

Author's Preface

I wish to bring before the public, through the World Wide Web, some information about tremendous events approaching. I am aware that much talk in this vein is already on the Web, and that there is generally a sense "in the air" that something big is happening, with the turning of the Millennium, the end of the Mayan calendar, etc. I believe that this sense of "something in the air" is a correct perception, albeit sometimes highly distorted.

Most of the information in this essay is not new; it has been open to the public at least since the aftermath of the First World War. Yet it has not reached the wide public that needs to hear it. I hope that the advent of the World Wide Web and the search engines will make this important information available to many around the world who have not yet encountered it and who might put it to good use. I claim no special knowledge concerning these matters; I have merely drawn on published sources.

I expect no one to take my word for anything. I do ask the readers to read and think through this information, to follow the leads that I give, and do their own investigations. Conscientious investigations might well cause some intellectual upheavals, and change the course of some lives; and this is exactly what is needed, many times over, around the world.

Rudolf Steiner

1861-1925

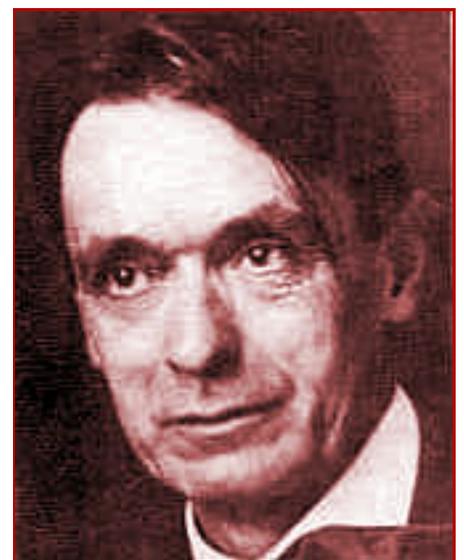
This essay is based, directly or indirectly, on the "spiritual science", or "Anthroposophy", promulgated by **Rudolf Steiner** in the first quarter of the Twentieth Century. I say "based on" because this exposition can only be grossly oversimplified, and must contain whatever misunderstandings that derive from my own (more or less) weak grasp of the subject-matter.

The reader must assume that this essay is almost wholly derivative; it contains scarcely any original ideas of my own. In the interest of readability (and to give my strained resources a break), I do not provide full citations in the text. If I did, almost every sentence would be footnoted. I do provide below some bibliographic remarks, which I hope will be useful to the conscientious reader. It is probable that hundreds, or thousands, of people in this world are better qualified than I to write this notice. I wrote it because:

I was not aware that anyone else was writing it, and it needed to be written, and published.

The events of which I speak are the approaching incarnation of a powerful super-human spiritual being, following the concomitant political, social, economic, and cultural events. Preparations for this incarnation have been building to a climax over the past four centuries or more, and the climax is approaching soon.

This being is called "**Ahriman**" (from the ancient Persian name *Angra Mainyu*, given by the prehistoric Zarathustra). We might consider Ahriman to be the same being usually called "*Satan*", except that the concept of "*Satan*" is much confused and misunderstood. Therefore, in this essay I will use the name "Ahriman", and will attempt to give a clearer understanding of his nature and aims than generally obtains.



Plaque Depicting the Birth of Ahura-Mazda and Ahriman, from Luristan, Western Iran, 799-600 BC

I realize that many are not inclined to take seriously the possibility of such an event, or to believe that such matters are known, or can be known. Nevertheless, again I ask the reader to read this essay with an open mind, at least open enough to take in the thoughts and concepts. I will give a few epistemological considerations which support the notion that such matters can be known.

And I will give some references which will help the readers to conduct their own epistemological researches, and thus to be able to make an informed estimation of this report. This is a matter of some importance; it is essential for the future of mankind and the earth that as many people as possible become wakeful and not be caught sleeping by the impending events.

