

Culminating in 2000

Shirley Routledge, Forest Row, 1999

Please note:

Following indications by Rudolf Steiner the years from 1998 (2 x 666) to 2000 were seen as auspicious years. People expected major changes and some – like Shirley Routledge, Coenraad van Houten's partner – were concerned that Anthroposophical Society was ill-prepared to the face the challenges of the 21st century. This article voices such concerns, but also contains some observations of new developments and possible future directions.

Karl-Heinz Finke

How do we understand anthroposophy reaching a culmination at the end of the 20th century'?

Rudolf Steiner foretold this. Some say it has failed – but with what eyes are we looking? What criteria? One view is that out of anthroposophy people would be involved with the main stream of human affairs and able to be effective – at the very least able to prevent the worst.

I do not pretend to answer this question but to suggest a way of looking at the present spiritual situation, from observing phenomena.

One can observe everywhere people who are working out of a Michaelic consciousness, living a life style and morality that is spirit-filled, often with a deeply Esoteric-Christian conscience for humanity and the Earth. Where did they learn this? These people are not members of the Anthroposophical Society nor have they heard of Rudolf Steiner. When or if they do meet anthroposophy and hear the insights of spiritual science, they can immediately recognise and affirm – yes that is so. They do not need to study the knowledge first then work it through as most of us 'older' generations had to do. They start differently.

Anthroposophy by now is present in the etheric 'ocean of being' around the Earth and thus also in the human organism. It is available to any sensitive open soul, directly, as an inner reality. One can think, breathe and live within it.

Imagine the various possibilities of incarnating into this 'reality'.

Souls on the way down towards incarnation witness that the new mysteries have been opened up on Earth. The etheric substance they take on is Christ-permeated. The human constitution has changed in this century. You can meet people who have a natural understanding for reincarnation, for the longer time processes and development of the Ego-spirit. Or it may manifest in the soul as a 'feeling-memory of Karma', or as a deep longing to find these new mysteries working here in the world.

Other souls have already met anthroposophy here on Earth early in this century and have reincarnated quickly, as Rudolf Steiner predicted. Anthroposophy lives in them in quite another way than those of us meeting it now. What they were able to assimilate and individualise is in their being. How do we recognise it? It likely manifests in qualities, attitudes, faculties, or will direction – perhaps one can observe the morality of a true spiritual scientist.

Further, we learn from Rudolf Steiner that souls will be present now who bring with them special capacities for social impulses (returning Platonists) or for transforming of evil in the world (new Manichean impulses). They could be recognised by the kind of will they manifest, and how they take on tasks for humanity – in ways we may find unusual or dangerous. They will certainly need a supportive human environment to make their work possible.

Considering these possibilities, the present spiritual situation asks for a new attitude to Michaelic endeavours. There is no sense in a protective caring for anthroposophy, nor claiming 'we' have the understanding. Such 'new' souls only to find a consciousness and language of expression in other people who living out of the etheric stream of Anthroposophia. They recognise the new mysteries when present in a situation – when people are together in this way or when manifesting in another individual. An outer form is no guarantee of spirituality – it is present in the moment or not.

This is another aspect of the contemporary scene. Esoteric realities are becoming transparent. If you are not authentic and living what you talk about (not to perfection of course, but as an intentional striving), you are by-passed by the 'new' souls. Spiritual leadership has to be earned and recognised. An appointed position of function is as such no guarantee of authority in spiritual matters. People will find and relate to what for them is valid. Such is the free spiritual life.

Where does this lead us?

The new way has no certainty, no control from a centre point as we may have been accustomed for many incarnations. One can only rely on individual integrity, confirmed by the spiritual world which either reinforces or disables initiatives. To the extent we can individualise the spirit in a free way, out of own forces, we will find new unifying forces, the beginnings of a new kind of encountering based on spiritual friendship, unconditional acceptance of differences, and confidence between people.

A culmination of anthroposophy in the sense of the foregoing asks from us a reversal of thinking, feeling and doing. Anthroposophy exists in the world as a life stream. We do not hold it. We can only recognise it, serve it, move with it.

On one hand we are in the age of Internet and information excess. The world (and our anthroposophical bookshelves) is full of an excess of content. But does it 'live'? We cannot solve conflicts and crises with head-bound knowledge.

On the other hand, in the will, we can experience that nothing comes by itself. Life is empty and without purpose or substance unless we choose to 'fill' it. We are now being given a greater margin of choice than ever before. The crises in the world around us and in interpersonal conflicts contain messages about the spiritual battle for the human soul. They tell us. 'Wake up!' What kind of human existence are you creating? ... To what end are you heading with your strategic plans or judgments or opinions? ... Is your will bound to past karma and who you used to be, or are you transforming past convictions to future oriented creative powers?

We are creating a human culture for future times by the way we live and fill our daily life style with spirit consciousness. My deeds are consequential for all others as well. This means a practical ethical individualism out of which a new humanity is born. We are part of the creation process.

*Returning to the new mysteries, inaugurated by Rudolf Steiner with the Foundation Stone and establishing the School of Spiritual Science: Rudolf Steiner expected the **New Anthroposophical Society** to be one with the spiritual movement of the becoming of Anthroposophia in the world. My observation is that the Anthroposophical Society and the movement have grown apart. The spiritual movement as an etheric stream, as well as its manifestations in initiatives and practical work is actually very alive and vast, involving thousands upon thousands in a culture of living. The Anthroposophical Society tends to be caught in a smallness of attitude and vision. It is very clear that the 'new' souls described above are by-passing the Society as we have known it and presented it. We have to change, with the emphasis on we! How will the Society change to embrace and serve the reality of anthroposophy as it lives in the world now and so that the incoming generations of souls who already know it could connect with its representation of Anthroposophia? For that we would need the awareness that the spiritual world is very near and will strengthen our will where it is justified to do so.*

Michael brings will, strength, courage.

He is the Sun Spirit. He wants us to behold him.

He works with the consequences, not with the causes.

Michael – silent, withholding.

He gives no answers – He is present – He wills – But affirms or denies.

What is thought and created on earth.

Only when it is found justified by the spiritual world.

For in the epochs of his reign he has never participated in earthly activity.

Anything inherited is distasteful to him.

Languages are something from which he turns away.

He wants the thoughts first.

From Rudolf Steiner's Note Book, January 1924