

## The End of the Century and Ahriman's Incarnation in the Following Millenium

by HANS-WERNER SCHROEDER

(From "Mitteilungen aus der anthroposophischen Arbeit in Deutschland," Michaelmas 1978. Published with permission. Translation by Maria St. Goar.)

From year to year our glance is increasingly directed toward events that are expected at the end of the century. I will here attempt to bring together Rudolf Steiner's statements concerning these events. The view is frequently voiced that Rudolf Steiner supposedly predicted the incarnation of Ahriman at the end of the century. To my knowledge no such statement exists.

### *The Period After the End of the Century and the Third Millenium*

As world events draw near the end of the century, it becomes increasingly important to look beyond these events as well. Our view is all too easily directed only towards what is closest at hand, and we tend to forget that events of primary significance have also been predicted for the ensuing millenium. These concern the attitudes and the actions of those human beings connected with anthroposophy. To begin with, I would like to quote several statements by Rudolf Steiner relating to events that are expected *after* the end of the century, events we should be conscious of with equal intensity. First, a reference from a lecture in Berlin, dated April 4, 1916.<sup>1</sup>

"After the year 2000, it will not be long before mankind will have to experience strange things, things that today are only gradually beginning to manifest. Matters are such that from the East and from the West two polar extremes are heading toward future development. . . . The intention will be to solve the riddle of what a child represents; a sort of ritual or cult will, to begin with, be connected with the rearing of the child. This is under way in the East. This cult will naturally reach over into Europe. It will cause the development of the highest esteem for what is termed 'genius,' a search for genius. . . . The majority of mankind, however, will be subject to the influence coming from the West, from America. This influence tends towards a different development which, in regard to what is yet to come, makes itself felt today in idealistic traces only, in pleasant beginnings. We can say that the present age is quite well off in comparison to what is yet to come — once the Western development increasingly will blossom forth. After the year 2000 will have passed, it won't be long before thinking — not directly, but in a certain sense — will be forbidden. A law will proceed from America with the purpose of suppressing all individual thinking. A start in this direction has been made by purely materialistic medicine today where the soul no longer is permitted to act and where, merely on the basis of external experiments, the human being is treated like a machine."

Another statement from a lecture in Dornach on January 15, 1917.<sup>2</sup>

"We must be serious about understanding these matters, we must be completely and utterly serious about them. This understanding implies that a number of people must summon up the fortitude with all the efforts of their personality actually to oppose the surging wave of materialism. This will become necessary because the materialism permeating the industrial and commercial impulses will unite with the content of other retarded impulses. These in turn become increasingly caught up in materialism and are originating from the Chinese-Japanese, but mainly the Japanese, elements. . . . Coming over from Asia, this will be a special form of materialism. In each and every instance we must clearly understand the need to resist with all of one's strength the floodtides of materialism. *Everyone can do this.* The endeavor will indeed bear fruit. . . . What is needed to counteract materialism which, after all, has a legitimate purpose, can be summed up in two sentences. In the future, during the fifth post-Atlantean period, the world will ever more be permeated by the industrial and commercial elements; but the counter-element, the opposing pole, must also exist. Human beings must be present who, by comprehending the conditions, work on the opposite side."

Finally, from a lecture of November 18, 1917 in Dornach.<sup>3</sup>

"Materialistic views are on the increase and will have the best chance to flourish if people begin to believe that they are no longer materialists. The increase in materialism will continue for four or five hundred years. We have to realize absolutely clearly, as I have so often said, that this is the case. Humanity will find peace if we are fully aware, and in the life of the spirit work in the knowledge, that the task of the fifth post-Atlantean period is to create materialistic existence out of the whole stream of human development; but for that very reason we must create the more spiritual existence in opposition to it."

More such quotes could be cited. In order that this presentation will not become one-sided, I would like to add the following excerpt from the lecture of January 8, 1918 in Dornach.<sup>4</sup> It demonstrates that positive aspects must also be visualized and connected with the events of the future.

"It may also be said that compared with the various periods of post-Atlantean time . . . our fifth period is . . . from certain aspects the greatest age, one that brings most of all to humanity, one that harbors within it immense possibilities for the evolution and existence of mankind. And precisely through what man develops very specially in this age as shadow side of the spiritual life, he takes the way, and can, if he proceeds rightly, find the way into the spiritual world. In particular he can find the way to his true, his highest human goal. Evolutionary possibilities are in our time very great, greater from a certain aspect than they were in former phases of post-Atlantean evolution."

### *Ahriman's Incarnation in the Third Millenium*

Against the background of these statements by Rudolf Steiner, his words concerning the incarnation of Ahriman can appear in their full significance. He depicts this fact in seven lectures of the year 1919 and indicates the preparations occurring in the present towards this event. Here is a list of the individual lectures: Zurich, Oct. 27, 1919<sup>5</sup>; Dornach Nov. 1 and 2, 1919<sup>6</sup>; Bern, Nov. 4, 1919<sup>6</sup>; Dornach, Nov. 15, 1919<sup>6</sup>; Stuttgart, Dec. 25 and 28, 1919.<sup>7</sup>

What is of interest to us is the *actual time* given by Rudolf Steiner for this incarnation. I quote the main statements:

"Just as there was an incarnation of Lucifer at the beginning of the third pre-Christian millenium, as there was the Christ Incarnation at the time of the Mystery of Golgatha, so there will be a first incarnation of the Ahriman being some time after our present earthly existence, in fact, in the third post-Christian millenium . . . Ahriman, however, has been at work since the middle of the fifteenth century and will increase in strength until an actual incarnation of Ahriman will take place in the Western civilization . . . Ahriman will appear in human form." (Nov. 27)

What is especially significant here is the statement that Ahriman's incarnation in regard to time is parallel to Lucifer's incarnation, which occurred in Asia *at the beginning of the third pre-Christian millenium*. Correspondingly, the *third millenium A.D.*, in a general way, is designated for Ahriman's incarnation. This moment in time is mentioned in the later lecture:

"Before only a part of the third millenium of the post-Christian era has elapsed, there will be, in the West, an actual incarnation of Ahriman. Ahriman in the flesh . . . A Being like Ahriman, who will incarnate in the West in time to come . . . And the time has now come for individual men to know which tendencies and events around them are machinations of Ahriman, helping him to prepare for his approaching incarnation . . . Now we are facing an incarnation of Ahriman in the third millenium." (Nov. 1)

And further:

"What is now in preparation and will quite definitely come to pass on Earth in a none too distant future, is an actual incarnation of Ahriman." (Nov. 4)

Here the impression is conveyed that this event will take place not at the end, but rather during the first part or even at the beginning of the third millenium. The last statement concerning the time is the following:

"A time will come in the future, when, just as Lucifer was incorporated in the East in an earthly personality, so in the West there will take place an earthly incarnation of Ahriman himself. This time is approaching. Ahriman will appear, objectively, on the Earth." (Dec. 25)

So much for Rudolf Steiner's statements of 1919 concerning the time of Ahriman's incarnation. (To my knowledge no other statements exist. A statement by Rudolf Steiner concerning Ahriman's appearance already at the end of this century is not known to me. If such an indication can be found, I would be grateful for the information.)

On the basis of these quotes we can conclude that it must be a misunderstanding if people today speak, as if it were a definite fact, of Ahriman's incarnation in regard to the end of this century. Instead, it does seem that the evidence must be viewed in a more discriminating manner, and this study offers the basis for such an approach. I shall return to this topic again at the end.

### *The End of the Century*

In searching through the whole of Rudolf Steiner's

lectures for statements concerning the end of the century, one is surprised to discover that such statements were made only in the very last period, namely in the Karma lectures. To my knowledge, only a few sparse indications can be found in the preceding years and decades. Here I shall quote the passages known to me.

The first excerpt is from a lecture held in Stuttgart on March 7, 1914.<sup>8</sup> The transcript is probably incomplete. Rudolf Steiner indicates here that each time a millenium draws to the close, a particularly vehement attack occurs on the part of Lucifer and Ahriman. As an example he cites the end of the first Christian millenium, stressing the fact that proofs concerning the existence of God came into use, especially the one by Anselm of Canterbury; and he points to Emperor Heinrich's journey to Canossa, saying, "This is when the official Church adopted customs that aroused scornful laughter among the Ahrimanic spirits." If one examines these indications more closely, it can be noticed that they refer not only to the end of the millenium but that they point beyond it. Anselm of Canterbury lived from 1033 to 1109 A.D., already a whole century later; the journey to Canossa took place in 1077, therefore also within the new millenium. From this we can see that Rudolf Steiner does not refer specifically to the end of the millenium as an exact point of time when speaking here of the onslaught of the Ahrimanic and Luciferic powers. It is important to keep this in mind as the text continues:

"As we draw near the year 2000, once again the Ahrimanic spirits make their influence felt. Evolution proceeds like an oscillating pendulum. In the year 1000, people awaited the end of the world; in the year 2000, the exact opposite is expected. In the year 3000, people will again await the end of the world, but the world will have become such that whole nations will long for this end. Without being emotional one can declare that the people of Europe are heading for disastrous times! . . . In the past, for instance, around the year 1000, men had to believe what Lucifer and Ahriman would have them believe, because human beings as yet did not bear within themselves the true, conscious Christ impulse. We no longer need to believe them; instead we should receive this new Christ impulse into ourselves of our own free will so that we can offer resistance to Lucifer and Ahriman. In the twentieth century it will come to pass that Lucifer and Ahriman will in particular usurp the designation of being Christian. People who no longer possess any trace of true Christianity will call themselves Christians, and they will rage against those who adhere not merely to what Christ once said according to the tradition of the Gospels, but for whom the words hold good, 'I am with you always, to the close of the age.' The latter will adhere to the living, continually-working Christ impulse. They will experience the wrath of the opponents. Confusion and devastation will abound when the year 2000 approaches. Then, not one piece of wood will be left in place in our building here in Dornach. Everything will be destroyed and laid waste. We shall look down upon it from the spiritual world. When the year 2086 dawns, however, everywhere in Europe we shall see buildings arising dedicated to spiritual aims that will be replicas of our building in Dornach with its two cupolas. This will be the golden age when spiritual life will flourish."

Concerning the above wording, it must be remembered that it was probably not transcribed verbatim. Another mention of the end of the millenium is in the lecture "The Work of the Angels in Man's Astral Body." (Oct. 9, 1918) Here Rudolf Steiner speaks of the inpouring of the impulses of the Angelic world into the astral body of man. The danger exists that this inflow cannot consciously be grasped by the human being.

