possible with what is said, one must try to behold it with one’s spirit, to behold the sphere in which lives the synthesis one has arrived at, and to do this long enough to allow the judgment to arise of itself out of the beholding. In the individual case this does not require great effort, but we are repeating here, in its essential character, the experience of Goethe, who contemplated the world of the plants for years in inner silence, until their cardinal idea sprang up in him, that all the elements of the plant are metamorphoses of the leaf (with the joint). So let us make such an attempt. Let us stop thinking actively, and behold with the eye of the spirit the content of element 4. It is, incidentally, worthy of note that the abstract reflection which is called ‘speculation’ in the languages of Western Europe is called ‘umozrenie’ (intellect-beholding) in Russian. Let us take this concept quite literally!

- | | | |
|----------------|--|---------------------------------|
| 4. (Beholding) | There are people who, in their moral pathos, accuse anyone who can deny so obvious a <i>fact</i> as freedom, of intellectual weakness. ‡Standing over against them are those who regard it as totally unscientific for anyone to imagine that the laws of nature are interrupted in the sphere of human action and thinking. ‡The thing that some describe as the most precious possession of humanity is described by others, just as often, as the most pernicious illusion. ‡Endless ingenuity has been employed in the attempt to explain how human freedom is compatible with the workings in nature, of which man is, after all, a part. ‡No less is the effort that has been expended on the other side to give a plausible explanation of how such an absurd idea could arise. | 1.’
2.’
3.’
1.”
2.” |
|----------------|--|---------------------------------|

Our study of the structure of the book has the character of research and is therefore unavoidably intellect-based and even in some degree artificial. One should not imagine that Rudolf Steiner constructed his train of thought likewise in an artificial way. No, he just thought, and as he did so he proceeded from his spiritual nature, which in him was different from our own. It was characteristic of him to identify with the process of metamorphosis in thinking, just as it is quite normal for us to think in opposites. There arises within us an immense number of concepts. We give utterance to them, often for no compelling reason. But when they have been uttered, we know that, looking at them from different standpoints, we can both uphold and also retract them. People who are not able to create a synthesis in cognition are mostly content with this and engage in endless arguments with one another. Others (Hegel, for example) think creatively: contradiction provides for them a fertile soil for the creation of new thought-forms. This is how our thought-instinct works. When we become aware of it, our sense of thought is strengthened: In the sphere of thinking the aesthetic principle – our taste for the elaboration of ideas in a beautiful, logical, artistic way – develops, and for this the capacity is required to identify with the material of thinking, just as the painter identifies with the material of form and colour, and the composer with that of musical sound. And the *logical conscience* also develops in us. Once all these things are there, we can begin to be creative in thinking.

If the process of thinking is accompanied by an active sense of thought, we are already close to ‘beholding’. On the path of the artistic elaboration of thinking, the feeling for our own higher ‘I’ develops within us; with its help we can have an ideal perception of the rebirth of the thesis out of ‘beholding’. In this concrete case we recognize that the force of the thesis has grown considerably: its character as a mere proposition has been transformed into a key question of *Lebensanschauung* (one’s philosophical view of life):

5. That here we have to do with one of the most important questions of life, of religion, of practical activity and scientific knowledge can be felt by anyone whose most significant character-trait is not the opposite of thoroughness. 3.”

A short digression into the history of the question has allowed us, thanks to identification with it, to obtain results for which an abstract speculative approach would have required the writing of a whole chapter.

It can happen, that a reader with an insufficiently developed sense of thought or with an aversion to thinking altogether, finds all these gradations and nuances in the process of development of living thinking unimportant or

even far-fetched; it is not by chance that the overwhelming majority of philosophical directions even regard thinking and cognition per se as an insufficiently real foundation of life and search with grim determination for the ‘things in themselves’. In order to forestall a possible mishap of this kind, we have given, also in the first three chapters, a methodological introduction into the practical work, and will develop this still further. Anyone who reads this with careful attention will even grasp the *inevitable character* of the method of thought brought to light by us, which is used in Anthroposophy, and also of its structures. The method of spiritual science has much in common with counterpoint. Thanks to it one’s knowledge as a whole arises out of the interplay of many different elements, and assumes a ‘stereoscopic’, spatial character. What has become known within a temporal process reappears, when it is beheld, in the instantaneous flash of insight. Is all of this easy to learn? Anyone who demands simplicity in all things could be asked the following question: Does a musician expect one of his listeners not to hear the polyphony in a Bach fugue or not to be able to distinguish C sharp minor from E flat major? In spiritual science things are more difficult than in music and the traditional sciences put together. Knowledge of its laws must be attained both via the sense-organs and the intellect and also with something that is higher than the senses and the intellect.

The judgments that are born of ‘beholding’ possess, so to speak, enhanced a posteriority and thus also heightened reality; they display a tendency towards individualization which, as in the case of the individualization of the human being, can be enormously varied in character. It can correspond to what we imagine, or stand in contradiction to it; it can be convincing or absurd, etc. Here as in dialectic, contradiction can, on occasion, be more fruitful than agreement. This is exactly what happens in the cycle we are considering. As we shall see from the further content of the ‘*Philosophie der Freiheit*’, it is difficult to find periods in the history of human thought which were favourable for the individualizing of the idea of freedom, and for the idea generally. Rudolf Steiner, therefore, not infrequently hands what has been attained in the fifth element to the opponents of freedom and enables them to give individual expression to the idea.

