

IMAGINATION, INSPIRATION AND INTUITION:

**Working with the Being of Anthroposophia in the Development of Art as a Moral
Force**

In ourselves and in the World

Lecture given

by

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What is art?

Plato, said that pure art is always allied with the supreme, and is, therefore, of intrinsic worth. Aristotle, said that art completes what nature cannot bring to a finish, that the artist gives us knowledge of nature's unrealized ends. Meister Eckhart, the great Christian Mystic, once said, that in making a work of art the very inmost self of a man comes into outwardness, that is, man's highest principle - the image and likeness of God. Thus, in seeking perfection and wholeness and harmony it prepares all creatures to return to God.

Rudolf Steiner tells us that 'art carries the spiritual divine into earth to fashion the latter in such a way that its forms, colours, words and tones act as a revelation of the world beyond, whether it takes an idealistic or realistic colouring is of no importance. What it needs is a relationship to the truly, not merely thought out spiritual.'

Tonight I will speak about how Anthroposophia guides us through the transformation that brings about the faculties of Imagination, inspiration and Intuition, and how this moral work is really an art in itself, an art, which then helps us to become more creative as artists, and allows our creations to ray out into the world as a moral force.

Who is Anthroposophia?

In a lecture given on the 13th of February 1913 Rudolf Steiner tells us that Anthroposophia is a being that has been with us since Egypto-chaldean times, an Archangelic being whose task it was to descend to earth into the human soul bringing with her the wisdom of the Cosmic Sophia. He tells us that it was in Egypto-Chaldean times that she first began to inspire us, before that we were still living in the lap of the gods.

We were more closely bound to all that existed around us. We felt we were citizens of the universe, and of the earth. We perceived that the stars and the moon and sun, the seasons that came and went, as well as the elements all around us, had a relationship to our body and our souls, to our feelings and will.

In those early days art was always an expression of this relationship with the spirit, on the one hand, and with the physical world, on the other. A man felt himself like a tower that unites heaven and earth, a relationship that became less and less conscious as time passed and then was nearly completely lost. This feeling of losing the spirit led to a longing in the will to remember this relationship, to celebrate it, to consecrate it and to keep it alive...That is how art began.

Before that no art was necessary because we were in constant communion with the gods, who were the highest creators.

When art came into being, it was, therefore, always sacred and religious and sought to make manifest in earthly space and earthly time what he could remember of the spaceless and eternal.

In Indian times the human being still had deep a connection to the spirit. An inward feeling, of breathing in the spirit lived in the Indian. He was elaborating his Etheric body and he had a connection to feeling and to the eternal and timeless. Through his Etheric body the ancient Indian could experience the spiritual world in the same way he could experience the physical world through his physical body. This gave him a feeling of spiritual 'oneness' with higher beings a state that resembled the state of 'oneness' of the first earthly age and the first planetary condition. This spirit of 'oneness' was summed up by the Indian as Brahma.¹ The Indian felt that the world he could see with his Etheric organs in its unity was his primeval home. In contrast the physical world was to the ancient Indian a fallacy of his perception an illusion. This led to the doctrine of Maya. The Indian person had no interest in the Earth except as a veil (Maya) of the supersensible,² and sought to free himself from its bondage. He felt his true being, his spirit, was in the stars and in the planets and in the sun and moon, and so he disdained the world of space and felt most at home when he was meditating, when he breathed in the gods and closed his eyes to the world. This consciousness of being one with the stars, was a kind of atavistic inspiration and we could call it a passive consciousness. A consciousness that felt a unity with the spirit, which was not earthly.

A faint echo of the spiritual wisdom of the Indians is contained in the Vedas, the Ramayana and the Bhagavad-Gita wherein there is an undertone of the longing for what the Indian man has lost; we can hear it even today in traditional

¹ Rudolf Steiner Egyptian Myths and Mysteries

² Rudolf Steiner Occult Science – An Outline – Man and the Evolution of the world Part 6

Indian music. This was the beginning of the withdrawal of the spirit from humanity and was necessary so that the human being could develop a means to raise himself through his own efforts to the Gods.