A full explanation of the nature of *Ahriman* and his incarnation is far beyond the scope of this essay (as well as beyond the understanding of this author). If I only give enough of an explanation so that the readers become conscious enough to see the necessity, and to have the means, of becoming more conscious about these matters, then I will have fulfilled my purpose.

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Spirit and Soul

Since this essay speaks of "spiritual" matters, I would like to bring into focus the concept of spirit, along with the concepts of soul and body. (I follow Steiner's exposition in his *Theosophy*.) The "body", of course, is the physical form, perceptible by the outer senses, in the world that is usually perceived in common by people's outer senses. By soul I mean the inner world of subjective feelings and sensations of a Man (or animal).

The sensation of an outer sense-perception (such as the green of grass), as well as feelings (such as pleasure or pain), are in the soul. Also, the inner being acts through the soul by the will, though the will is not usually conscious. We might say that the physical world acts on the soul through sensation; the soul lives in its own feelings, and acts upon the world through the will. We (generally) experience sensations in wakefulness, feelings as if in a dream, and will as if in deep, unconscious sleep.

In addition to living in the inner world of the soul, the Man can live in the world of thought. Through thinking, we make contact with the being of the things of the world. By spirit I mean the essence of thought. Contrary to common misconception, thought is not subjective, but objective, in that it belongs to the whole world, accessible to all.

Many people can grasp the same thought and through that thought contact the same objective reality, though they do not (usually) experience each other's sensations and feelings. As the physical world interacts with the soul, so also does the spirit; we can call forth thoughts by our acts of will, and the thoughts give us feelings.

Much of the confusion about the supposed subjectivity of thinking arises from the subjectivity of feelings and sensations connected with thinking, as well as from the fact that much of what usually passes for thinking is hardly thinking at all, but a kind of semi-conscious, automatic pseudo-thinking.

(In modern times, people experience thinking as if it comes, usually automatically, out of themselves, yet, paradoxically, thinking in essence is objective and universal [as we can best see in mathematics]. I will say more about this below.)

Thus, through our experience of thinking, we can attach an experiential, "empirical" meaning to the concept of spirit. (All this should, of course, be taken as only a bare introduction to a vast, deep subject. For now, I am trying only to counter the widespread opinion that soul and spirit are nebulous, meaningless terms.)

And while it is usually true that we hardly experience our thinking, thinking may be intensified so that it becomes conscious, and this development of consciousness may lead to the perception of the world and beings of soul and spirit -- and thus become the basis of "spiritual science".

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Spiritual Beings and Earthly Evolution

Following the communications of this spiritual science, I will posit that spiritual beings, known as "angels", live invisibly (to us, usually) and involve themselves in earthly affairs. (This idea has been gaining acceptance in the general culture in recent years, with a surge of interest in angels.) I will also posit the existence of other spiritual beings, higher and more advanced than the angels, called the "archangels" in theology or angelology.

Modern spiritual research (by Steiner), as well as ancient tradition (from Dionysius the Areopagate, pupil of St. Paul) speaks of at least nine orders of angels and supra-angelic beings -- which, taken together, are called the "hierarchies", sometimes the "choirs of angels", or sometimes the "Gods". (Other, still higher Beings are not discussed here.)

Some of the names given to the nine hierarchies, in ascending order, are:

- Angels (Angeloi, Sons of Twilight, Sons of Life; all Men have individual angels as guardians and carriers of their eternal Selves)
- Archangels (Archangeloi, Spirits of Fire; the "folk-spirits" are of this rank)
- Archai (singular "Arche"; Spirits of Personality, Primal Beginnings, Principalities; the "Time Spirit" or "Zeitgeist" is of this rank)
- Exusiai (Spirits of Form, Powers, Authorities; the "Elohim" and "Jehovah" are of this rank)
- Dynamis (Spirits of Motion, Might, Virtues)
- Kyriotetes (Spirits of Wisdom, Dominions)
- Thrones (Spirits of Will)
- Cherubim (Spirits of Harmony)
- Seraphim (Spirits of Love).