"Here lies the great danger for the age of the Spiritual Soul. This is what might still happen if, before the beginning of the third millenium, men were to refuse to turn to the spiritual life. The third millenium begins with the year 2000, so it is only a short time ahead of us. It might still happen that the aim of the Angels in their work would have to be achieved by means of the sleeping bodies of men—instead of through men wide awake."

As described in the further course of the lecture, this would give rise to complete perversion of humanity.

From the lecture of July 30, 1920, held in Stuttgart<sup>9</sup>:

"With the very beginning of the third millenium we might experience that mankind will have developed in such a way that materialism will have become the correct outlook. Today it is not a question of disproving materialism, because materialism is in the process of eventually becoming true; rather, it is a question of making it to be untrue—otherwise it will become a fact because it is more than a false theory."

And finally, from a lecture held in Dornach on August 6, 1921<sup>10</sup>:

"If the development were to continue in this consistent way, we would reach, at the end of the twentieth century, the war of all against all, particularly in that region of human progress where so-called recent civilization has arisen. We may already see what has thus developed, we may see it raying out from the East and asserting itself over a great part of the Earth. There is an inner connection. We should be able to see it."

So much for the statements, made prior to the year 1924, by Rudolf Steiner concerning the end of the century.

### *The Karma Lectures*

Just a few weeks before the end of his public lecture activities, Rudolf Steiner begins to speak about the end of the century. Without exception, these presentations are found in the "Karma Lectures" (1924) in connection with the mission of Michael and the task of the Michael-followers in regard to the shaping of our cultural future. Rudolf Steiner starts out on July 18 in Arnheim, with further statements there on July 19 and 20; then in Dornach on July 28 and August 1, also in Dornach on August 3, 4, and 8; then in Torquay on August 14, in London on August 27; and finally in Dornach on September 16.

The themes are:

- The crisis of civilization at the end of the century.
- The culmination of the anthroposophic movement.

- The working together of Platonists and Aristotelians.

- Reincarnation of Rudolf Steiner's contemporary pupils.

In this context no mention is made of Ahriman's incarnation, but mention is made of the inpouring activity of Ahrimanic spirits to the point where Ahriman, in the role of author, will inspire human consciousness and has indeed done so in the case of Nietzsche. I would like to point to one particular passage that once again opens the perspective into the next millenium, going beyond the end of the century:

"In the course of the twentieth century, when the first century after the end of Kali Yuga has elapsed, humanity will either stand at the grave of all civilization—or at the beginning of that Age when in the souls of men who in their hearts ally Intellectuality with Spirituality, Michael's battle will be fought to victory."<sup>11</sup>(July 19)

Here is specific mention of the fact that Michael's battle, which shall transform intellectuality into spirituality, must be continued into the next millenium. To me, this perspective relates organically to the statements of 1919 concerning the incarnation of Ahriman.

### *Possible Conclusions and Questions*

Dwelling upon the above statements by Rudolf Steiner, we can come to the conclusion that in the case of the predictions concerning the end of the century and the incarnation of Ahriman, we are dealing with two events occurring at different times. (It could be possible that with his remarks in the Karma lectures, Rudolf Steiner wanted to initiate a kind of correction to his earlier statements of 1919 concerning the point of time, since in the course of this century events have unfolded faster than could originally be expected, and thus the stronger influence of Ahriman must necessarily occur earlier. This possibility perhaps should at least be left open.)

In any case, it seems important that anthroposophists look not only towards the end of the century, but even today become conscious of the events that are to follow. May these excerpts from the literature help to serve this purpose.

In the further study of these and related statements the following view can result that may here be suggested with all caution. At the end of the century we shall confront the decisive crisis of our civilization. This crisis will contain a challenge to our *will*. The chaotic disintegration of circumstances generally, the "War of All Against All" (see quote from Aug. 6, 1921) will threaten to sweep away anything spiritual, especially the foundations and institutions born of the spiritual life. If that were to come about, then the *first* prerequisite for the full success of the Ahriman incarnation would be fulfilled. This prerequisite will not be attained so long as anthroposophists *work together*.

The anthroposophic movement is to achieve a culmination towards the end of the century (Karma Lectures); it must be anchored through the cooperation of a great number of individuals in such a way that it simply cannot be swept away. The crucial factor will be the *human will to stand united and to act together* out of spiritual strength. The Platonists and the Aristotelians are to unite in this will.

This, perhaps, is the proper place to report a conversation that Anna Mahn had with Rudolf Steiner in 1920:

"When, for the last time, around 1920, I could speak with Rudolf Steiner, he said, deeply serious: 'You must now turn to another main task which shall no longer be painting. I now give you another task. In all the work you have to do, take special care that the members stay together. The leadership must be mindful of keeping the members unified. It is the responsibility of the leadership of a smaller or larger group to see to it that the members find a way to proceed harmoniously together in the common work that has to be accomplished. The Society must face the world as a unity. Above else, truth must prevail. Justified objections must be clarified and not simply ignored. Be watchful in this regard, the Society will thank you later for it. Do not fail in this.'

"As he said this, Rudolf Steiner looked at me seriously, fixing me with his eyes, and repeated this admonition three times loudly and slowly, 'Do not fail.'"