6. And it is one of the sad symptoms of the superficiality of contemporary thought that a book whose intention it is to distil a ‘new order’ from the results of modern natural-scientific research (David Friedrich Strauss – ‘The Old and the new Faith’) has nothing more to say on this question than the words: “Here we do not need to enter into the question of the freedom of human will. The supposed freedom of indifferent choice has always been regarded as an empty illusion by every philosophy worthy of 4.

the name. However, this question does not affect in any way the moral value attached to human actions and thoughts.”

The fruits of this ‘handing over’ gesture show themselves in the element of All-unity, with which the cycle ends. Here we can see how fruitful it was to give way. Now we have the right to a conclusion that is truly colossal in its scope.

7. I have quoted this passage, not because I regard the book in which it is found as being of special importance, but because it seems to me to express the (most enlightened) opinion to which the majority of our thoughtful contemporaries are able to rise in this matter.

Thus the, at first sight, uncomplicated dialectical beginning: free – not free, unfolding according to the laws of ‘beholding in thinking’, has led us, within a single page, to a fundamental conclusion of not just philosophical but also social and historical importance.

Cycle II proceeds further.* Let us not forget its general nuance: it forms the antithesis to Cycle I. The latter was, in a sense, a threefold thesis, since the whole first part stands under the sign of the thesis, and the same is true of Chap. 1 within the context of the first part. Therefore considerable attention is given in Cycle I to what is called in science ‘the stating of the problem’. Now begins its overcoming and preserving (*Aufhebung*), its elevation to a higher level, where it will show itself in a new form.

As the aim of our studies is to provide material for the development of new feelings, we will now quote the description of the nature of thesis and antithesis which was given to them by Jakob Boehme in his book ‘Aurora’ in the language of alchemy and from the standpoint of the principle of world-development. Thesis: “In dark astringency the primal Being takes on form,

* The analysis put forward here of the system structure of the book is not the only one possible. It is connected with the subject of knowledge and is therefore, in its objective aspect, also determined by the subject. Something similar happens in the experience of works of art. For lack of space, we have no opportunity to consider the second option here, in which the content sounds in a more macrocosmic ‘key’, a rhythmic breathing as compared with the microcosm of the five-fold structure that we are investigating. In the second variant, the first cycle develops, after the first triad, two more; thus the second and then the third synthesis arise, whereby the dialectical principle of the cycle is deepened.

silently enclosed within Himself and motionless”; antithesis: “through the devouring of its opposite the first nature-form passes over into the form of the second; what is astringent and motionless acquires movement; strength and life enters into it” (GA 7). In the past it was known to those who still had relics of the old clairvoyance, that thought possesses substance, that it is an intelligible Being. It is to this reality of thinking, and nothing else, that we battle our way through the curtain of seeming abstraction, which is overcome by a way of thinking which transforms itself.

In Cycle II we experience something similar to that of which Boehme speaks. The call to battle sounds already in the thesis. One can even find it sarcastic. But what we have is, rather, a justified nuance of indignation provoked by element 6 in the previous Cycle.

CYCLE II

1. That freedom cannot consist in the completely arbitrary choice between the one or the other of two possible actions, everyone today seems to know who claims to have grown beyond the kindergarten stage of science. There is always, so people say, a quite definite *reason* why, of several possible actions, there is one particular action which a person carries out.

Before we move on to the antithesis, let us return to the theme of the octave, which we touched upon earlier. The thought-cycles, which have been developed according to the new logic, possess their organic and aesthetic principles which are not of the sense-world. The laws of all these realms of spiritual being merge together into a unity in the phenomenology of Goetheanistic thinking. Its cyclic systems pass over into one another in smooth transition; between them a connection remains which is conditioned by the law of the higher unity, in the same way as all that happens in the evolution of the world.

What we have just said can be experienced clearly in the transition from the 1st to the 2nd Cycle. The first Cycle led us to the conclusion: The majority of thoughtful contemporaries have only been able to rise to the idea that seemingly indifferent freedom of choice is an illusion. And now we are confronting a new thesis: This everyone seems to know, etc. Actually, we have here the same as what we had in the seventh element of the first cycle, and at the same time we understand clearly, and even feel (from the tone of what is being said) that we have before us a new beginning. Two aspects of the question of freedom – thinking and activity – are sounding in the new structure in a similar way to what went before, but differently all the same – ‘an octave higher’.

In addition to the musical element there is a touch of the dramatic art in the character of the thinking in the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’. The polemical-

dialectical element is frequently personified, in such a way that the battle over the idea of freedom takes on the character of a world drama, assuming the aspect of a social alchemy in which the antitheses are substantially real. They come to expression in the struggle of opinions and world-views, but are rooted in the many-membered being of man and are conditioned by the extent of his development, but also by the extent of his failure to develop. It is therefore no exaggeration to say that the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’ is experienced by anyone who really begins to understand it, as a Mystery Drama, whose main hero is the new Dionysos-Prometheus who battles with all that has become, for the sake of individual evolution and the overcoming of inherited sin. But the Mysteries pursued, at all times, the goal of bringing about in the participant catharsis, moral purification. In the case at hand catharsis of the soul is absolutely essential, in order to eradicate everything that disturbs pure thought and beholding.

