

NEWSLETTER

For The Southeastern Pennsylvania Branch of
The Anthroposophical Society



August
Summer
2026

The Archangel Gabriel

School of Berneditto Antelami
Active 1177 to 1233 Parma, Italy

Calendar Summer/Fall 2026

Aug 2	10:30 am	Stonehaven Farm	<i>Spirit Lineage of Lazarus/John – The First Sun Initiate:</i> a study and conversation by the Corps de Michael. Info: thecorpsdemichael@yahoo.com
Aug 7	7:15 – 8:30 pm	Rose Hall	<i>Deepening our Relationship to the Christ Impulse in our Time: a talk by Simon Kuttner, AAP faculty.</i> This is a public lecture provided to our community in gratitude to Kimberton for hosting AAP seminars.
Aug 28 Aug 29	6:30 – 9p 9a – 5p	Rose Hall	<i>Laurie Portocarrero's Workshop on The Soul's Probation (now Trial of the Soul):</i> Two days of plays
Sept 4 Sept 5 Sept 6	7:30 p 3-3:45p 12:30p	CC Devon Rose Hall CC Devon	<i>Thornton Wilder one act plays:</i> Hugh Thornton and the Christian Community acting ensemble presents: "Nascuntur Poetae", "Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came" and "The Angel the Troubled the Water".
Sept 20	3 pm	Rose Hall	<i>Trusted Friends Group:</i> Continuing the work.
Oct 1	7:30 pm	Rose Hall	<i>Karma Drama – Creative Approaches to Reincarnation and Karma Research:</i> a talk by Mike Chase, including a book launch for his book "Karma Drama: Inspired by Spiritual Science".
Oct 2/3	7 – 9 pm 9a – 7:30	Beaver Farm	<i>Karma Drama Workshop:</i> presented by Mike Chase. An immersive workshop where movement, mask work and ritual meet to explore the deeper patterns shaping your life story.
Oct 9/11		Spring Valley, NY	<i>Anthroposophy & America Now: Seeding the Future:</i> 2026 ASA Annual General Meeting Featuring Thomas O'Keefe, Cliff Venho and Megan Durney
Oct 10	9a – 5p	Mosaic Place Glenmoore PA	<i>The Inner Critic, Clowning and Presence:</i> a workshop with Cornia Schad and Angie Foster
Nov 21	9 a – 4 p	Rose Hall Kimberton Hills	<i>Meeting each other through the Karma Exercises:</i> a Mid-Atlantic gathering of Anthroposophical Society members. More info to come.

Laurie Portocarrero will offer a workshop on Rudolf Steiner's second mystery drama, *Trial of the Soul* (a.k.a. *The Soul's Probation*)

When:

Friday, August 28th, 6:30-9:00 pm

Saturday, August 29th, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm

Where:

Rose Hall at Camphill Village Kimberton Hills, 1601 Pughtown Rd Kimberton (enter "Phoenixville" instead for GPS apps)

[Coming from afar and needing a place to stay overnight? Contact Esther Martin at CV Kimberton Hills: 4esthermartin@gmail.com]

Who:

Everyone is welcome, bringing any level of knowledge, ability, or experience

What:

Using all the tools of the dramatic arts - voice, movement, gesture, space, relationship - we **will move and read our way aloud** through the entire second drama.