Although the doctrines of Dionysius were long considered to be heretical, the existence of these Hierarchical beings is mentioned in the Bible. Angels, of course, are mentioned in many places.

Some other examples:

- Archangels -- Jude v.9; I Thes. 4: 16
- Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Powers -- Rom. 8: 38; Col. 1: 16, 2: 15; Eph. 1: 21, 3: 10
- Cherubim -- Gen. 3: 24; Ex. 25: 18-20,22; Num. 7: 89; Ezk. 9: 3, ch. 10; Ps. 18: 10
- Seraphim -- Isa. 6: 21

These spirits are not all "angelic", in the sense of "good and holy". Some, sometimes, oppose the regular, good world-order. Ahriman ("the Unjust Prince of this World") is a "retarded" Spirit of Form, working as an Arche, opposing (in a sense) the good world order. (Yet, this opposition is not purely "evil", as I will discuss below.)

Since **Ahriman** is a spirit of opposition, we might begin to understand his nature by understanding what he opposes: the Gods' plan of earthly and human development. But the situation is not as simple as a two-sided contest; basic to competent understanding of the world-process is the recognition of at least three kinds of spiritual influence upon the evolution of mankind and the cosmos.

(We must be clear that this "evolution" is something very different from the random, meaningless, material process conceived by the neo-Darwinists and suchlike theorists. I mean by "evolution" a thoroughly purposeful, thought-filled process of development initiated and guided by spiritual beings.)

The *normal Gods* (the regular hierarchies) create and nurture the evolvement of the world and mankind, so as to bring about the possibility of Men attaining the status of divinity as "Spirits of Freedom and Love" -- the tenth hierarchy. (At the present stage of evolution, the Man progresses through alternating periods of earth-lives and purely spiritual lives: birth, death, and reincarnation.)

As the name implies, essential to the fulfillment of mankind's task is the realization of "freedom", meaning not so much political freedom as spiritual freedom -- that Men should become independent, unique individuals acting consciously as the originators of their own deeds. Occult wisdom, independently rediscovered and made public by Steiner (and greatly simplified here, to put it mildly), explains this evolution as being created and guided through seven great cosmic ages. We are now in the fourth great age, called the "Earth" Age. (All ages' names here are given in order of succession.)

The previous three ages are called "Saturn", "Sun", and "Moon". Again, these are past ages of cosmic development, not to be confused with the present-day heavenly bodies of the same names. The same holds for the three future ages: "Jupiter", "Venus", and "Vulcan". The great Earth Age comprises seven lesser ages, of which we are in the fifth. These five are called "Polarian", "Hyperborean", "Lemurian", "Atlantean", and "Post-Atlantean". And the Post-Atlantean Age comprises seven cultural epochs, of which, again, we are in the fifth.

The previous four are called "Indian", "Persian", "Egypto-Chaldean", and "Greco-Roman". Recorded history begins only with the Egypto-Chaldean Epoch; what is generally known of ancient Indian and Persian culture derives from records made in the third epoch. -- These names of epochs do not imply that nothing important was happening in other regions of the earth, but that the archetypal evolutionary impulses of the times were centered in the regions designated.

The epochs last approximately 2160 years; and the present, fifth post-Atlantean epoch began about 1413 AD. Neither are these epochs considered to be sharply differentiated; transitions happen gradually, future developments being prepared in advance, and past influences lingering after.

Note: This account is ridiculously simplified, for the purpose of providing a bare conceptual framework for this essay. To get a faint idea of how simplified, consider that on Old Saturn "space" did not exist; "time", paradoxically, "began" only during that age; and the only quasi-sensory phenomenon was a kind of heat-substance.