Rudolf Steiner says with reference to this point that, thanks to work with the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’, in the reader “catharsis can be brought about to a high degree. For what is important in such things as this book is the fact that the thoughts are all set out in such a way that they have an effect This book is a structured organism, and to work through the thoughts in this book brings about something like an inner training” (GA 103, 31.5.1908).

Work with this book can be compared to the placing of an object in a magnetic field, thereby charging it with an electromagnetic potential, or with a blind man walking always along the same route and thus, after a while, no longer needing someone to accompany him. In the present case, we are learning to orientate ourselves within a reality that is invisible to us. We learn this by identifying the rhythms and processes in our astral and etheric bodies repeatedly with the rhythmic quality of the thinking in which the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’ is written. Its ‘field’ becomes, in the end, our own ‘field’; we learn to *perceive* it with our sense of thought. Even the title of the book should not be understood in the traditional sense in which one speaks, for example, of the philosophy of the unconscious, or transcendental philosophy. It is related to conceptions of a different kind like, for example, the philosophy of the heroic deed, the philosophy of revelation, the philosophy of sacrifice. As one reads this book the first paragraph of the first chapter already awakens associations with Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony. Then (until the end of Ch. 9) we have the theme of the battle of the romantic hero with fate. This battle resembles flashes of lightning which have been long suppressed by the darkness of destiny:

- we have here to do with one “of the most important questions of life, of religion”;
- = “we do not need to enter here into the question of the freedom of the human will”;
- “This sounds convincing”;
- = The fundamental thesis of the doctrine of free will is, of course, “rejected”.

The discussion here is not about abstract questions of cognition, but about the immediate, present and eternal destiny of the real human being. Nevertheless, armies march towards us again in Ch. 4, bearing banners with the inscription: “The world is my inner representation”, together with many other illusionists. Their battle against the idea of freedom, whatever may be their intentions, merges together with an all-pervading conflict between good and evil which we will be examining in the chapters of our book. A Mystery Drama is impossible without the antithesis between good and evil.

At the end of the first cycle we know, as readers, that the battle has concluded here with our defeat. The victor is David Freidrich Strauss, who has imparted to the majority of ‘thoughtful contemporaries’ not actually the knowledge, but rather the belief, that freedom does not exist, because it could only be freedom of choice (for which in reality there is always a definite reason). The destructive consequences of this belief are, indeed, incalculable. For in that case there is neither sin nor virtue, and individual evolution is an empty dream. The positive, creative element in the first Cycle is contained in the way its content is structured (Fig. 43).

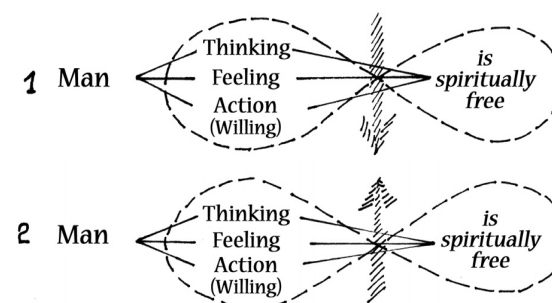


Fig. 43

One can see from the diagram that, although the problem is only presented from the standpoint of thought and will, feeling is also (because there are elements of the tri-unity) an accompanying factor below the surface. It orientates

the solution of the problem, now from willing to thinking – and then we are looking into an as yet unrealized future, when the will really enters the thinking, whereby the character of thinking is changed – and now from thinking to willing, and then, before one can make a judgment regarding the possibility of action, one must first understand what thinking really is. Thus we discover that the main question of the whole first part of the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’ (it has a significant role to play also in the second) is already posed in the first thesis. Such is the remarkable way in which the living nature of the book is

revealed, in whose words we only experience its outer form. Something similar happens in our dealings with the organic world. We observe the multiplicity of its forms, behind which are concealed the principle of life and the seeds of psychical functions. In the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’ we contemplate thought-forms. They are built up according to the principles of the living realm, and we must learn to transform our psychical activity in order to be able to really behold them. Pure acts of ‘beholding’ are attained in emptied consciousness, and the thought is apprehended in ideal perception, through the sense which is free of all attachment to sense-qualities.

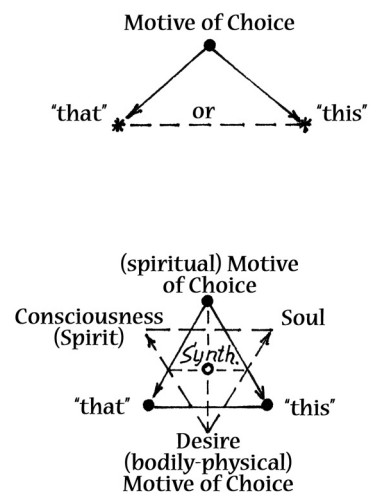


Fig. 44

For reasons of space, it is not possible for us to analyse all the movements and thought-structures in the book in as detailed (but still far from adequate) way as this, so we are trying at the beginning to give the reader a real incentive to work through the continuation in independent thought and play an active part in our deliberations.