If the crisis at the end of the century is to be met, a further challenge must be faced—a challenge to our *cognitive powers*. Ahriman can take over only if he is not recognized. To truly recognize him, however, requires the transformation of intellectuality into spirituality. We all find ourselves in the midst of this conflict which, in the sense of the above quoted passage, will attain its most intense and final actuality in the following millenium:

"In the course of the twentieth century, when the first century after the end of Kali Yuga has elapsed, humanity will either stand at the grave of all civilization—or at the beginning of that Age when in the souls of men who in their hearts ally Intellectuality with Spirituality, Michael's battle will be fought to victory."<sup>11</sup>

#### FOOTNOTES:

1. Bibl. #167 (German).
2. Bibl. #174 (German).
3. *Secret Brotherhoods*, London.
4. *Ancient Myths—Their Meaning and Connection with Evolution*, Toronto, 1971.
5. "The Ahrimanic Deception."
6. *The Influences of Lucifer and Ahriman. Man's Responsibility for the Earth*. Vancouver, 1976.
7. *The Cosmic New Year*, London, 1938.
8. *Bilder okkulter Siegel und Saeulen*.
9. Bibl. #197 (German).
10. "The Remedy for Our Diseased Civilization" *Anthrop. News Sheet*, Vol. 7, 1939, Suppl. 2/3.
11. *Karmic Relationships*, Vol. IV, London, 1957.

## Clairvoyance, "Clair-Thinking" and "Clair-Judgment"

by ALAN HOWARD

Rudolf Steiner has said that in this twentieth century, especially from about the middle of it onward, more and more people would appear who, at a comparatively early age, would show signs of clairvoyance. He added that in some cases this would be the first contact with the etheric Christ.

As there is no reason to assume that these people will be confined to card-carrying members of the Anthroposophical Society, but may spring from the most unlikely backgrounds, an interesting question arises as to how they will be received. Very much may depend on it, for them and for us; and particularly how they are received by those of us of an earlier generation who are not so gifted.

Some of these young people—for they will invariably be young—are in for a hard time. If they are not seduced by the fawning attentions of simple-minded or excitable followers and led into all kinds of extravagances of messianic egoism, many of them will be regarded as psychopaths or emotionally unbalanced, and may even be confined in mental institutions until they are "cured." The future spiritual development of mankind may very well depend on whether they, and those of us who lack such gifts but who have been studying Steiner for years, can get together to our mutual advantage in the further development of spiritual science.

For clairvoyance itself is not enough. This is made very clear in the first few pages of *Theosophy*, where the relative possibilities of the seer, the knower and the teacher are clearly set out. The seer is only a "see-er," that is one who perceives in the supersensible. He is not necessarily a knower as well, any more than one who could only see in this world would be able to expatiate knowledgeably on the phenomena he sees. He would still need the elaboration of thought and understanding to make his perceptions meaningful to himself and others.

What then should be our attitude to such a young person if he should appear, say, in an anthroposophical community, or in an institute for Waldorf training, or even in a Waldorf school as the friend and companion of teachers?

Any arbitrary and immediate rejection, any refusal to have anything to do with such a person, any kind of reference to atavism and the like would be both uncharitable and high handed. Yet the danger of this happening is only too real if we aren't prepared for it beforehand. Some of the best of people can give

## The Incarnation of Ahriman and the Asuras

by HANS-WERNER SCHROEDER

(Translated by Maria St. Goar from "Mitteilungen aus der anthroposophischen Arbeit in Deutschland," Easter 1979. Published with permission.)

In a previous article (*Newsletter*, Summer 1979), we looked to the end of the century and the incarnation of Ahriman in the next millennium. In order to fully grasp the events connected with future developments, it will be necessary to include two additional groups of beings which at the same time broaden the view. One group concerns the activity of the *Asuras* in the present and in the future; the other is the activity of the so-called *Sun Demon*, whose mystery name is Soradt. In this article, we shall mainly study the first. (A subsequent article will deal with Soradt's activity.)

### PREPARATIONS FOR THE INCARNATION IN THE NEXT MILLENNIUM

In order to correctly characterize the activities of the *Asuras*, we shall look once again at the preparations for Ahriman's incarnation. In the 1979 article, seven lectures were listed in which Ahriman's incarnation is referred to by Rudolf Steiner. The time indicated by Rudolf Steiner was of particular interest to us. It became clear that Rudolf Steiner always refers to the following millennium or to the beginning of it. The date of the end of the century is never mentioned in this connection.

When we ask which motifs play a significant role in Rudolf Steiner's description of the preparations for this incarnation, we arrive at approximately the following seven. In the above-mentioned lectures, all or some are repeatedly referred to. Abstract thinking, the mechanistic, mathematical world view, is designated as the *dominant* motif. Six others are listed in addition.

1. Abstract thinking, a mechanistic, mathematical world view.
2. Preservation of the spiritual (libraries).
3. Faith in figures (statistics).
4. Action without interest (also: "Inability to be enthused about spiritual science").
5. Factions, disharmony among groups of men, national impulses.
6. Materialistic interpretation of the Gospels (leads to hallucinations of Christ).
7. Establishment of schools for the purpose of making people clairvoyant.

It is evident in these seven motifs that, almost without exception, they are connected with the *manner* of human *thought*. Either directly or indirectly, they are *consequences of abstract thinking*. In contrast to these are the descriptions given concerning the activities and efforts of the *Asuras*.