Conditions on Old Saturn were so vastly different from earthly conditions that we can imagine them only faintly. Indeed, perhaps better than trying merely to picture Old Saturn as a physical existence, would be to conceive of this "heat" as only an outer appearance of the "soul-warmth" of the Creator-Gods. The basic reality is spirit-beings and their deeds. The "beginning" might be pictured thus: the Thrones offered sacrifice of part of their own being to the Cherubim; the warmth of this devotional sacrifice rose as smoke, and from this fiery smoke was born the Archai -- the Time-Spirits.

Thus: a sacramental, creative act of holy Beings, viewed "externally" as "heat" and the "beginning of time". -- We can properly approach these sacred Mysteries (made public only in our time) with reverent inner activity, calling forth inner pictures imbued with devotional feeling of respect for even our physical existence as a gift of the Gods' own being-substance.

And again, this is only to give the dimmest conception of these tremendous facts, and of their remoteness from our usual, materialistic imagining. Conditions only very gradually, over inconceivable aeons, approached those of the present. For example, a kind of "space" came into existence only on the Old Sun, and so on. Always, the reality "behind" the "outer appearances" is: beings and their deeds.

The central event of the Earth Age occurred during the Greco-Roman Epoch, in Palestine. It was the incarnation of a very high spiritual Being, a God of the normal current, called the "*Christ*" -- culminating in the events surrounding the *Crucifixion*: the "*Mystery of Golgatha*".

This Event was the turning-point of Earth-evolution from descent from spirit into matter, toward ascent back to the spirit, with the fruits gained from the sojourn into matter. (**Steiner** himself did not begin with a Christian world-view. He independently, and unexpectedly, rediscovered the "mystical fact" of Christianity during the course of his consciously clairvoyant experiences.)

Besides the normal Gods, a host of abnormal spiritual beings, called "Luciferic", also influences earthly evolution. In a sense, these oppose the normal Gods' plans for evolution. The Luciferic beings try to draw mankind away from the normal earth-evolution to their own abnormal psychic-spiritual cosmos of light. In the human soul they inspire pride, egotism, disinterest in one's fellow Men, fiery emotionalism, subjectivity, fantasy, and hallucination.

In the human intellect they inspire generalization, unification, hypothesizing, and the building of imaginative pictures beyond reality. Human speech and thought are Luciferic in origin; so are human self-consciousness and the capacity for independence and rebellion against the normal Gods' world-order. Also, the susceptibility to disease originated from Luciferic influence. A high spiritual being, in a sense the leader of the Luciferic host, "*Lucifer*" himself, incarnated in a human body, in the region of China, in the Third Millennium BC. This event brought about a revolution in human consciousness. Before then, Men could not use the organs of intellect and lived by a kind of instinct.

Lucifer was the first to grasp by the intellect the wisdom of the Mysteries theretofore revealed by the Gods to

mankind in other forms of consciousness. The effects of this incarnation inspired the wisdom of Pagan culture, up through the Gnosis of the early centuries AD, and lingered even into the early Nineteenth Century.

This wisdom should not be considered to be false in itself; it is good or evil depending on who holds it, and for what purposes it is used. The great Pagan initiates took it upon themselves to enter into the Luciferic influence and turn it to the good of mankind. Only through the Luciferic influence has mankind risen above the status of childishness. (Apart from the Pagan culture of Nature-wisdom was the Hebraic culture, which [in a sense] separated the Man from Nature, and which prepared an hereditary current to provide a body for the incarnation of *Christ*.)

In Pagan culture the Man felt membered into the starry cosmos, without what we now know as moral impulses. Moral impulses in the human soul were prepared by Hebrewism and furthered by Christianity. Christianity is also a culmination and fulfillment of Pagan wisdom. Here "Christianity" means not so much "organized religion" as the deeds and continuing influence of the Christ-Being and His hosts, not necessarily confined to formal-religious organizations.)

A third spiritual influence working into human and earthly evolution is the Ahrimanic. The intention of Ahriman, and his hosts, is to freeze the earth into complete rigidity, so that it will not pass over to the Jupiter, Venus, and Vulcan ages, and to make the Man into an entirely earthly being -- unindividualized, unfree, and divorced from the normal Gods' cosmos.