Let us now return to the second Cycle. Here, too, the forces of the past voice their opinion, those judgments about freedom in which the element of feeling prevailed over that of thinking, and the idea of freedom therefore seemed unconvincing. As we give ourselves over to these moods, the wish grows stronger in us, to turn our attention to the present and the future of the consciousness-soul. The thought-content in this Cycle is based upon a triangle.

This is, let us say, the theory of the question. Its practice is rooted in a real soul-process, which is also threefold. This results in the hexagram of choice, which represents together with its centre a seven-membered system. This cen-

tre is the point of the synthesis, which Spinoza tries to understand. The flicker of a suggestion of a rational way of thinking, which was contained in the thesis of the second Cycle, appears again in the antithesis, but, just as D. F. Strauss did in Cycle 1, Herbert Spencer scores the victory over us this time. Behind him there stands, as was the case with Strauss, the majority of “thoughtful contemporaries”. They force us to let the battle between thesis and antithesis end in their favour.

2. This sounds convincing. And yet, right up to the present day, the main attacks of the opponents of freedom have only been directed against the freedom of choice. Herbert Spencer, who subscribes to views which are growing in popularity from day to day, says in ‘The Principles of Psychology’ (Part IV, chap. IX, par. 219): “*That everyone is at liberty to desire or not to desire*, which is the real proposition involved in the dogma of free will, is negatived as much by the analysis of consciousness, as by the contents of the preceding chapters (of psychology)”.
3. Others, too, proceed from this same standpoint when they attack the concept of free will. The germ of all the arguments concerned can already be found in Spinoza. His clear and simple objection to the idea of freedom has since been repeated countless times, only shrouded, as a rule, in the most subtle theoretical doctrines, so that it becomes difficult to recognize the straightforward line of thinking, which is the only thing that matters.

The ‘draughts game’ with the contending party – the opponent of freedom – continues. It is subject to the laws of the logic of beholding in thinking. We need to behold the synthesis within the ‘environment’ of the laws. This ‘environment’ was erected very directly by Spinoza. The ur-phenomenon of the counter-argument is also best revealed in simple thought-forms.

4. Spinoza writes in a letter of October or November 1674: “I call a thing *free*, which exists and acts out of the sheer necessity of its nature, and I call *unfree* that which is determined in its existence and activity in a rigid and precise way by something else. Thus, God, for example, though He exists necessarily, is nevertheless free, because He exists purely and simply out of the necessity of His own nature. Similarly, God freely knows Himself and all other things, because it follows from the necessity of His nature, that He knows all things. So you see that I connect freedom not with free decision, but with free necessity. But let us descend to the level of created things, which are all determined by external causes to exist and act in a fixed and exact way. For the purpose of clarification, let us take a very simple picture. A stone, for example, receives from an external cause that strikes it a certain quantity of movement with which it afterwards, when the impact of the outer cause has ceased, necessarily continues to move. This continuation of the stone in its movement is unfree and without necessity, because it has to be defined by the impact of an external cause. What here is

true of the stone, is true of every other single thing, however complex and adaptable to many purposes it may be: namely, that every thing is necessarily determined by an external cause to exist and to act in a fixed and precise way.

Now, please imagine that the stone, while it is moving, thinks and knows that it is striving with the utmost of its strength to continue in this movement. This stone, which is only aware of its striving and is not at all indifferent, will be convinced that it is entirely free and that it is continuing in its motion for no other reason than that it wishes to do so. Such, however, is the human freedom which we all believe we have and which consists solely in the fact that human beings are conscious of their desires, but at the same time do not know the causes that determine them. Thus, the child believes that it freely desires milk, the angry boy that he freely craves revenge, and the coward that he freely wishes to run away. Then, also, the drunken man believes that it is out of a free decision that he says something which, when he is sober again, he wishes he had not said; and since this prejudice is inborn in all human beings, it is not easy to free oneself of it. For, although we are amply taught by experience that human beings are least able to moderate their desires and that, torn by conflicting passions, they acknowledge what is better and do what is worse, yet they regard themselves as free all the same; the reason being that there are certain things which they desire less strongly, and many a craving can be inhibited through the recollection of something that one often calls to mind.”

The act of beholding is of long duration this time, and here it is very graphic (anschaulich) indeed. If we do not disturb it with incidental thoughts, in the end we cannot but ask the question: So isn't freedom consciously recognized necessity? (Karl Marx). All our thoughts and feelings are brought into a state of tension on account of a conclusion of this kind, but they will not come into movement. The 'I' becomes active and discovers by means of a kind of perception (in the 'beholding') within itself, an understanding of the main error, not only of Spinoza, but of the majority of the opponents of freedom.