If we look at this early picture of the Buddha we can sense immediately the disconnection from the outside world of Maya. The Buddha's eyes are closed and he pays little notice to the devils that are all around him desiring to tempt him with the material senses.

In Persian times the human being was developing the Astral body and so had a connection both to the spiritual and the physical world, man felt himself one with the gods and one with the earth. This balance was brought about by the senses and perceptions which became more highly tuned and connected the inner man with the outer world. A kind of breathing in and out now took place, a sensing and perceiving of darkness and light, space and time, in the world and in man, was the experience of the Persian. Cultivation of crops now took place because a feeling for the seasons, and the course of the year. These seasonal experiences the Persian connected to morality and to the gods, and because of this, seasonal festivals began to take place.

They could look out to the world of the stars and see it in all its clarity and brilliance, he was at once with the stars he belonged to them; while at the same time the power to look outwards to the world through the vehicle of the Astral body gradually unfolded. The two aspects of 'seeing' coexisted together. Unlike

the ancient Indian the Persian found that the world of Cosmic space held the same interest as the physical world.

It is comprehensible then that the ancient Persian used neither temples, altars, nor statues in their worship, but performed their sacrifices on the tops of mountains from whence they could gaze out at both the outer world of nature and the world of the stars (spirit).

We can hear this ability to fuse sense impressions with spiritual understanding in the many hymns and sacrificial mantras of the Zend Avesta.

'We sacrifice to the undying, shining, swift-horsed Sun.

When the light of the sun waxes warmer, when the brightness of the sun waxes warmer, then stand up the heavenly Yazatas, by hundreds and thousands, they gather together its glory, they make its increase of the worlds of holiness, for the increase of the creatures of holiness, for the increase of the undying shining, swift horsed sun.'

A Mazdean Sacrifice to the Sun (Khorshed Yasht, 1-5)

In art we see a growing ability to balance spirit and mater. The winged body of a lion with the head of a man above the winded disc of the sun from the Palace of Darius at Susa.





The above Persian head shows a further descent towards the world of matter. The head is beautiful but the face lacks personality. It is blank and lifeless. There is as yet, no 'I'ness

By the time Egypto-Chaldean times, the human being was working further on his soul or his Astral body and what was once an outward experience that was only fleeting in the soul, could now be apprehended with feeling through the elaboration of the soul's first truly conscious member, the sentient soul. Man now could internalise his perceptions and sensations even further as the first germ of what would later be thinking. They could also bring their experiences of the spiritual worlds to intimate consciousness *within*. The Sentient or Feeling soul then did not experience merely light and darkness but something of the element of life that is present in sympathies and antipathies - colour.

From their Temples the Egyptians could observe the world of stars and find their relationship to the physical world (Geometry, Architecture, Mathematics)³. And it was also in a Temple or pyramid that the acolyte or

³ Rudolf Steiner Egyptian Myths and Legends

student of the mysteries would undergo an elaborate initiation rite called the "Temple Sleep" in order to see into the worlds of Spirit.

From this inward and outward observation there arose the veneration of a divine trinity, Osiris, Isis and Horus.

At this time a feeling arose for earthly gravity and death. The human being was becoming more closely tied to the earth, he felt himself more earthly than a being a spritual being. It is at this time that Rudolf Steiner tells us, that Anthroposophia entered into the human soul, to help to inspire this inward feeling for the gods. This was called Theosophy - wisdom of God.

It was now the case that the physical world became more prominent in the consciousness of the Egyptian than ever before. The world of Spirit was receding from view.



**Valley of the Queens, Egypt.
Dynasty XIX 1270 B.C.**

This scene shows the Goddess Maat kneeling with her wings extended in a pose of homage to the Goddess Hathor who is seated on a throne. Maat is the Goddess of Truth and Justice who personifies cosmic order and harmony.

Hathor was the Goddess of joy and motherhood and the embodiment of all that is best in women. Hathor was also considered the Goddess of music, dance, light-hearted pleasure and love. She was considered the protectress of pregnant women and midwives.