The essential Ahrimanic tendency is to materialize; to crystallize; to darken; to silence; to bring living, mobile forces into fixed form -- in other words, to kill that which is living. This tendency in itself, within proper bounds, is not evil; the dead, material world is necessary for the regular Gods' plan of human and cosmic development.

The Ahrimanic tendency is evil only when it exceeds proper bounds, when it reaches into what should be alive -- and Ahriman does try to exceed proper bounds. Again, the basic reality of the world is spiritual beings together with their deeds, but Ahriman promotes the illusion, the lie, that matter is the basic reality, or the only reality.

In fact, Ahrimanic spirits, not "atoms" or "ultimate particles", are the reality behind the apparently material world. Ahriman lives upon lies; he is a spirit of untruth, the "Father of Lies".

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Ahriman in Modern Times

In the present, fifth cultural epoch the Ahrimanic influence in human culture is reaching a climax. The modern scientific revolution, since the fifteenth century, has been inspired largely by Ahriman. He is the inspirer of amoral, atheistic, mechanistic materialism, and the kind of cleverness that goes with it.

The regular Gods' intent for the present epoch (also called the "Consciousness Soul Epoch") is that mankind should develop increased consciousness, together with the individuality and spiritual freedom that go with that consciousness. Ahriman opposes this; he wants the Man to live from unconscious instincts as an unindividualized, impulsive animal -- clever, but an animal nonetheless. (Ahriman is the teacher of the lie that the Man is an animal: neo-Darwinism and similar theories.)

To the modern mind it might seem a contradiction to say Ahriman opposes increased consciousness but promotes intelligence and science. This is because the modern mind is so immured in what is generally considered to be "scientific thinking" that it has almost no conception of the true nature of conscious thinking.

(**Steiner**, especially in his book *Die Philosophie der Freiheit* [1894], has been our teacher of real thinking, but the general intellectual culture has not learned the lesson.)

The fact is that the "scientific" thinking normal in this epoch, no matter how clever, is hardly conscious at all (possibly with some relatively rare exceptions at moments of "insight" or mathematical discovery). In the kind of consciousness usual in our "scientific" culture, we become conscious only of the fixed results of the thinking, after it has been accomplished; we are not (usually) conscious of the thinking-process itself.

And since it is unconscious, it is not our free action; it is automatic. When we think in the manner usual in our epoch, we are sentient automata, acting from instinct. (Formerly occult fact: this instinctive thinking in the wide culture had been inspired by [Jehovah](#) up to about 1840 AD. Since then it has been inspired by [Ahriman](#), resulting in the Nineteenth-Century torrent of materialism, which, aided by the withdrawal of the German folk-spirit, drowned the life-positive Romanticism in culture.)

And this is what Ahriman wants: he wants to stamp out all traces and all possibility of free, individualized human consciousness; he wants the Man not to be an individual, but only a member of a general species of pseudo-mankind -- to be a clever, earth-bound animal, an "homunculus".

As indicated, Ahriman is the inspirer of the most extreme kind of "scientific" materialism: the doctrine that there is no spirit or soul in the world; that life itself is not in fact alive, but is only a complex of mechanical processes; that reality is at base only quantitative, that there is no reality in the qualitative -- color, sound, etc.; even that the human's inner being is a confluence of material forces.

On the emotional level, he works in the human subconscious instincts, inspiring fear, hatred, lust for power, and destructive sex impulses. On the mental level, he inspires rigid, automatic thinking: (in Steiner's phrase) thinking almost entirely without thoughts, but thinking tremendously strongly in the language, in the literal words, which easily become empty words, which in turn easily become lies.

This "abstract" thinking is devoid of any conscious, inner activity and devoid of any real connection to living experience, and creates a darkened consciousness without light, color, or images.