5. Because we have here a view that is expressed in a clear and straightforward manner, 2. it will also be easy to expose the fundamental error contained within it. (Spinoza maintains that:) There is the same degree of necessity in the action of a human being when he is motivated by some reason or other to carry it out, as there is when a stone carries out a movement when subjected to a given impact. Only because the human being has a consciousness of his action does he believe that he brought it about freely. He overlooks the fact that he is driven by a cause which he must of necessity follow. The error in this line of argument is soon detected. Spinoza and all those who think like him overlook the fact that the human being not only has consciousness of his action, but can also be aware of the causes by which he is led. No-one will dispute the fact that the child is *unfree* when it desires milk, that the drunken man is *unfree* when he says things which he later regrets. They are both ignorant of the causes, which are active in the depths of their organism and to whose irresistible compulsion they are subject. But is it right to treat actions of this kind on an equal basis with those where

the human being is conscious, not only of his action, but also of the reasons that prompt him? Are human actions all of the same kind? Is it legitimate to place the action of the soldier in the battlefield, that of the research scientist in his laboratory, and that of the statesman involved in complex diplomatic negotiations, on the same level as that of the child when it cries for milk? It is no doubt true that the best way of seeking the solution to a problem is to approach it where it presents itself in the simplest form. But it is often the case that the lack of ability to discriminate has resulted in endless confusion. ‡ And it makes a huge and far-reaching difference 3. whether I know why I am doing something, or whether this is not the case. This would seem, at first, to be a quite self-evident truth. And yet the opponents of freedom never ask whether a motive of my action which is known to me in full transparency exercises compulsion over me in the same way as the organic process which prompts a child to cry for milk.

We have won a remarkable victory. It came to us in a very natural and obvious way. We have begun to 'see-and-understand' what many people do not see and therefore do not understand; their intellectual subtleties only conceal from them an important truth. We must therefore change the question of freedom around from 'freedom of choice' to 'becoming aware of the motive'. We are struck with amazement at the fact that great minds like Strauss, Spencer and Spinoza "overlooked" the simple truth. What were the reasons for this? – We are given two reasons in the book: an *inner* and an *outer* reason. As we do not have the right to impose anything on the thought in its development and our victory forms no more than a positive 'overtone' within it, it receives its individual features from Hartmann who connects it with two aspects of the soul.

6. Eduard von Hartmann asserts in his 'Phenomenology of Moral Consciousness' 4. (p. 451) that the human will depends upon two main factors: the motives and the character. If we look at human beings as all the same as each other, or regard the differences as negligible, then their willing appears as if determined *from without*, namely through the situations which come to meet them. But if one considers the fact that different people make an inner representation (Vorstellung) into a motive for their action, only if their character is of such a kind as to be roused to a desire by the inner representation concerned, then the human being appears as if determined *from within* and not *from without*. Now, the human being is convinced that, because he has first, in accordance with his character, to make an inner representation that has been imposed on him from outside, into a motive for action, he is free, that is to say, independent of outer motives. But the truth is, according to Eduard von Hartmann, that: "Even if it is we ourselves who raise the inner representations onto the level of motives, we do not do this arbitrarily, but in accordance with the necessity of our characterological disposition. That is to say we are, in this, *anything but free*."

As we see, Hartmann has given features to his thought which stifle him with their one-sidedness. The philosopher did not completely understand what he was dealing with. Thought, which is a visitor from the higher world, frees itself from everything that obscures it and, in the striving towards a positive all-unity in which there is freedom, bestows rich fruits upon us as the fulfilment of the cycle of antithesis.

7. Here, too, no account is taken of the difference that exists between motives which I allow to work on me only after I have permeated them with my consciousness, and those which I follow without possessing clear knowledge of them.

And this leads us directly to the standpoint from which the whole matter will be regarded here. Should the question concerning the freedom of our will, be asked one-sidedly in isolation from other questions? And if not, with what other question must it necessarily be connected?

If there is a difference between a conscious motive for my action and an unconscious drive, then the former will also result in an action that must be judged differently from one performed out of a blind urge. The question regarding this difference will therefore be the first to be dealt with. How we are to relate to the actual freedom question will depend entirely upon the outcome of this investigation.

The thesis of the cycle that follows also has the character of an octave in relation to the preceding ‘musical scale’ of thinking. As it represents the thesis of Cycle III, i.e. of the synthesis-cycle, it states the conflicting points of view and shows how they can be reconciled.

CYCLE III

1. What does it mean to have *knowledge* of the reasons for one’s action? Too little consideration has been given to this question, because one has, unfortunately, torn apart an indivisible whole, namely the human being. Man as an active being was distinguished from man as a knower, and the most important of all, the human being who acts out of knowledge, was forgotten.

In this case, too, there is an opponent.

2. The view is expressed that a man is free if his actions are governed by reason alone and not by his animal desires. Or, alternatively, that freedom means to be able to direct one’s life and one’s actions in accordance with purposes and decisions.

But in this sphere the opponent is weak. Once the problem is stated correctly, his arguments are easily refuted.

3. Nothing is gained through assertions of this kind, because they leave unanswered the crucial question – whether reason, purposes and decisions work with the same compelling effect on the human being as animal desires. If, with no active involvement on my part, a rational decision arises in me with the same necessity as hunger or thirst, then I have no choice but to follow it, and my freedom is an illusion.