We see the shift in consciousness; the un-winged Goddess of pleasure love and all things earthly carries the sphere of the earth on her head and sits on a throne. The winged Goddess Maat the spirit of Truth and Justice pays homage at her feet in a perfect symbol of spirit bowing down to matter.

The statue of the scribe shows us also how more attention was payed to sentience or inner feeling than to physiological accuracy. The onlooker can almost sense the feelings and thoughts of the scribe.



After that, in Greco-Roman times the Intellectual soul was being elaborated and the Greek began to contemplate his relationship to nature and the world of

'space' around him, to think about his feelings and to remember them consecutively, in 'time'. Now, there lived only a shadowy experience of the spiritual world and that is why the Greek considered the spiritual world a realm of shades. The Greek saying 'better to be a beggar on earth than a king in the realm of shades' shows us the darkening of spiritual consciousness. The spiritual world was nothing more than a realm of shades.

At the same time the Ego began to receive all its impressions from the outside world and very little now could be gained from the old clairvoyant sight into worlds of spirit. A door was shut so to speak on the worlds of Spirit and man had to learn to rely instead on the power of his own thinking.

The Greek's relation to his physical body too, was more conscious, it appeared to him to be God-like. At the same time the Gods were pictured to be the highest ideal of the human and was depicted as human, even though they no longer walked the earth, they were above the earth and would only descend now and again into Temples. The elaboration of the Intellect was inspired by Anthroposophia and that is how Philosophy came into being.



In this head of Athena we can see how the human form takes equal place with the sentience or feeling of the subject.

This statue of a youth shows perfection of symmetry and knowledge of physiognomy. The Ancient Greek became preoccupied with the beauty of the human form. He sought to intellectualise it, to understand it.



The Romans who came later, became more enmeshed in the physical world via the intellect and this resulted in the idea of Roman Citizenship and Roman Laws as opposed to citizenship of the universe and the inner instinctive laws that came from a clairvoyant ability to discern good from evil. They were more interested in space and in conquering it.

Up until this time the arts served the gods, and the relationship of man to the earth and to the gods, but along with the evolution of consciousness came a loss of the consciousness of the spirit. More and more, as human consciousness began to forget the gods, so too art became more earthly and a mere representation of nature.



A time was coming when the consciousness would enter into its deepest realm the realm of the will, which connects the human being with the physical body. Art would lose its connection to the spirit altogether if, at this point, the Mystery of Golgotha and the sacrifice Christ had not taken place. The redemption of consciousness by Christ meant that conditions were created whereby the soul could rise up out from the ashes of dead intellect to a consciousness of the spirit again but it had to first still pass through the will.

Rudolf Steiner says that a consciousness in the will, leads to the consciousness of the whole soul. That is why he gives it the name 'Consciousness soul.' Rudolf Steiner called the fifth age, the age of the Consciousness soul, and it began with the Renaissance and our cultural epoch, the English-Germanic epoch.

During the Renaissance (or rebirth of Greece) the emphasis was on thinking and the realm of space. Thought lives in the Etheric body. The Etheric body connects us with spiritual time the outer Etheric light and darkness, (chiascurro), but in the conscious body, it connects us with a sense for earthly

space. For this reason thought which occurs in the Etheric body through memory, was also connected more and more to space and the idea of perspective arises.

But we must first perceive and sense in the physical body for thinking to arise, so the Astral body is also needed . On earth the Astral body gives us a sense for earthly time and is connected to spiritual space in which lives Astral colours, and that is how painting came to the fore at this time.

The Renaissance artist sought not only to represent nature but, because so many artists at this time were reincarnations of men who had experienced the mystery of Golgotha physically, that is Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci and Raphael, an understanding for the soul and spirit was mixed with this physical representation of space and there was a desire in Raphael, for instance, in his Sistine Madonna to transcend what is occurs in space, or natural, for what is spiritual or timeless.