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The Degradation of Language

According to **Steiner**, it is characteristic of the present culture of Ahrimanic scientism and Anglo-American economic imperialism that language has lost its instinctive spiritual meaning; that is, the connection is lost between the literal word and the spiritual impulse that constitutes meaning.

Without real, spiritual content, language consists only of "empty phrases", such as rule by the will of the people, the free world, individual freedom, and so on. These phrases are largely devoid of reality in our socio-political structure; here the pervasive actuality is the power of money over Men and over life. And where the empty phrase rules in language, mere conventions -- rather than living human contact -- rule in social life, and mere routine -- rather than lively human interest -- rules in economic life.

And: "It is only a short step from the empty phrase to the lie." Again, this is especially true in politics and economics, for the prevalence of empty words makes possible the falsification of realities -- a potent weapon in the hands of those with occult, conscious intentions to manipulate people for devious ends. In our time, people en masse act as if they are possessed by evil forces, because, in a way, they are.

The *demons of materialism* speak through empty words. A language in which the demons of materialism have taken the place of human spiritual impulses can lead only to destruction.

Certainly [Steiner](#) was not the only one to notice this aspect of modern language. **George Orwell** was perhaps the most prominent writer to decry this trend. See, for instance, his classic essay "Politics and the English Language". He envisioned the dehumanization of language becoming deliberately intensified in the "newspeak" of the Ahrimanic nightmare [1984](#). Having no apparent knowledge of spiritual science, and working with only keen observation and a love of truth, he saw what was happening in the political discourse of Western Europe and carried to extremes in the totalitarian regimes.

On the socio-political level, the antidote for this poison of empty words is the liberation of cultural life, especially education, from political and financial power. (As outlined in Steiner's concept of the "threefold commonwealth": the separation of the political-rights state, the spiritual-cultural sphere, and the economic sector -- along with the elimination of egotism and coercion from the economy.)

On the individual-personal level, the antidote is the infusion of active, creative thought into language, thus creating a language in which the words point to the thoughts, evoking living thinking in the listeners. If we do not put effort into creating our original thoughts, then ready-made pseudo-thoughts, trite words and phrases,

come automatically to mind and carry us along with them, resulting in "thinking almost entirely without thoughts".

We can at least make the effort to resist these ready-made phrases and generalizations that effortlessly come to mind, and to form mental pictures of particular people, things, and events -- and further, to make original word-formations describing these things and pictures from varying points of view. The essential point is that we not let our speaking and writing be determined by unconscious influences, but that we call forth through our own efforts new, original thought-creations and convey them with original, fluid, artistic word-formations.

We will not always fully succeed; we are not all poets all the time; but if we consciously make this effort, then we will go far toward recovering the lost human-spirituality of language, and consequently, toward the humanization of culture. (I will say more on this subject in another context.)

And, not incidentally, we will thus progress toward living consciously in the thinking-free-of-literal-words that is the "language" of the spirit-soul world in which we will live after death.

"Men must learn to see through words; they will have to acquire the capacity to grasp the gesture in language."

[From *Symptom to Reality in Modern History*, p. 124]

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The Ahrimanization of Culture

In the social-cultural sphere, Ahriman's influence is apparent everywhere, especially strong and growing stronger throughout the Twentieth Century.

Chief among the Ahrimanic trends are:

- Antagonistic nationalism based on ethnicity. (Moderate folk-nationalism was a progressive principle in the past, but ethnic nationalism is retrogressive and destructive today.)
- Dogmatic party politics, engendering hatred and bitterness arising from the refusal to see other, equally valid (or invalid) points of view

The subjugation of cultural life (e.g. medicine, education, research, criminal jurisprudence) to political and economic power

The mechanization of the political state, bound by rigid laws everywhere, with little place for free human initiative

In everyday life: Philistinism, tedium, and alienation, lack of interest in one's work, even in intellectual work

(**Ahriman** wants knowledge to be devoid of warm human interest and connection, to be stored in libraries and not to live in human souls.)