As we are still in the process, in our discussion, of forming a judgment and are not dogmatically insisting on our point of view, we must acknowledge that, for the present, it is not possible for us to complete in ‘beholding’ the positive outcome we have reached. It is new and it has no ‘surrounding’ of its own. The old ‘surrounding’, however, is exceptionally rich and varied, and we have no alternative but to incorporate our synthesis into it. We will ‘behold’ what it does to our synthesis.

4. There is yet another argument, which is formulated as follows: To be free is not to be able to will as one wishes, but to be able to do what one wishes. The philosopher-poet Robert Hamerling has given very clear-cut expression to this thought in his ‘Atomistik des Willens’: “The human being can *do* what he wishes (wills) – but he cannot *will* as he wishes (wills), because his will is determined by *motives!* – He cannot will as he wishes (wills)? Let us look at these words more closely. Do they contain any rational sense? Would freedom of will have to mean the ability to will something without reason, without motive? But what else does willing mean than *to have a reason* for doing or striving to achieve this thing rather than that? To will something for no reason and with no motive would mean to will it without *wanting (willing) it*. The concept of willing is *inseparably* connected with that of motive. Without a determining motive the will is an empty *capacity*: only through the motive does it become active and real. It is, therefore, correct to say that the human will is ‘unfree’ to the extent that its direction is always determined by the strongest motive. But on the other hand it must be admitted that it is absurd to set over against this ‘unfreedom’ a conceivable ‘freedom of will’, which would consist in being able to will what one does *not* want (will)” (Atomistik des Willens, Vol. 2, p. 213 f.).

The ‘apagogical’ (Gr. apo - away, agogos - guide - Trans.) act of beholding has merely confirmed the obvious correctness of our position and, moreover, made the tragedy of the situation quite apparent. Yes, there is no-one who distinguishes between conscious and unconscious motives. Such is our ideal ‘a posteriori’.

5. Here, too, motives in general are referred to, and no account is taken of the difference between unconscious and conscious motives. If a motive works upon me and I am compelled to follow it because it proves to be the “strongest” of several motives, then the idea of freedom ceases to have any meaning. How should it matter to me whether I can do something or not, if I am compelled by the motive to do it? The point is not whether, when the motive has worked upon me, I can or cannot do something, but whether only that kind of motive exists which works with inescapable necessity.

In this case our idea receives an extended opportunity to reveal its character. And for its individualization nothing more than this is needed.

6. If I must will something, then in certain circumstances it is a matter of complete indifference to me whether I can also do it. If, on account of my character and the circumstances prevailing in my surroundings, a motive is forced upon me which my thinking judges to be unreasonable, then I ought even to be glad if I am unable to do what I will.

The stage of All-oneness in the Cycle is correspondingly more incisive and more personalistic. This is the overall synthesis of the three Cycles.

7. The question is not whether I can carry out in practice something I have decided to do, but how the decision arises within me.

But here there is a danger of falling into dogmatism and wanting to triumph abstractly. For this reason we should not forget that the ‘beholding’ cycle is coming next. Appropriately enough, it concluded with a certain crescendo. Now the second – the beholding, ‘pastoral’ – section begins. It consists of only one Cycle. While outwardly it is passive, inwardly it prepares the metamorphosis of the element of the past into that of the future. This is its overall character, which imprints itself on all the elements. In it too, in its thesis, we must affirm something. This time we must content ourselves with registering the fact; but it is contradictory, or, rather has a double aspect.

CYCLE IV

1. That which distinguishes the human being from all other organisms lies in his rational thinking.
2. Activity is something that he shares with all other organic beings.

The synthesis maintains the quality of ‘beholding’, thanks to its object. It is based directly on sense-perception.

3. If one is trying to throw light on the concept of freedom, there is nothing to be gained by seeking within the animal kingdom for analogies with the actions of human beings. Modern science is fond of such analogies. And if once it has succeeded in finding in animals something similar to human behaviour, it believes it has touched upon the most important question of the science of man.

The fourth element is built upon the same material as the synthesis. In it the author suggests to us directly that we should ‘behold’ the observation offered to us by P. Rée. The ideal perception arising out of the ‘beholding’ leads over, like the thesis, into a registering of the fact.

4. To what misunderstandings this opinion leads, can be seen, for example, in the book ‘Die Illusion der Willensfreiheit’ by P. Rée, 1885, who (on p. 5) says the following on the subject of freedom: “That the movement of the stone seems to us to be necessary and the act of will of the donkey not so, is very easily explained. The causes which move the stone are outside it and visible. But the causes which account for the donkey’s acts of will are inside it and invisible: between us and the place of their activity there stands the cranium of the donkey. We cannot see the causal conditioning, and therefore believe that it does not exist. The impulse of will, so the explanation goes, is that which causes the donkey to turn round, but the will itself is not conditioned, it is an absolute beginning.”

5. Thus, here too, the actions of the human being which are accompanied by an awareness of the reasons for his action are simply ignored, because Rée explains that: “between us and the place of their activity there stands the cranium of the donkey.”

The individualizing of the ideas consists in a shift of our attention from the donkey to the human being.

6. That there are actions, not of the donkey but of the human being, in which there stands between us and the action the motive *that has become conscious*, of this Rée has no idea – so we are forced to conclude from his words. He further confirms this a few pages later when he says: “We do not perceive the *causes* through which our will is determined, and we therefore imagine that it is not causally determined at all.”