NOTE: **If you have a copy of the play, PLEASE BRING IT WITH YOU!**

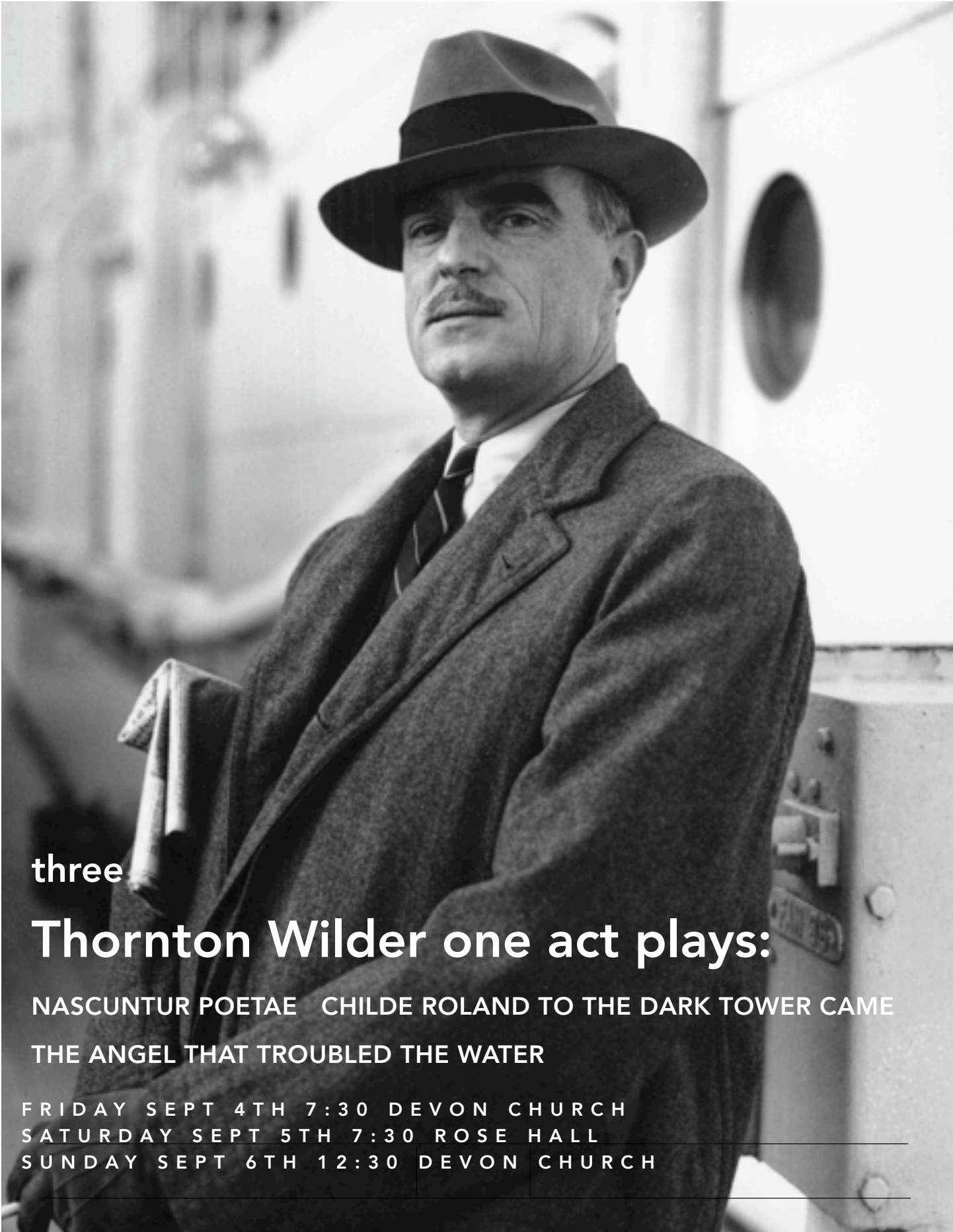
Why:

Rudolf Steiner said that all of Anthroposophy is in these dramas. Living into their imaginations can give us **inspiration, understanding, and strength** for walking our own karmic paths. ***Also, this workshop is enlivening and fun! JOIN US!***

How:

At the door or payment online: in order **to be able to support the financial need of this gifted artist** we request: Sliding Scale \$75 to \$125 per person (Understanding, per usual, that no one is turned away for a contribution of less, if necessary.) **Bring your own snacks for Saturday; LUNCH IS POTLUCK** and will be served in Rose Hall. Look forward to sharing our culinary creations! Wear comfortable clothing and shoes for moving in.

SPECIAL REQUEST: If you cannot attend but can **loan your copy of the play**, please contact Sherry Wildfeuer 610-935-0302; email: slwildfeuer@gmail.com; - or leave it on the windowsill of her entry hall in Garden Cottage at CVKH with your NAME clearly printed inside. This will save HUGE printing costs which we can't afford! ***Thank you!***]



three

Thornton Wilder one act plays:

NASCUNTUR POETAE CHILDE ROLAND TO THE DARK TOWER CAME
THE ANGEL THAT TROUBLED THE WATER

FRIDAY SEPT 4TH 7:30 DEVON CHURCH

SATURDAY SEPT 5TH 7:30 ROSE HALL

SUNDAY SEPT 6TH 12:30 DEVON CHURCH

The Inner Critic, Clowning, and Presence



How can we liberate ourselves from the “shoulds” and “should nots” that constrain our innate capacity to be authentic, playful and creative, and re-discover our natural state of presence and awareness?

A Workshop with Corina Schad and Angie Foster

Clowning is a state of playfulness that allows us to experience a child-like, naïve, and vulnerable state of being. What is important is not “getting it right”, but rather finding the magic of being surprised when all else falls away. Together we will explore vulnerability, authenticity, connection, and presence through clowning, integrative teaching, improvisation, and awareness exercises. * Please wear clothes that allow you to move.*

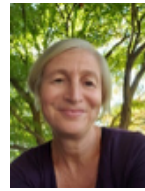
Saturday, October 10th, 2026 ~ 9 am – 5 pm

**At Mosaic Place – 41 St Andrews Ln,
Glenmoore, PA 19343**

Cost: \$150 [includes lunch and snacks]

For sign up and question, please contact Corina Schad at corinaschd@gmail.com or Angie Foster at 4angiefoster@gmail.com

Corina Schad is a certified



Awakening to Presence
Coach and licensed
bodyworker with a private
practice, “Presence in Mind
and Body” in Glenmoore
and Downingtown, and has
lead workshops in the area
for many years.