- In medicine: materialistic, mechanistic (and atrocious) experimentalism and treatment, without understanding of the living human individual (The related practice of embalming corpses tends to bind the human entity to earth; this is an Ahrimanic reflection of ancient Egyptian mummification.)
- In social science: blind acceptance of statistics, and the belief that the satisfaction of economic needs by itself will secure human welfare
- In economics: the subjugation of all living and human interests to the inhuman, impersonal mechanism of profit-seeking, to the "artificial person" of the corporation.

(In the USA this has reached such a state that the humanizing influence of the labor movement is being obliterated, and the exigencies of "making a living", along with other destructive Ahrimanic trends, are destroying the human family -- this in the so-called "richest country in the world". (A perspicacious American folk-wisdom has coined the phrase "the Almighty Dollar".)

The Ahrimanic "Mammon" is archetypally the god of "filthy lucre" and of the power of money over life, as

well as of all low and dark forces; his hosts also attack the human body and soul to corrupt and destroy them.)

- In the Christian religion: narrow, simplistic interpretation of the Gospels, without appreciation for the occult wisdom needed for an approach to the deep mysteries of the Christ Being
- In literature: books inspired directly by Ahriman, works of great intelligence that further Ahriman's goals (e.g. some parts of Nietzsche's *Antichrist* and *Ecce Homo*)
- In techniques: very refined developments, but directed only at satisfying animal needs, promoting human immersion in the sense-world to the exclusion of the supersensible
- In world-view: Men as animals, animals (and all living things) as mechanisms, the non-existence of soul and spirit, and the non-existence of moral reality: *amoralism*.

Obviously, these impulses are running amok in this world, more so all the time. They are, in fact, approaching a climax; they are preparations for *the incarnation of Ahriman himself in a human body*.

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Good and Evil

To sum up this description of the triad of spiritual streams: The conflicts of human and spiritual life do not derive from a simple, two-sided war between good and evil. It was one of the great insights of **Steiner** to renew the ancient teaching of the "Golden Mean", of good as the middle way between opposing extremes.

Lucifer is too warm, too flighty, too unstable; he inspires human fanaticism, false mysticism, hot-bloodedness, and the tendency to flee earthly reality for hallucinatory pleasures. Ahriman is too cold, too hard, too rigid; he tries to make people dry, prosaic, philistine, materialistic in thought and in deed -- and hardens what would be healthily mobile, supple thoughts, feelings, and even bodies.

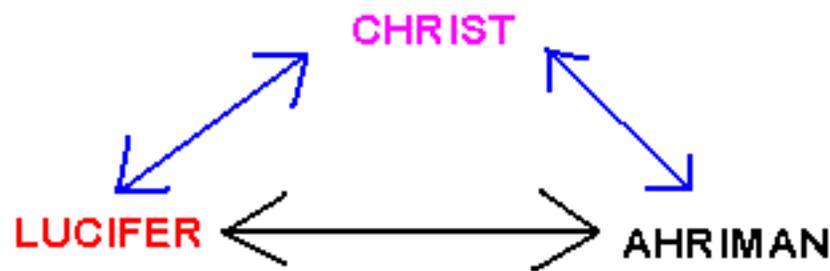
Christ, as the Exemplar of the *regular Gods*, represents the middle way between the too-much and the too-little, holding the opposites in balance -- and leading mankind to find the healthy middle way. Seen this way, Lucifer and Ahriman are not purely evil; they both bring to human and earthly evolution forces that are needed for good, healthy development and the fulfillment of the Gods' plans. Evil results only when events get out of balance and run to extremes.

However, neither do Lucifer and Ahriman simply oppose each other; in a sense, they work together in opposition to the Gods' intent for evolution; they both work to prevent mankind and the earth from progressing together to the New Jupiter. Lucifer draws human spirits away from earthly embodiment toward his own psychic-spiritual "planet" of light; Ahriman pushes the individual human spirit out of the human organism and away from the earth, so that only a hardened, mechanized, ghostly human organism, devoid of free individuality and living an instinctive-but-clever animalistic species-life remains on the hardened "cosmic slag" of the earth (surrounded with Old Moon forces).