### THE ASURAS AS DESCRIBED BY RUDOLF STEINER

In attempting a survey of the lectures in which Rudolf Steiner mentions the *Asuras*, we soon notice that there are not many, all told. First, I want to list the lectures known to me in which the theme is touched upon:

- Berlin, May 23, 1904 (German GA93);
- Berlin, October 7 and 17, 1905 (German GA93a);
- Munich, June 2, 1907 *Theosophy of the Rosicrucians*;
- Kassel, June 24, 1907 *Theosophy and Rosicrucianism*;
- Berlin, May 16, 1908 *The Influence of Spiritual Beings Upon Man*;
- Nuremberg, June 22, 1908 *The Apocalypse of St. John*;
- Stuttgart, August 7, 1908 *Universe, Earth and Man*;
- Berlin, January 1 and March 22, 1909 *The Deed of Christ and the Opposing Spiritual Powers*;
- Duesseldorf, April 21, 1909 *The Spiritual Hierarchies and Their Reflection in the Physical World*;
- Basel, October 1, 1911 *The Etherisation of the Blood*;
- Dornach, December 15, 1919 *The Mysteries of Light, of Space and of the Earth*.

There are thirteen sources of which twelve appear within seven years, from 1904 to 1911; the last doesn't appear until 1919 and there, in close proximity to statements concerning the incarnation of Ahriman.

We now seek for answers to three questions in Rudolf Steiner's description:

How do the *Asuras* fit into the realm of the adversary powers?

What effects are described?

What time span is given for their activity?

### WHERE DO THE ASURAS FIT IN?

In studying the above-mentioned statements by Rudolf Steiner we soon realize that the *Asuras* belong neither to the Ahrimanic nor the Luciferic beings, but that they constitute a separate group of opposing powers. (This despite the fact that Rudolf Steiner occasionally identifies their name directly with Ahrimanic



effects. The reason for this is probably that in the past the Asuras have as yet hardly appeared as independently active beings. Instead, they have unfolded their efforts through the Ahrimanic powers. They are beginning only now to emerge as independently active beings. In *The Deed of Christ and the Opposing Spiritual Powers* Rudolf Steiner differentiates the activity of the adversary powers in three directions:

*Lucifer's* influence in the *sentient soul*, which has come into being through the transformation of the astral body;

*Ahriman's* effect upon the *intellectual soul*, which came about through the transformation of the etheric body;

the influence of the *Asuras* is described as extending into the human *consciousness soul* and the *ego*, whose activities in man are based on transformation of the *physical body*. (Lecture of March 22, 1909)

In the questions-and-answers to the lecture, "The Etherisation of the Blood," the influence of these three powers is differentiated not according to the members of man, but to their realms in the spiritual world. The *Luciferic beings* are connected with the realm that results in the "subphysical" as a mirroring of the astral world. The effects of Ahriman are connected with the mirroring of the lower Devachan, that of the Asuras with the mirroring of the higher Devachan in the physical world. Here, we have a second criterion indicating that in the case of the Asuras, we are dealing with an independent realm of beings within the adversary powers.

Finally, from the lectures of June 2 and June 24, 1907, a differentiation arises as to the *time* when the Asuric entities came into being. According to Rudolf Steiner's descriptions, the very beginning of the secession of the Ahrimanic beings must be fixed on the Old Sun; that of the Luciferic beings on the Old Moon. The secession of the Asuric beings occurred during the evolution of Old Saturn. In these lectures, Rudolf Steiner pictures how, along with the origin of the human body, an influence proceeds from the Archai—who there are also called "Spirits of Egoism"—which transmits faculties to the physical body enabling it to later receive the human ego:

To this end had the Spirits of Egoism, the *Asuras*, to work.

Among them are to be found two kinds, apart from slight deviations. The one kind has elaborated egoism in a noble, self-reliant way, and has risen higher and higher in the perfection of the sense of freedom: that is the rightful independence of egoism. These Spirits have guided mankind through all the successive planets, they have become the educators of man towards independence.

Now on each planet there are also Spirits who have remained behind in evolution, they have remained stationary and not wished to progress. You will recognize a law from this: If the most outstanding fall and commit the "great sin" of not advancing with evolution, then they become the very worst of all.

The noble sense of liberty has been reversed into wickedness, into its opposite. Those are the Spirits of Temptation, and they must be taken gravely into account; they lead to the evil side of egoism, even today they are still in our environment, these evil Spirits of Saturn. All that is bad draws its power from these Spirits. (6. 2. 1907)

He expresses it in a similar way in the second above-mentioned lecture. I would like to quote the following details from it:

In striving after freedom and human dignity we bear within us the influences of the Spirits of Ego who followed the good path, and we bear within us the seed of evil, because the influence of the Beings who fell away continued to be active. This contrast has always been felt. Christianity itself makes a distinction between God the Father, Whom it considers as the most highly developed Spirit of Saturn, and His opponent, the Spirit of all the evil Egos and of everything which is radically immoral, the Spirit who fell away upon the ancient Saturn. These are two representatives of Saturn. (6. 24. 1907)

We now have three criteria: The influence within the members of man; the realms in which dwell the opposing powers in the spiritual world; and the time span in which they abandoned the progressive activities of the Gods within evolution. The conclusion is always that the Asuras occupy the very highest position within the threefoldness of the opposing powers.