www.presenceinmindandbody.com

Angie Foster is a

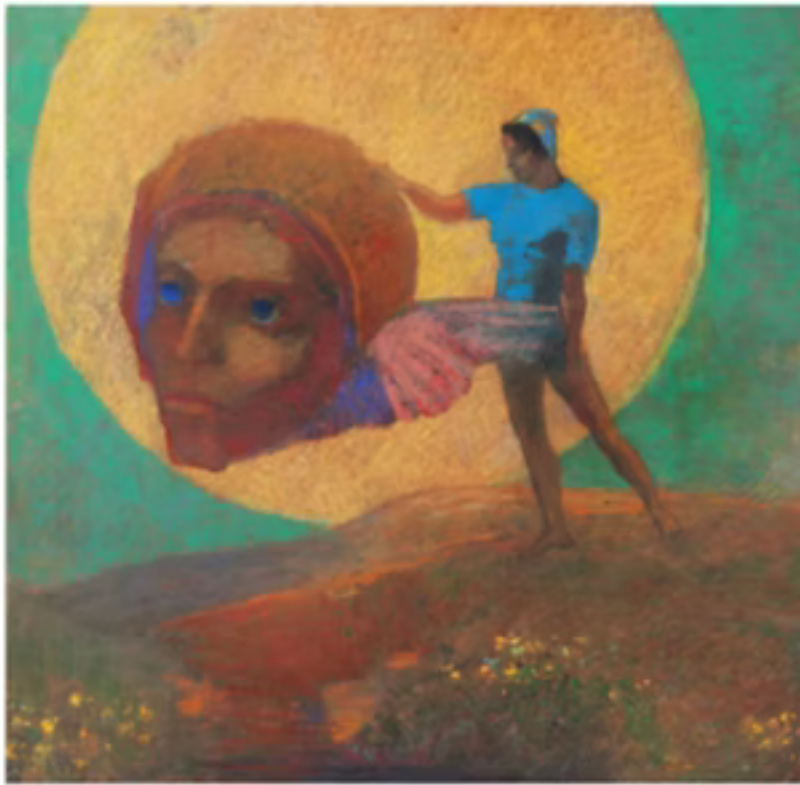


clowning facilitator with
Nose to Nose, an actress,
director, and educator. She
has facilitated clowning
workshops for 20 years in
the Philadelphia area,
California and Switzerland.

She was on Broadway
twice, off-Broadway and in
regional theater. She
directed plays at Kimberton
Waldorf School for 28
years.

KARMA DRAMA

karma and past life research methods



Inspired by Spiritual Science
Mike Chase

October 1: Talk on Karma in Rose Hall at 3 pm

October 2/3: Karma Drama Workshop at Beaver Farm (10/2 7-9 pm & 10/3 9am – 7:30pm)

Karma Drama exercise:

By employing embodiment, action methods, masks, artwork and enactments to immerse the researcher in a past-life experience, Karma Drama invites the researcher to engage in an embodied past-life experience. This process can be undertaken imaginatively without these elements, but they provide the necessary preparation to get started. The outcomes of these exercises can be processed through a component called Kamaloka Drama.

SAVE THE
DATE!
**Saturday
November 21
2026
Kimberton, PA**

**Who am I?
Who are you?**

Meeting each other through the Karma Exercises:

Is the drama of our personal karma really separate from the karma of the Anthroposophical Society? And does the Anthroposophical Society have an important contribution to make in these troubled times?

Rudolf Steiner gave exercises for us to practice to educate ourselves and our angels to come into harmony with the people we meet in life (and their angels) -- and not only the ones we get along with naturally! Are we practicing? What are we learning?

Come to the Mid-Atlantic Gathering of Anthroposophical Society members on Saturday, November 21, 2026 in Kimberton, PA to immerse yourself in a day of practical exercises; to meet and be supported by your fellow members and learn about their lives; to glean insights from the experiences of other Branches within a day's drive from where you live; and to breathe our life into the life of the Society with which Rudolf Steiner joined his destiny.

More will come soon...



Painting: Michael, by Ninetta Sombart

Dear Friends of the SEPA Branch,

Would you like to contribute to the cultural life of the Branch?

Here's how: (see below)

With gratitude,

Rick Ruffin (Secretary) and John Mugge (New Branch Treasurer)
Branch Initiative Group members

Supporters of the Newsletter and Anthroposophy in our area frequently make their donations to the Branch this time of year. Donations ranged from \$25 - \$500 last year; \$200 seemed to be most common. Every donation is appreciated. Funds are used to support anthroposophical initiatives, including the bringing of performances, lectures and other events to the community. Generous donations at the door cover many, but not all, costs.

There are two easy ways to donate to the Branch:

1. Via PayPal's Giving Fund.

Click either link below:

<https://www.paypal.com/US/fundraiser/charity/1632250>

sepabbranchasa.org

Then, click on the blue "Donate" button to the right of and above the Branch's name (not on the "Start a fundraiser" button that is farther down on the page).

Choose (or better yet!) enter the amount of your donation.

Please be sure to click the box: "Share my name and email with this charity" so that we can thank you!

Follow remaining instructions to pay from your bank account or credit card.

Why use PayPal's Giving Fund? Though it can take over a month for the money to arrive in the Branch's account, this path reduces transaction fees (PayPal charges no fee for this) and environmental impact, while saving you the cost of a stamp.

2. Send a check payable to "SE PA Branch AS" to:

SEPA Branch AS
PO Box 401
Kimberton, PA 19442

Want a more challenging (but more rewarding 😊) giving experience? If you have your own Paypal account, and link it to your credit card, you might be able, as I was, to use your credit card "points" to make the gift, instead of actually paying out of pocket.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to contact me!

John Mugge, Treasurer

Email: sepabrandh@gmail.com

NEW VIEW MAGAZINE:

Paper subscriptions, of *New View* magazine can be purchased [here](#).