Mankind's rightful task for the present is to lead lives of healthy, progressive alternation between the earthly and the cosmic (life, death, and rebirth), so as to lead the earth over to New Jupiter. -- The profound mystery of evil is that in a higher sense, in the long run, it serves the good. Not to imply that we would be justified in doing evil with the rationalization that good would result. "...it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!" [Matthew 18:vii]

Note: This is a deep subject, and I am not altogether sure of my grasp of it. My impression is that **Steiner** was developing and expanding his insights during his career, so that reading just one of his treatments of the subject will not give the whole picture.

The picture I have drawn so far is this:



The true picture of the workings of evil might be even more complex than outlined above. **Steiner** did make some statements which might be interpreted as indicating a third stream of spirits of opposition: the "Asuras" (a borrowed Eastern term), which are retarded Archai who work to destroy the human "I", the Ego itself.

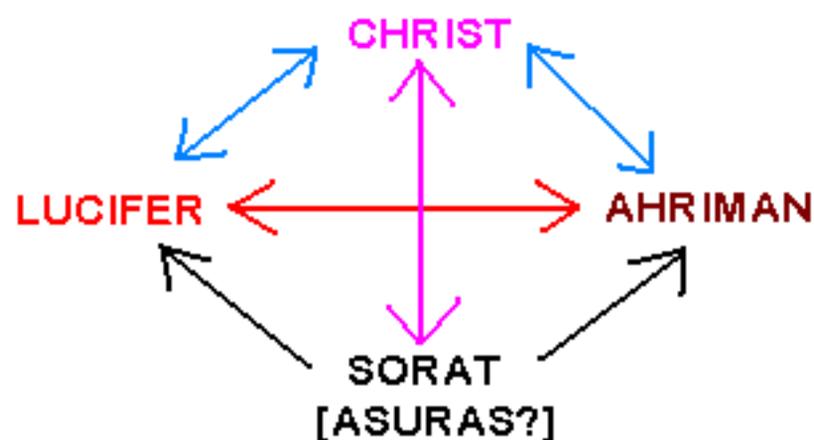
The Asuras might be agents of the actual *Antichrist*, the *Sun-Demon*, known to occultism as "Sorat" (or "Sorath"). In some passages Steiner does identify the Apocalyptic Beast 666 as **Sorat**, not clearly differentiating the Ahrimanic and Soratic principals. While it seems true that the numerical interpretation of the Hebrew spelling of "Sorat" gives the number 666, still the position of Sorat in relation to Lucifer and Ahriman is not altogether clear (to this writer).

A possible solution to this question might follow from the imagery of the Apocalypse: Michael casts the Dragon out of heaven; immediately afterwards arise the two "beasts" -- the first from the sea (Lucifer) and the second from the land (Ahriman). Thus Lucifer and Ahriman appear on earth as two beings or principles, but they are the progeny of the one spirit of opposition -- the Dragon -- in Heaven.

If we identify the Dragon, the Antichrist, as Sorat, we can picture Lucifer and Ahriman as the left and right hands of Sorat. *Christ* strives to hold *Lucifer* and *Ahriman* in balance so that they serve the good, while Sorat strives to keep them out of balance, so that they work for destruction. While Lucifer seeks to draw the human "I", the Ego to his own planet, and Ahriman seeks to harden the earth and the human organism so that no Ego can live in a human on earth, Sorat -- through the Asuras -- seeks to destroy the Ego itself, along with the earth.

Sorat uses Lucifer and Ahriman as spirits of seduction to mask his own true intention of pure destruction. And Sorat manifests in social evolution as pure destruction, especially in the wars and mass murders of our century. (Some suggest that he manifests in the human organism as the destroyer of the immune system -- the so-called "AIDS".)

Thus, the true picture might look something like this:



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