Perhaps we should emphasize here that the above outline is a first approach to a complex problem. The entirety of Anthroposophy shows how spiritual entities exhibit most diverse natures and activities. Even after the Saturn and also the Sun evolution, some Ahrimanic as well as Asuric beings continued to develop; hence, a most complex picture arises of these entities. The points given here are intended merely as an initial outline.

#### WHAT EFFECTS ARE CONNECTED WITH THE ASURAS?

In the early statements (in the lectures of October 7 and 17, 1905), the basic motifs that reoccur later in dif-

ferent ways, are already expressed. They are connected with human *sensuality*, physical debauchery and the development of *black magic*. The motif of sensuality also surfaces in the lectures in *The Deed of Christ and the Opposing Powers*; there in the lecture of March 22, 1909, the influence of the Asuras is described perhaps most intensively:

For these Asuric Spirits will prompt what has been seized hold of by them, namely the very core of man's being, the consciousness soul together with the "I," to unite with earthly materiality. Fragment after fragment will be torn out of the "I," and in the same measure in which the Asuric Spirits establish themselves in the consciousness soul, man must leave parts of his existence behind on the earth. What thus becomes the prey of the Asuric powers will be irretrievably lost. Not that the whole man need become their victim—but parts of his spirit will be torn away by the Asuric powers.

Perhaps it is appropriate here to insert a remark as to method: Quotations such as the one above really should never be repeated without reference to the overall condition. We find that Rudolf Steiner always placed descriptions of humanity's future and the activity of evil connected with it into a most *positive* overall context. Without this positive total view, such excerpts take on a one-sided nuance that they should not have, all seriousness and urgency notwithstanding. We should mention that in the lecture from which the above excerpt was taken, Rudolf Steiner makes completely positive remarks in conclusion. I would therefore like to quote the end of the lecture:

So we see how Powers work together in the world, how everything that appears to oppose the progress of mankind subsequently turns out to be a blessing . . . . For everything in the great world Plan is good and the evil endures only for a season. Therefore he alone believes in the eternity of the evil who confounds the temporal with the eternal; he who does not rise from the temporal to the eternal can never understand the evil.

Another familiar quotation concerning the powerful activity of the Asuras is found in the lecture "The Etherisation of the Blood." Especially the so-called "third force" is discussed here. It will be discovered as a nature force and will contribute to the destruction of the Earth.

This description of the destructive forces connected with the Asuras is also placed within a most positive prophecy concerning the future, namely a vivid description of the activity of the Etheric Christ.

If we attempt to discern the difference between the descriptions of the Asuric influences and those connected with the incarnation of Ahriman, we arrive at an interesting contrast that ought to be stressed here (though perhaps the contrast should be viewed in even greater detail). In preparation of Ahriman's incarnation, essentially the *forces of thought* are weakened in man. *Abstract thinking* and its consequences lead to the desired effects, namely materialism as a world view.

As we have seen, the Asuric influences reach far deeper; they unfold sensuality and thereby take hold of man's *bodily organization* directly. They lead man from a sensory world view to *sensuality* in human action. They bring about not only isolation of the "I," as happens in the Ahrimanic realm by means of abstract thinking, but a step-by-step *destruction of the "I"-forces*.

#### WHAT DATE CAN BE ASCRIBED TO THE ACTIVITY OF THE ASURAS?

From Rudolf Steiner's descriptions it becomes evident that the influences of the Asuras *begin* in our age. In some areas such effects can be concretely experienced. The main *unfolding* of the Asuric forces is, however, still a matter of the future. This becomes obvious if we consider that the Luciferic influence, for example, began even during Lemuria and continued to evolve all through Atlantean and post-Atlantean times until it reached the summit of its development in Lucifer's incarnation in pre-Christian times. The beginning of Ahriman's activity in regard to mankind was in Atlantis, evolved through the post-Atlantean age and, as we have seen, will reach its culmination in the next millennium. This suggests that we can picture the very beginnings of activity of the Asuric powers in our time, but that their culmination occurs in the distant future. Their activity is, after all, connected with the development of the human "I." They are called upon to confront this ego, which in the future will develop to ever greater maturity, with the most powerful force of opposition. This will be the case only in the future, when the human ego will have attained ever higher degrees of maturity and greater power. Related to this is the question, whether the "third force," mentioned by Rudolf Steiner, refers already to atomic power. There are criteria in favor of assuming that it too refers to a power that is yet to emerge in the future.

In conclusion, two excerpts from the cycle *The Apocalypse of St. John* will balance the somewhat gloomy outlook of the future:

Consider that through the evil separating from the good, the good will receive its greatest strengthening. For after the great War of All against All,

the good will have to make every possible effort to rescue the evil during the period in which this will still be possible . . . Men speak of good and evil, but they do not know that it is necessary in the great plan that evil, too, should come to a peak, in order that those who have overcome it should, in the very overcoming of evil, so use their force that a still greater good results from it. . . The good would not be so great a good if it were not to grow through the conquest of evil. Love would not be so intense if it had not to become love so great as to be able even to overcome the wickedness in the countenances of evil men. Therefore you must not think that evil has no part in the plan of creation. It is there in order that through it may come the great good.