Digital downloads can be purchased [here](#).

MAGAZINE INFORMATION:

(To read more about *New View*** and what inspires it click [here](#)).

CONTENT: You can also see the content and the editorial of each previous issue of the magazine [here](#).

(We are gradually adding more back issues).

COVERS: You can view a [picture gallery](#) of the front cover artwork of the magazine.

Gift Subscriptions –

We think *New View* is a good and important read – why not buy a friend or relative a [Gift Subscription](#)? This is a good way to introduce new readers to the magazine and having more subscribers helps keep it going.

Donations –

New View is a small initiative with a big heart which wishes to continue to communicate with the wider world about the spiritual life. The *New View* magazine initiative has very much needed [donations](#) to keep going these last few years, as we gradually build up the circulation to a point where we can break even financially. A number of people have given their support in this way, without which we would not have been able to continue. If you are able to make a donation, great or small, this would be very much appreciated. You can do this on our [subscriptions page](#).

Plan for the Future of Your Books

(a message from the Steiner Online Library rsarchive.org)

Are you downsizing and having difficulty finding a home for your library? We accept both German and English anthroposophical books for our resource library and recirculate duplicates through our online bookstore. By donating and/or purchasing books from us, you are not only helping to preserve these valuable resources, but you help to fund our work on the Rudolf Steiner Archive. Together, we can ensure these important works reach a broader audience.

I. Donate Books

When you give books to our nonprofit, Steiner Online Library, you will receive a donation receipt for tax purposes *and* at the same time help us to fund the Rudolf Steiner Archive.

Mail to: Steiner Online Library
PO Box 42
Interlochen, MI 49643-0042 USA

II. Buy Used Books

Purchase books from us to prevent these treasures from ending up in a large bookstore warehouse while supporting our work. Give them a new home by adding them to your personal collection. **Thank you for your support!**

The Destinies of Individuals and of Nations

Schmidt Number: S-3041

On-line since: 31st May, 2017

Lecture 10

Problems on Spiritual Path — National Characteristics in Europe Molded by Folk Spirits

*Berlin,
March 16, 1915*

Dear friends, once again let us first of all remember those who are out there at the front, in the great arena of present-day events:

Spirits of your souls, guardian guides,
On your wings let there be borne
The prayer of love from our souls
To those whom you guard here on earth.
Thus, united with your might,
A ray of help our prayer shall be
For the souls it seeks out there in love.

And for those who because of those events have already gone through the gate of death:

Spirits of your souls, guardian guides,
On your wings let there be borne
The prayer of love from our souls
To those whom you guard here on earth.
Thus, united with your might,
A ray of help our prayer shall be
For the souls it seeks out there in love.

May the spirit we are seeking as we work towards spiritual knowledge, the spirit who has gone through the Mystery of Golgotha for the good of the earth, for the freedom and progress of man, be with you and the hard duties you have to perform.

Dear friends, the points we shall consider today will once again be aphoristic. They may serve to round off one or another of the things I have spoken of before. The first point I want to refer to is the way we find the facts, the real nature, of the spiritual worlds when we ascend to those spiritual worlds and have taken the first steps Within them. Let me start by considering the problems we meet in our efforts to attain to the spiritual worlds. They are indeed considerable, and although it is certain that the path we take when we meditate, with all the work we do in the inner soul, must lead to the spiritual world — certain as this may be — it is also very easy to fail to recognize the particular kind of soul experience that takes the soul up into the spiritual worlds.

First of all, there is the problem that we are in the habit of judging everything our soul comes upon on the basis of experiences we have gained in the world accessible to the outer senses. We could say that we really know nothing but what we have made our own out of the sense-perceptible world. Now we enter the spiritual world and find that everything is entirely different from the sense-perceptible world. Everything being different, the main problem is to extend the range of our attention to the things we are supposed to be seeing. The situation is that the whole of the spiritual world might lie spread out before us but we would see nothing. The reason is that whilst we are awake and in our earth bodies, we are not in a position to withdraw our spiritual organs from this earth body, to draw them away from their union with the earth body.

Let me use a comparison I have used on a number of occasions to present an image of the soul element separating from the body. I have often said that it is just as impossible to recognize the immortal part of man from what he is here in ordinary life as it is to recognize the properties of hydrogen and oxygen by looking at water. Hydrogen is present in water, forming a compound with oxygen, the way our immortal part is present in the body. It will reveal nothing of its qualities until it is separated out of the water. It hides all those qualities. In the same way the soul hides its qualities when it is united with the body.

Our ordinary life between birth and death trains us to relate to the sense-perceptible world in such a way that whilst we are awake the organs of the mind and spirit are always tied up with the body in the same way as hydrogen is tied up with oxygen in water. The soul is therefore unable to depart from the body during the time between birth and death, except for the time between going to sleep and waking up again when it is in the spiritual worlds. During the time between going to sleep and waking up the soul really enters the spiritual worlds. It is there in those worlds. It gains new strength for the daily round out of the spiritual worlds. It retains the habit, however, of perceiving lily with the physical organs, and the moment it reaches the point where it has gained the strength that would enable it to achieve perception within the spiritual sphere it wakes up. The soul is joined to the body through the powers within it; because of its ability to feel desire the soul is connected with the body. The moment its powers have been recharged and it is again able to be active it desires to return to the body as long as the body is still capable of life. In the first place it will therefore be necessary for us gradually to get our bearings after death.