Art, which once had been an expression of our connection with the gods and the world had been firstly inspired by Theosophy and then by Philosophy, now became the expression of our search for a new relationship to the spiritual world. In the future it must become more and more a manifestation of the soul's journey towards the spirit and initiation. The new initiation science which was given to humanity by Rudolf Steiner is inspired by the being of Anthroposophia. She helps us now to find a way again to the gods, to our will or sphere of morality, that is, to the impulses which we have brought from spiritual worlds - to the new Religion. She helps us to become conscious here and this is the sphere of true moral creation. This is the unification of thinking with will of Science with religion is the task of art in our times and in the future. To take thinking down into the realm of will, or the realm of the moral not only frees our will but also makes our thinking morally creative.

How can we do this with the help of Anthroposophia or Anthroposophy?

The New mysteries of initiation develop our thinking into the faculty of Imagination, our feeling into the faculty of Inspiration and our will into the faculty of Intuition.

Lets begin with Imagination.

What is imagination?

Imagination is really a spiritual power to see pictures that do not exist in nature. What is this power?

The Etheric body.

Rudolf Steiner tells us that we can think about our thoughts and perceptions of the world because we have an Etheric body a body of memory. Ordinary thoughts and perceptions have created a cloudiness in the Etheric body over time and this enabled us to be able to use it as mirror which reflects our thoughts to us. To achieve Imagination we have to start by quietening our ordinary thoughts and closing our eyes to nature. We meditate on pictures that do not belong to nature and this cleanses the Etheric body and creates a power, or faculty of vision, which is not muddied, but clear - an inner light. Then when

we open our eyes again and look out at nature this light of thought comes out of us and illuminates the thoughts of the gods. We perceive the thoughts of the gods.

This is imagination: a perception of the thoughts of the gods. An objective, selfless experience (Which actually means the gods are perceiving us!)

What are the thoughts of the gods? Light. 'Wisdom Lives in the Light.'

We observe spiritual light, the wisdom that weaves in the world. That is why, when we work with shading, light and dark, we strengthen the Etheric body. What happens now is that the more we do this, the more transparent is our Etheric light the more we see spiritual colour. What do I mean by this? We have to free our spiritual sight from the blood and nerves, from the brain and senses, otherwise all we are doing is experiencing our own blood through the nerves and senses - this is atavistic.

Spiritual colour now slowly manifests when we begin not only to perceive the Etheric world, but the Astral colours shining into the Etheric world, that is, not only thoughts, but the sympathies and antipathies of the gods. Now we are truly experiencing their Imaginations - Feelings. Imagination in this context has a relationship to the angels, the first hierarchy, whom we knew on the moon.

At this point our Etheric light (inner colour) is passing through our Astral organs (inner light) to illuminate the outer Etheric (light) and the outer Astral (colour). We turn ourselves inside out. This is what it means to become selfless!

Or objective.

The art of Costuming came from our memory of how our Astral body looked before we were born, the colours so on. Painting is a reflection of our inner astral being. Epic drama comes from our ability to let the thoughts of the upper gods, the light and the dark of the gods speak through us.

Anthroposophia is that being which inspires this process, and through it we come to know our thoughts and to differentiate them from the thoughts of the gods - as a higher form of Philosophy.

We see this clearly in the Foundation Stone meditation in the third panel.

What is Inspiration?

Experiencing the feelings of the gods, their imaginations.

When we observe these thoughts and imaginations of the gods and we allow these to enter into us, that is, we breathe them into our souls. That is how we experience colour as melody or pitch, tone as light and dark, movement as rhythm and form, shapes as tamber, the harmony as a chorus of pitches, tones.

What do I mean by this?