(From lecture 8)

. . . men will often have the opportunity to open their hearts to the spiritual world-conception, which is today flowing through the anthroposophical movement. There will be many, many opportunities, and you must not imagine that future opportunities will only be such as they are today. The way in which we are able to make the spiritual view of the world known to others is still very feeble. Even if a man were now to speak in such a way that his voice were to sound forth directly like the fire of the spirit, that would be feeble as compared with the possibilities which will exist in later and more developed bodies in order to direct our fellow men to this spiritual movement. When mankind as a whole will have developed higher and higher in future ages, there will be very different means through which the spiritual conception of the world will be able to penetrate into men's hearts, and the most fiery word today is small and weak compared with what will work in the future to give all souls the possibility of the spiritual conception of the world—all the souls now living in bodies in which no heart beats for this spiritual conception of the world.

We are at the beginning of the spiritual movement, and it will grow. It will require much obduracy and much hardness to close the heart and mind to the powerful impressions of the future. The souls now living in bodies which have the heart to hear and feel Anthroposophy are now preparing themselves to live in bodies in the future in which power will be given them to serve their fellow men, who up to that time had been unable to feel this heartbeat within them. We are only preparing for the preparers, as yet nothing more. The spiritual movement is today but a very small flame; in the future it will develop into a mighty spiritual fire.

(From Lecture 12)

## Rudolf Steiner on the Work with Young People

by ERNST LEHRS

*Editor's note: We bring the following article in memory of the author who died on December 31, 1979 in Germany, at the age of 85. As writer and as lecturer, Ernst Lehrs has been known to many members in this country. In 1933, 1956, 1958 and 1976 he participated as a main speaker in the Summer Conference in Spring Valley; in 1956 he traveled afterwards all the way to California, lecturing at the various anthroposophic centers. His Man or Matter, written originally in English and published in the 1950's by Harper and Row, has become an anthroposophic classic.*

*Ernst Lehrs' autobiography was recently printed in Germany. We hope to bring an extensive review in one of the forthcoming issues.*

*(Translated by Maria St. Goar from "Mitteilungen aus der anthroposophischen Arbeit in Deutschland," Summer 1971. Published with permission.)*

Soon after the founding of the Independent Anthroposophical Society on February 27, 1923, Rudolf Steiner gave its executive committee a memorandum—designated as such by him—in which it says in the fifth paragraph, among other things:

"Out of their midst, lecturing and other work for the public will have to arise."\*

For this reason a member of the committee asked Rudolf Steiner during a discussion that took place some time later: "When we want to speak to young people of our generation of supersensible contents how can we generate the necessary confidence towards what we say? The same confidence that one gains towards you, the proclaimer of spiritual science, once one has attained the insight that you have explored the content of spiritual science at the very source. To a certain extent, we merely pass on what we have heard from you." To this, Rudolf Steiner replied: "In every case, you must try to take hold of that one little corner of the supersensible that manifests in the sense world. In that way, you create for yourself the platform of confidence on which you can also speak of supersensible matters that do not manifest to the senses,"—and here he turned to the writer of these lines—"as I showed it to you this morning during the lesson in the tenth grade." To his surprise, this person thus realized that during the lesson that morning, a model had been shown of how to address young people of every age so that confidence

\*Contained in: Rudolf Steiner, *Die Erkenntnis-Aufgabe der Jugend*, Rudolf Steiner Verlag, Dornach.



## Sorath and the End of the Century

by HANS-WERNER SCHROEDER

*Translated by Maria St. Goar from "Mitteilungen aus der anthroposophischen Arbeit in Deutschland," Michaelmas 1979. Published with permission.*

In two previous articles of this *Newsletter* we have dealt with the incarnation of Ahriman in the next millennium (Summer 1979) and with the activity of the Asuras that is now beginning (Spring 1980). It was shown how the preparation for the incarnation of Ahriman consists specifically in the development of abstract thinking, the mathematical and mechanistic attitude with which the material world view is connected. In contrast to this, the influence of the Asuras had to be described as representing a separate grouping within the threesome of opposing powers (the Luciferic, Ahrimanic, and Asuric beings). They have a more far-reaching effect: that of penetrating man's physical body as licentiousness and sensuality, and of bringing about the destruction of the human ego; related to this is the development of black magic.

Our new study will concern a third influence, spoken of by Rudolf Steiner in connection with the end of the century. This is the activity of the Sun-Demon, also called Sorath, the two-horned beast of the Apocalypse (Chapter 13). The description in the Apocalypse shows that he is not identical with Ahriman, since he appears separately, with the dragon, and is pictured as the lamb with two horns. The number 666 is connected with him.

First, the few occasions will be listed where Rudolf Steiner spoke of the influences of this Sun-Demon:

Munich, April 22, 1907 *The Apocalypse*

Berlin, April 27, 1907 (German GA 96)

Berlin, Oct. or Nov. 1907 ("White and Black Magic," unpublished)

Nuremberg, June 29 & 30, 1908 *The Apocalypse of St. John*

Dornach, Oct. 11, 12, 13, 1918 *Three Streams in the Evolution of Mankind*.

We are dealing with eight lectures, five of which were given in 1907 and 1908, mostly in the context of the Apocalypse. Ten years later the Sorath-theme surfaces again; independent of the Apocalypse, it is unfolded in relation to historic events and to the number 666.