In one of my public lectures, I referred to the ability to remember as the ultimate soul activity [**Note 53**] Let us compare this with what happens when man learns to look into the spiritual world. It is something which to some extent does make us free of the bodily element. Modern science, as it continues to develop, will actually show that looking back to an earlier experience is a process occurring in mind and spirit. This process is however given enormous assistance, assistance provided by the body.

It happens like this. When our soul dwells in the body, anything we entrust to our power of memory has the nature of an image to begin with; it is very similar to what we call imaginative perception. In ordinary life, however, we proceed to imprint everything that is to be memory into the bodily element. When we have an experience, we first of all encounter the experience with our senses; we form an image of it. This image first of all imprints itself in the body; an imprint is left in the body, an imprint we could compare with the imprint left by a seal. It is important to understand that such an imprint is left. Conventional science takes rather a naive view of this. According to some authors, one idea is recorded in one part of the brain, another idea in another, and so on. That is not how it happens. The imprint a memory leaves in our physical body is really very dissimilar to what may later come up as a memory. To the clairvoyant eye it is a kind of image taking the form of the human head and a bit more, continuing on into the rest of the human being. Irrespective of the nature of the experience, the imprint will be of that kind; such an imprint is made into the ether body. If we were able to take this imprint out we would indeed have a thin, shadowy specter of the head and its continuation. Another memory would also take the form of a shadow image of a head and its continuation. These images are certainly quite different from what we experience as a memory. There is such a shadowy specter within us for every single memory we have. They all merge into each other, they interpenetrate. What remains would from the outside appear as such a shadow picture and all one could say would be that one of them looks like this, another like that.

If memory is to arise the soul of man must first of all focus on the imprint left in the body and decipher it the way we decipher the peculiar symbols on a page when we are reading — symbols entirely different from what the soul experiences after reading them. The soul has to apply a subconscious reading process in order to convert those imprints into the actual memory we experience. Let us assume you are today recalling an event you experienced in your eighth year. The actual process consists in something making you focus your soul on this little head with its continuation that was imprinted at the time; your soul will now decipher it. As to the experience, as little remains of it in the body as the book you have read retains of what you experienced in the reading. When you read the book again you need to recreate the whole thing in your soul. All this happens without our noticing it. But someone who has not learned to read will be unable to tell from the symbols what they represent. The same applies to the memory process; it is an inner reading process. There is much that goes on below the threshold of consciousness in the human soul and is never considered by man. When we give ourselves up to memory, an infinitely complex process takes place in the human being. All the time, etheric seal

imprints rise up from the dim twilight where all else in life is darkness and the inner process man experiences as memory consists in these imprints arising and being deciphered.

I am not telling you something I have thought up but a genuine fact discovered through occult investigation.

When we begin to strengthen the inner powers of the soul through meditation and concentration the process I have already mentioned will come about. The process which develops is not the one we have to call memory. We develop inner powers but an imprint also forms and is left upon the ether that is alive and present everywhere in the world outside us, it is objectively imprinted into the world. As we meditate, as we concentrate, we leave an imprint in the objective cosmic process. Basically, the same thing happens when we devote our studies to what spiritual science has to give, for spiritual science has to do with supersensible, nonphysical, things. When we really take hold of the thoughts coming to us from spiritual science we are already coming away from ourselves to such an extent that our mental effort has us working with the cosmic ether: when we think ordinary thoughts we merely imprint them within ourselves.

You realize, of course, that it is important for anyone wishing to make progress in soul development to put enormous emphasis on what we must call repetition of the same thought process. If we concentrate just once on some thought or other, it will merely leave a fleeting impression within the world ether. If however, we nurture the same thought in our soul day after day, over and over again, the impression will also be made over and over again.

Here we must ask ourselves the following question. If we repeatedly make an impression in the world ether, repeating a meditation over and over again, what actually happens? Where is the impression made?

To answer this question, something else has to be considered first. If someone is genuinely looking for the way to the spiritual world and begins to be clairvoyant, he will find that his clairvoyant experiences take a very strange form. He will be very much aware that what he finds there is something which is experienced but, fundamentally speaking, there is something lacking in those experiences. I am presupposing that the person has reached the point where he has clairvoyant experiences. Afterwards, when we are no longer in those clairvoyant experiences but remember those clairvoyant experiences, we say to ourselves: It may be that I have nothing whatsoever to do with all those things. The impression is that the things experienced in clairvoyance are quite separate from us. Above all, it is impossible to find out how far we ourselves have anything to do with those experiences. That is the important point. Because of this it is easy to consider such experiences mere dreams. We only realize that we have something to do with it when we come to see that our own self has been confronting us there in another form. We come to realize that what we have experienced there is really very similar to our personal experiences and we could not have experienced what we did in clairvoyance if we did not exist.

To make it even clearer let me put it like this. Let us assume you have a dream which brings back something you experienced when very young. When you wake from the dream you only realize that those were dream experiences because among the mass of images you encountered there was also that childhood experience. Then you knew that the dream must have something to do with you. That is how it is with our first clairvoyant experiences. You gradually come to realize that really it is someone else who is dreaming there and yet at the same time it is also you yourself. We come to recognize ourselves within the mass of clairvoyant experiences.