As a result of our act of ‘apagogical’ beholding we have convinced ourselves of the complete inadequacy of the arguments disproving human freedom, brought forward by the representatives of the physiological trend in sci-

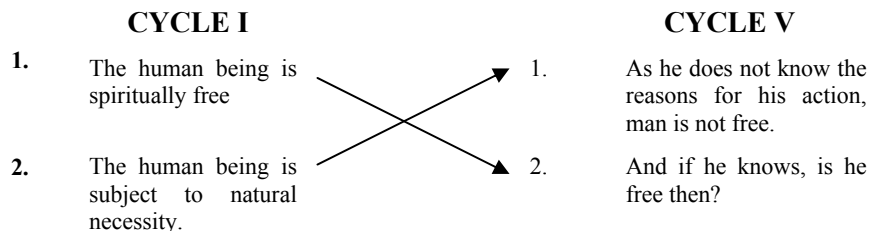
ence, which has grown ever stronger since the end of the 18th century. And this means that the conclusion we reached towards the end of Cycle III is now still more solidly grounded.

7. But the examples we have given suffice to show that many people activity oppose freedom without knowing what freedom really is.

In the modern methodology of science one of the criteria of scientific truth is known as the principle of falsifiability. As the previous example has shown, spiritual science can also fulfil this criterion.

With the fifth Cycle begins the third part of that greater Cycle which extends across the entire chapter. This consists, not as one might have expected, of three small Cycles, but only of one. The reason for this is that the (human) subject of thinking in Ch. 1, which represents the thesis, raises the problem of research. It does this out of the fullness of its own spiritual nature, which as a microcosm is fivefold. To present Cycles VI and VII in this chapter would have meant the solution of the problem, but this is the task of the chapters to come. If one had done this right at the beginning of the research, one would have rendered a service to the method, but to the disadvantage of the cognizing subject, which would be in contradiction to the spirit of the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’.

Thus, Cycle V in Ch. 1 is the final one. Here must be revealed to us the results of the process of beholding, through which all that has passed which was achieved through the work of the first three Cycles. The dialectical triad of Cycle V shows this in a concise and decisive way. In it the dialectical triad of Cycle I is born again on a higher level. There it sounded very abstract indeed, but now it fulfils a rich ‘a posteriori’.



CYCLE V

1. That an action cannot be *free*, of which the doer is unaware of the reasons why he is doing it, is quite self-evident.
2. But what are we to say of an action whose reasons are known?
3. This leads us to the question: What is the origin and significance of thinking? For if we lack insight into the *thinking* activity of the soul, a concept of the knowledge of something, and therefore also of an action, is not possible. Once we know what is the significance of thinking in general, it will also be easy to gain clarity concerning the role played by thinking in human action.

The ‘beholding’ in the cycle is, with regard to form, reduced to a minimum, but in respect to content it is prodigious. The fifth Cycle is the opposite of Cycle IV. We find in it the answer to the conclusion drawn by Rée on the basis of his observation of animals. So sublime does an idea prove to be, which actually arises from a quite simple experience – so long as we do not think this through, but ‘behold’ it.

4. “It is thinking that makes the soul, with which the animal is also endowed, into spirit,” Hegel rightly says.... and thinking will therefore impress its own particular quality upon human action.

‘Beholding’ is this time in complete harmony with the content of the thesis, and in element 5 we arrive at those results of the study of man’s nature which are central to the question of freedom.

5. I would by no means wish to assert that all our action flows only out of the sober reflection of our intellectual understanding. It is in no way my intention to characterize as *human* in the highest sense, only those actions which arise out of the abstract power of judgment. But as soon as our action raises itself above the sphere of the satisfaction of purely animal desires, our motives are always permeated with thoughts.

If we ask ourselves how the ideas of the science of human nature (Menschenerkenntnis) can be individualized, then element 6 provides us with the best answer.

6. Love, compassion, patriotism are motivating forces which cannot be resolved into cold intellectual concepts. One says that here the heart, the life of feeling come into their own. But the heart and the life of feeling do not create the motives for action. They presuppose them and take them up into their own sphere. Compassion awakens

in my heart when in my consciousness the inner representation has arisen of a person who excites compassion. The way to the heart is through the head. Not even love is an exception to this rule. When it is not a mere expression of the sexual drive, it has its foundation in the inner representations which we make of the object of our love. And the more idealistic these representations are, the more blissful is the happiness which this love brings us. Here, too, thought is the father of feeling. As the saying goes: love makes us blind to the failings of the one we love. But one can also turn this around, and assert that love opens our eyes to the merits of the beloved. Many people pass these merits by and are entirely oblivious to them. And then someone sees them, and for this reason love awakens in his soul. What else has he done than form an inner representation of something of which a hundred other people have formed none at all. They do not experience love because the *inner representation* is lacking.

Finally, the ultimate conclusion falls, so to speak, like a ripe fruit into our hands. And this is no less than the All-unity of the whole chapter.

7. However we may care to approach the matter, it cannot but grow increasingly clear 7. that the question as to the true nature of human action presupposes the other, concerning the origin of thinking. So I will now address this question.