## WITH WHICH BEING ARE WE CONCERNED?

To begin with, we can refer to descriptions given in Nuremberg in the lectures about the Apocalypse. Motifs appear there that are reminiscent of the Asuric influence:

"Mankind will finally be divided into beings who practice white magic and those who practice black magic. Thus in the mystery of Sorath is hidden the secret of black magic; and the tempter to black magic, that most fearful crime in Earth evolution, with which no other crimes can be compared, this seducer is represented by the writer of the Apocalypse as the two-horned beast. Thus there appears on our horizon, so to speak, the division of mankind in the far distant future; the chosen of Christ, who finally will be the white magicians, and the adversaries, the terrible wizards, the black magicians, who cannot escape from matter and whom the writer of the Apocalypse describes as those who commit prostitution with matter. Hence this whole practice of black magic, the marriage which takes place between man and the hardening in matter, is presented to him in his spiritual vision as the great Babylon, the community made up of all those who carry on black magic; in the frightful marriage, or rather concubinage, between man and the forces of deteriorated matter." (6.26.1908)

In this description, especially in reference to black magic, the motif of the Asuric influence appears. Yet the impression can arise that Sorath is not simply an Asuric entity. Rudolf Steiner relates the mystery-name of this being to the four members of man. The Hebrew spelling of this name contains four sounds:

S	Samech
O (or W)	Wav
R	Raish
T	Tav

This spelling results in the name Sorath (with the accent on the second syllable). In relating these four letters to the four members of man, Rudolf Steiner describes how, through the influence of the Sun-Demon, a hardening tendency is impressed into each one of them. This is diametrically opposed to the Sun-activity of Christ. Hence we are dealing with a being that influences man in an all-encompassing manner—not as the other adversaries who work primarily into *single* components of man's being.

This thought of Sorath's encompassing power is supplemented by further descriptions, stating that with this being "the greatest adversary of Christ Jesus" is at work, the Sun-Demon who wills to prevent mankind and the Earth from attaining a further, higher evolution (1918).

It is perhaps permissible, by way of comparison between an inferior and the sublime, to call to mind how in Christ's working for mankind—though on an exalted level—something similarly all-embracing is at work. Through the Christ, the *Father-God* can manifest; on the other hand, the *active force of the Spirit* as well proceeds from the Christ. He has the fullness of power to unfold His efforts toward both aspects of the *Cosmos*.

Perhaps, on a lower level, something similar is at work in the nature of Sorath: a being who can take into himself the other evil influences, then to let them issue from himself—but who is fundamentally perhaps of an Asuric nature. (This is intended more in the form of a problem, rather than a conclusive statement.)

### THE TIME OF SORATH'S ACTIVITY

In the lectures of 1918, Rudolf Steiner ties the time of Sorath's activity to the number 666. (In the Apocalypse, chapter 13, specific mention is made of this number.) He develops the number 666 from the number value contained in the Hebrew letters of the name Sorath:

Samech	60
Wav	6
Raish	200
Tav	400

In the Mysteries the name Sorath provided the key for the number 666 and thus a symbolic meaning; on the other hand—as was made clear in the lectures of 1918—an actual historic date is connected, namely the year 666 A.D., during which time Sorath perpetrated a powerful attack against the progress of mankind. This found expression primarily in Arabism.

In the context of Sorath's activity, the number 1998— $3 \times 666$ —was mentioned by Rudolf Steiner only once. (This was to Friedrich Rittelmeyer and other priests of the Christian Community.) It refers directly to the end of the century when this being will once again activate his evil influence among mankind.

Again, it should be emphasized that the *incarnation of Ahriman* is *nowhere* mentioned by Rudolf Steiner in connection with the end of the century. The reference to the year 1998 concerns *Sorath*, but only an increased *influence*, not an actual embodiment.

In such matters it must always be remembered that such dates never refer to an isolated moment in

time. We may assume that this influence has been *in preparation*; perhaps some of the events we have experienced were foreshadowing this impending encroachment of the Christ-opponent. In recalling the effects of black magic, we may gain the impression that such magic effects already are making themselves felt. In this context, the year 1998 will perhaps bring an *external* intensification, then again it might only bring an *inner* intensified impulse on the part of the opposing power.

### COLLECTIVE ATTACK AT THE END OF THE CENTURY

The Ahrimanic and Asuric activities and those of Sorath show a formidable concentration of opposing powers for the end of the century. The incarnation of Ahriman is in preparation and will cast its shadow upon that period; for the first time in the history of mankind, the Asuric powers attack; and Sorath utilizes the rhythm of 666, inherent in his activity, to intensify his influence at exactly the same time. In regard to the end of the century, all three powers work together. For this time period, it is mostly the human *will*, which could be called the *magical* component, that will be decisive as the bearer of evil—through the Asuras and Sorath. The incarnation of Ahriman will follow in the next millennium, and the appeal then will be to human *intelligence*; the course of the future will eventually depend on the transformation of the intellect, its spiritualization.

The great problem facing men in the years ahead is therefore: Will it be possible for us to counteract, through the forces of a *white magic*, the destructive and divisive magical will-effects of the adversaries? The powers of white magic become active through the cooperation of human beings who out of responsibility toward the spirit think, feel, and work together. The *common intent* of those who resolve to dedicate themselves to the continuance of the spiritual life—this will determine the fate of mankind at the end of the century.

Facing the challenge of the incarnation of Ahriman in the next millennium: Will we be able to muster enough strength and power—to be born of our common intent—to transform our ordinary, native intellect to such an extent that spiritualized, it can be freed from the clutches of Ahriman to serve humanity in the age of Michael.