It is indeed an experience of some significance to learn that we have been within a great body of experiences yet it was we ourselves who were within it. One must first of all discover oneself within those clairvoyant experiences. We then come to realize that we are not only inside our bodies but also in the world outside. It is an experience of tremendous significance which shows us that we have something which the spirits of the higher hierarchies hold and support, nurture and cherish. Here I am, we say to ourselves, in my body. I inhabit the enveloping form of the body and I am at the same time also in the spiritual world, held and supported by the spirits of the higher hierarchies. We must not allow ourselves to be distracted by the law which says that a particular entity cannot be in two places at one and the same time, for laws of this kind no longer apply in the spiritual world. I am inside me and at the same time I am also someone Who lets experiences arise within him in the spiritual world. We find ourselves held secure within the higher hierarchies. We know we have this kind of dual nature and we gradually come to realize that what we are in essence in the spirit does not really lie within the sense-perceptible world at all. It lies in the spiritual world and what exists in the sense-perceptible world is a shadow cast from the spiritual world. We slip into a spiritual 'body' existence and with this are outside ourselves, looking at ourselves from outside. Anyone not prepared to make himself familiar with such apparent contradictions will never arrive at concepts that can make the spiritual world explicable to him. The important thing is that in as far as we are part of the world of the senses we discover that we are beyond ourselves.

We have now reached the point where we can consider the question as to where our meditations are inscribed. Our ordinary memories are imprinted in ourselves. A seal imprint is always made which represents the upper part of the human being, the head and a few appendages. When we meditate or consider in our mind the ideas presented in spiritual science, we also produce imprints but these go to the other one I have just described, the one who is another self. These ideas go to the other one. We may experience something in Berlin or in Nuremberg; the imprint of this will be made in the same body. Everything we experience in the spirit, however, goes to the one who is another self. Everything is imprinted there. If our attitude is truly in accord with what is thought or felt or experienced in spiritual science, we are working on the supersensible human being whom we also are, just as we work on the physical human being we are when facing everyday experiences.

You will now understand that it needs great inner strength to work on the supersensible human being. It clearly is easier to recall things that had an external effect on us through their color, sound and so on, because we are in that case supported by the body. When a color makes

an impression on us, this triggers a physical process within us. When it is our aim to enter into a purely spiritual idea we have to do without all those physical props; inner effort has to be made in the soul and the soul must gain greater and greater powers, growing so strong in itself that it really can make an impression on the cosmic ether outside.

If we look for union in this way with the human being, we really are, the human being who is always there, we establish a relationship with our individual human identity, with what we really are as human beings. And what we really are as human beings, this lives among the forms of being that are the higher hierarchies the way our body lives among sense-perceptible processes in nature. We are part of earthly existence and in the same way we also partake of existence in the spirit, within all that takes place in the world of the higher hierarchies.

There is something else I want to mention. Being thus related to the spiritual world, we are related to many different spirits in the higher hierarchies. Among them are the spirits we only relate to as human individuals — they are not destined to have any kind of cosmic function. On the other hand, we also belong to spirits that do have a cosmic function. We all belong to a folk spirit for instance. In the processes that belong entirely to the world of the senses we are connected with sense-perceptible nature. Reaching upwards we are connected with all those spirits which in a supersensible way reach down into the world of the physical senses. Here, we relate to things outside us and have thoughts and ideas about them. In the same way the different spirits in the higher hierarchies develop thoughts and ideas on the basis of the fact that we are objects to them. We are objects to the spirits in the higher hierarchies; we are the realm they have thoughts about. These thoughts are more will-like by nature.

The spiritual entities are different in kind because of the way the hierarchies relate to us. An important distinction will clearly emerge if we note how the evolution of such spirits in the higher hierarchies progresses, for instance in the case of the folk spirits. We also progress between birth and death here on earth, for our ego grows more and more mature, gaining experiences about the world. A young Person cannot have learned as much as someone who is older. The same applies to the spirits of the higher hierarchies, except that their evolution proceeds somewhat differently from our own.

We are referring to a spirit belonging to the higher hierarchies when we speak of the Italian folk spirit. This Italian folk spirit goes through its evolution and we are actually able to pinpoint a particular time when this folk spirit passed a major stage in evolution. We know the relationship between the Italian folk spirit and individual Italians to be such that the Italian folk spirit acts through the sentient soul of individual Italians. The way this happens is that to begin with the folk spirit is, as it were, only acting on the soul element. It is only later, in the course of its further development, that the folk spirit, using its will, intervenes more and more in the way the soul comes to expression through the element of the physical body. If you consider Italian history you come to a very important year, around 1530. That is the year when the Italian folk spirit grew so powerful that it was then able to begin to work also on the physical body. From that time it started to develop very specific national characteristics. In occult terms this means

that the folk spirit developed a much more powerful will; it began to engrave itself also into the physical element, developing national characteristics even at the physical level. Whilst our ego is becoming more and more independent of the body the folk spirit is evolving in the opposite direction. Having influenced the soul element for a time it is now beginning to influence the physical.