When we behold the spiritual world, in all its colour and light and dark and intensity and movement, we now experience how this beholding feels in us. This behold affects us, and if we are mindful of it we feel a counterpart in our souls, we feel a rhythm, a pulse which unites with the rhythm of our breathing and the pulse of our blood and we begin to hear also. When the thoughts and imaginations of the gods enter us, this music, we feel in our breath and pulse, changing depending on what we see, these colours and forms and in movement resound inwardly. We feel the sympathies and antipathies of the gods, this is a higher form of Compassion. To do this we have to be balanced in own feelings and learn to distinguish these from the inspirations that we are receiving. This now works on our Etheric body (inner body of colour) and signifies that what was astral has entered us as light and colour in our Etheric body. Now when we create through inspiration, the sound that we make is a linear, and has a one dimensional reality. When we listen to music which is really the colour that has passed through our souls, now we can discern the depths again, that exist in one single note. One note becomes an experience - we hear the harmonics and harmonies, and they evoke in us dark or light thoughts, feelings of overcoming our souls or entering down into the the depths. Through music and rhythm, we become a conduit, that is, a vehicle for the second hierarchy which weaves and connects the upper gods with the lower gods. When this Compassion with the gods is expressed in connection to the rhythmic system (Etheric) it is through either sculpture, which tries to form a physical likeness of the Etheric; music which is transformed colour, and lyric poetry which is like a weaving of the spiritual word into the physical word through the rhythm of breath and blood - light and darkness.

Anthroposophia guides us on this path as a higher form of Theosophy as we see in the Second panel of the Foundation Stone Meditation.

What is Intuition?

Now, in order to come to know and understand the gods who have had a hand in building our physical bodies, we have to unite our consciousness and compassion with the past. We do this by bringing the thoughts and the feelings of the gods, the lights colours, tones, music rhythm, into contact with our physical body and we do this by way of our blood which enters into our hearts.

The heart is the seat of the will. When the blood permeated by these experiences enters the heart, we enter the true realm of creativity. We recollect in the depths of our souls, the connection of man to the creative word, an understanding of the gesture of our own being, or how virtuous it is in comparison with the gesture of the lower beings, which are really the highest ones, that is the first hierarchy. This is Conscience, that is a consciousness of our true nature our gesture, our impulses which have been laid down in the physical body. Here we come to our karma, we learn to see how it has a bearing on the present and how we can become creative towards the future. Up to now we have fashioned ourselves into a work of art. The expression of this relationship of our consciousness of our metabolic system (Physical) is expressed through Architecture, which seeks to find the right physical forms for the soul, Drama which seeks to allow the lower gods to speak through us, and Eurhythmia which is the understanding of the word, the gestures of the Creative Gods. That is why Gesture and speech are so closely linked.

We can say, therefore that:

Vision of outer spiritual light/colour, Thoughts and Imaginations of the gods = Moral imaginations - True Thought - enlightened minds can think creatively.

Hearing of Thoughts and Feelings of the gods = Moral inspirations - Compassion - True Feeling - warm hearts.

Recollecting and understanding the gesture of the gods, the Creative Spirit Word = Intuition - Free Willing working creatively and consciously with the gods for the good - Moral intuition - is free willing.

Anthroposophia guides us on this path towards a future Christosophy, that is a understanding of Christ.

Since Indian times to our times as human consciousness has evolved from Religion, that is from the sphere of our knowledge of the gods to Cognition or science, the sphere of knowledge which helps us understand how we exist in the world. One is Revelation and the other is Nature. One is Magi and the other is Shepherd.

Rudolf Steiner says that only art can bridge cognition religion. Art lives in the middle realm of heart and lung and can therefore move from the self in the world - Science, to the God in the self - Religion.

Anthroposophia lives in this artistic realm. She is the daughter of the Divine Sophia, the Divine Creative being. She is the artist that carries the spiritual wisdom for creation into the human heart and helps us to become true creators and artists ourselves through the Creative Word of Christ.

Rudolf Steiner tells us that the gods did not create man in vain. He exists on earth in order that something which can be achieved only by man may be used by the gods for further earth creation, man is on earth, because the gods need him. He is on earth so that he can by his own efforts finish the work of the gods, to finish nature from within outwards.

When we fashion ourselves inwardly morally, like a work of art, what we create outside of us, even if only through our breathing, is artistic and enduring.

That is how art can become a true moral force, when it is permeated through and through with Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition.

Thank you and goodnight.

This lecture was written after long years of work primarily with two books, both compilations of lectures by Rudolf Steiner:

Art as seen in the light of Mystery Wisdom

The Arts and their Mission