Let us now carry out a kind of ‘cross-check’ of the structure of thought which we have highlighted. *We will test the structure by referring to the content.* In contrast to the Salieri of Pushkin we will test algebra against the yardstick of harmony. As we have already observed, elements 1, 3, 5 and 7 bear the main bulk of the content. The other three – 2, 4 and 6 – contribute to the metamorphosing of these four elements (we discussed this question in the methodology). We will therefore place over against each other, ‘content-bearing’ elements of the same order from different cycles. And we will try, as we do so, to reduce their content to a minimum, thus making it easier to survey the whole (Table 1).

From the juxtaposition of these brief formulations we can clearly see, above all, the difference between the dialectical and ‘beholding’ parts of the lemniscate. Parallel to this, the law of the sevenfold metamorphosis of the thought-cycle *joins together into a unitary whole, elements of the same order in the different Cycles.* Thus, when we compare the theses of the different cycles with one another we arrive at an organic whole, which is not only meaningful but also, for its own part, structured according to the laws of seven-membered metamorphosis: Cycle I (thesis) – the human being is free; Cycle II (antithesis) – but there is always a reason for his actions; Cycle III (synthesis) – what does it mean, to know about the motives of activity? Cycle IV (behold-

ing, or to be more precise, this thesis is only pointing to the content of beholding): thinking distinguishes man from animal; Cycle V (ideal perception): an action without knowledge of the reason is not free. The third, fifth and seventh elements are connected together in a similar way. Table I enables us to make a further observation, namely that in the first and third elements thought predominates; in the fifth element this is united with feeling, and in the seventh element both thought, feeling and will are present. Thus the entire content of the chapter stands before us as a unitary organism all of whose parts in different relation to one another give confirmation of the meaningful structure of the whole. It would have been possible though a purely speculative approach, to reach the conclusions that are elaborated in this chapter. Kant showed in his ‘Critique of Pure Reason’ that speculative reasoning is able to prove even the existence of a higher Being. This did not lead him to the idea of spiritual cognition, nor did it strengthen him in his religious faith.

To express, through the conflict of ideas, the drama of human life which is endeavouring to break the fetters of conditioning influences and win through to the power of self-determination – this is the task of cognition which stirs the human heart and is fulfilled in the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’. It is futile to register the fact with one’s cold intellectual understanding alone, that the question of freedom is fundamental, and so on. The crisis of life, as we are aware, is called forth by the crisis of cognition. There are in the world people who play a leading role in civilization. The role is played differently, according to whether or not they believe human freedom to be possible. Moreover, the earthly life of man is closely bound up with the spiritual life of the cosmos, and this lends macrocosmic dimensions to the question of freedom. For all these reasons together, the drama of the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’ assumes the aspect of a Mystery. In the Mystery Dramas, however, the heroes do not shout and roll around on the stage as is usual in theatrical performances today. In them one can feel, through the outer tranquillity of the form, the mighty pulse-beat of the real life of the spirit, its higher conflict and its suffering. It is to these, also, that we seek a connection when we read such books as the ‘Philosophie der Freiheit’.

To conclude the chapter we will give a brief summary of its content, in order to take it with us as a seed for our further work with the metamorphoses of consciousness.

When the question of freedom is discussed, it is usual for people to leave out of account the differences between conscious and unconscious motives, and only to speak of freedom of choice. In this case freedom shows itself as an impossibility. This relates to freedom of action, but what is the situation with regard to freedom in thinking? If the deed is not called forth by instinct, does not arise from an unconscious sphere, but is evoked by a concrete thought concerning the deed, then one needs to understand how this thought concerning the deed arises, where thinking comes from in the first place, and only after this can the question as to the freedom of thinking and action be answered.

	Element 1 thesis	Element. 3 synthesis	Element. 5 ideal perception	Element. 7 All-unity
C. I	The human being is spiritually free in his thinking and his activity	The idea of freedom has a great many ardent adherents and opponents	This is the most important question of life, or religion, and of science	But the prevailing view is that freedom of choice is an illusion
C. II	Human action always has a reason	And all the attacks of the opponents of freedom are directed against freedom of choice	In these attacks they fail to notice that one can become conscious not only of the action, but also of its cause	In order to make a judgment on the question of freedom, one must distinguish between conscious and unconscious motives
C. III	One always fails to consider the man who acts out of knowledge	If reason, too, works with compulsive force upon our will-endeavours, freedom is an illusion	But do all motives only work with compulsive force?	The most important question is how the decision arises within me, and not: Am I able to carry it out?
C. IV	Through thinking, man is distinguished from the animals	If analogies are sought in the animal kingdom, there is no way of providing freedom with a rational foundation	P. Rée gives us a striking example of underestimation of the thinking human being	Many people argue strongly against freedom without knowing at all what freedom really is
C. V	If one knows nothing of the motives of an action one cannot be free	Without knowledge of the activity of thinking, one cannot make a judgment concerning freedom of action	All motives are pervaded with thoughts, provided only one raises oneself above the sphere of instincts	The question concerning activity depends on how we answer the question regarding the origin of thinking

Table 1

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