We find the same thing happened with the French folk spirit around the year 1600, and about 1650 for the English folk spirit. Before, the folk spirit had more or less only taken hold of the soul element but from then on it also intervened in the physical. It will grew more powerful and the soul was less able to put up resistance against being given a configuration that had national characteristics. It was therefore at this time that national characteristics began to emerge more clearly. This happened because the folk spirit descended. It is higher up when it acts more on the soul sphere; it descends to act more on the physical aspect. The folk spirit of the Italian peninsula therefore descended around the year 1530. In France this happened at the beginning of the 17th century and in England in the middle of the 17th century. Shakespeare wrote his works before the folk spirit had passed this stage. This is what is so significant. It is the reason for the strange rupture which occurred in the way the English regard Shakespeare, with the result that Shakespeare is actually more appreciated in Germany than in England. We are speaking of the way the folk spirit descends more and more into individual human beings.

If we now come to consider the evolution of the German folk spirit, we can see something similar happening during the period between about 1750 and 1850. Yet oddly enough we have to say that in this case the folk spirit descended but then ascended again. This is what is so significant. We are able to observe a process in which the folk spirits of Western European peoples descended and took hold of those peoples. In the case of the German people, we can also observe the folk spirit descending around the middle of the 18th century, but we then find it ascending again around the middle of the 19th century. The situation is therefore quite a different one. A beginning was made to develop the German character into an eminently national one, but it was only done for a while. When some of this had been done the folk spirit ascended again, once again to act only on the soul element.

German cultural life had its flowering period at the time when the folk spirit had descended to the lowest level. The folk spirit will of course always remain with these people, but it is now again in spiritual heights. That is the peculiar thing about the German folk spiny It did descend at an earlier time but it then stopped before the people became too strongly national. The Western European peoples have become very much crystallized in their national characteristics, but in the case of the German people this cannot happen because of the peculiar nature of the German folk spirit. The result is that German attitudes will always have to remain more universal than those of other peoples. These things relate to profound realities in the spiritual world. If we had been looking for the German folk spirit in Goethe's time, we would have found it at about the same level as the English, French or Italian folk spirit. If we want to look for it today, we have to go higher up. There will be times when it descends again and others when it

ascends again. It is this to-and-fro movement which is so characteristic of the German folk spirit.

The Russian folk spirit does not descend at all to achieve full crystallization of the people. It always remains something like a cloud hovering above the national character. We shall always have to look for it up above, and the Russian people will only enter into spiritual development when they make the effort to combine the fruits of the work done in the West of Europe with their own essential nature. They must develop their culture in conjunction with the West for they will never develop a culture out of their own resources.

All this has to be understood in this way. The flexibility in German attitudes is due to the fact that the German has not united with his folk spirit the way this has happened in the West of Europe. This is also why it is so tremendously difficult to understand the Germans. They can only be understood if we are able to admit that it is possible to have a people whose folk spirit only comes in sporadically to intervene in their evolution. This is one of the most difficult chapters in historical development and you should not despair if it seems to be full of contradictions. We are, however, living in an age when we must try and really understand the origins of the enmity which shows itself so clearly now during these fateful days within Europe. With anything we experience, if you look more closely, you'll always find that there is something coming in which might indeed be called incomprehensible and only becomes clear when we look more closely. Yes, of course, the Germans will be aware that fundamentally there is a tremendous hatred felt towards them. Looking at it more closely we shall find that this hatred is directed towards what in fact are the best qualities of the Germans. No particular hatred is directed towards their less desirable qualities.

Anyone wishing to penetrate these mysteries will have to consider these things more in their context. You might say that it is a case of German chauvinism if someone says such things now in Germany. Why should a German speak with appreciation and in praise of the German character? Yet if that were the case, these lectures would not be given and I would not speak in this way about the German people. It really does not need German chauvinism to characterize the nature of the German people in such a way that it is evident that it differs from the nature of other European peoples, and not to its disadvantage. To demonstrate this let me read to you a characterization of the nature of the German people given in a letter Ernest Renan wrote to David Friedrich Strauss.

It was around 1843, when I was at the St Sulpice Seminary, that I started to learn something about Germany through the works of Goethe and Herder. I felt I was entering a temple, and from that moment onwards everything I had formerly considered magnificent and worthy of the deity appeared merely as tired and faded paper flowers... Germany has the most perfect legal title, because of a historical role of the utmost significance, a soul, I would say, a literature, men of genius, a unique view of things divine and human. Germany produced the most important revolution in recent times, the Reformation; what is more, over the last century one of the most marvelous developments of intellectual and spiritual life known in history has occurred in

Germany, a development which — if I dare put it like this — has taken the human mind and spirit one step further in depth and breadth. People who have not been touched by this new development are to those who have gone through it as someone who only knows elementary arithmetic is in relation to someone well versed in differential calculus. [[Note 54](#)]

So that is what Ernest Renan wrote to David Friedrich Strauss in 1870. I am not going to go into the details of their correspondence, but let me just mention that Renan also wrote that there were only two alternatives. The first would be to take away French territory-The outcome would be revenge unto death against all that is German and alliance with all kinds of confederates. The other alternative would be to leave France untouched, and then the Peace Party would gain the upper hand and say: 'We have been extremely foolish, we want to make good where we have gone wrong, and the good of mankind will be preserved.'

I mention this in order to show you that when Renan wrote the letter, part of which I have just read to you, his mood was not exactly a conciliatory one with regard to the German character which had evolved in the course of human evolution. On the other hand, he was prepared to represent the qualities mankind had gained through the German character in relation to everything else as being like higher mathematics in comparison to elementary arithmetic. There is no question, then, of being a chauvinist; one merely has to repeat what Renan wrote in 1870.

In thus speaking of man's relationship to the higher worlds, we must realize that in concrete terms, in reality, man is able to have these relations because he bears this other one within him, because this other one is alive in him who has the same relationship to the higher world of the spirit as we have to the sense-perceptible world here in our body•

The supersensible, intangible part of us gives us a certain relationship to all that is supersensible. And it is a truly living development we undergo — nothing theoretical — when our heart and mind enter into the experience I have described as the process of meditation. The soul is really inscribing something into the spiritual worlds. It inscribes it into what fundamentally speaking is we ourselves. If we really think about this, the idea of 'being within the living stream of spiritual science' links up with the idea of 'human responsibility'. This idea of 'human responsibility' really must arise in the soul of anyone pursuing spiritual science. We know that mankind is going through things in the course of historical development, that it undergoes change. Clairvoyance has been gradually disappearing and today we know that it will be necessary to regain the connection with the spiritual world that existed in the past. and that spiritual science is the path by which it can be regained. In the past, man's natural relationship to his body was such that part of him was always within the spiritual worlds. Today he is so much more closely bound up with his body that he must see to it that he gains understanding of the spiritual world independent of his body. We may say that man had a hereditary trait that gradually grew weaker and weaker and disappeared altogether in the present age. It is in our time, therefore, that work has to start that will take the soul up into the spiritual world.

Can you envisage the way the German folk spirit is again and again coming down to the German peoples and then going up again into the higher world? Why does it do this with just one particular people? It is because it is intended to evoke in this particular culture the powers that will lead to spiritual science in the truest sense of the word. When the folk spirit descends it firmly establishes the folk characteristics. When it recedes again, leaving the national characteristics in a state of fluidity, the people will have to go through that upsurge and regression of the folk spirit again and again in their own bodies, and they will learn how all 'beingness' is a state of flux between the sense-perceptible and the supersensible world.

You will recall my saying a week ago that the whole history of literature for recent decades will have to be rewritten. This is because certain individuals with spiritual insight have been forgotten, though they are of much greater significance than literary figures known to us today. That relates to the period when the folk spirit was once again ascending. It will now be necessary for us to unite ourselves in the greatest possible degree with spiritual science so that we may find the folk spirit in its ascent. In other words, Germans must come to understand their essential nature not just in the physical world but also in the supersensible world. It is to be found in both these worlds. This is another reason why I have said — even in public lectures — that there is a certain inner relationship between the culture of the German spirit and the striving for spiritual science. Fichte [[Note 55](#)] could only develop his views at a time when the folk spirit had descended. Because of this his philosophy can only be imperfectly understood and must indeed be misunderstood. All that busy activity in concepts and ideas where egoic nature had entered the way it had in Fichte's philosophy was possible only at a time when the folk spirit had descended to a lower level. Today we have to look for it at a higher level and we can only find it with the aid of spiritual science. This is due to the relationship of the folk spirit to the German people. It is entirely part of the nature of German cultural development that there is a profound relationship between German cultural life and the path which leads to spiritual science. It is much to be hoped that these things will gradually come to be understood more and more clearly.

It really has to be said that if you consider the events of the present time, the enormous sacrifices that have to be made, all the difficulties people have to live through because of present events, it should be obvious that what is coming to expression here is something far, far beyond anything we are able to comprehend by taking an external view. And we might paraphrase the words written by St Paul: 'And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain and your faith is also vain.' [[Note 56](#)] Paul found affirmation for what he had to give to the world in the reality of the Resurrection. His words have been much misunderstood. With regard to what is happening now, we have to say: 'These deaths give expression to the belief, to the firm avowal, that man relates to more than merely the things existing in the world accessible to the senses.' It is not only that religious feeling is growing more profound, but it is possible to see that in these very times we live in souls are forcefully protesting against the whole of materialism, and they do this by the way in which they enter into death. We have to say that whatever else these events represent they also contribute to the overcoming of materialistic ways of thinking and the

materialistic way of life which has gradually evolved. Out of a profound awareness of current developments, the human soul has to say to itself: 'If it were to happen that materialistic attitudes, materialistic ways of thinking were to prevail on earth once the sun of peace is shining again, would we not have to say that all these deaths must have been in vain — unless a spiritual way of thinking develops on the plane that lies open to the gaze of the dead?' We might therefore paraphrase the words of St Paul as follows: 'All the infinite suffering would be in vain, and all the many individuals would have gone through death in vain at such a young physical age if a materialistic way of thinking and a materialistic way of life were to spread in the fields of peace.' These days will have to be like a great warning beacon for those who live through them, a light entering deeply into human hearts and minds and souls, that man shall develop a genuine desire to live in the sphere of the spirit. We cannot concern ourselves deeply enough with the events of our time. And this is also why one hopes that vision will broaden among those who profess themselves anthroposophists to extend beyond the narrow horizon that tends to limit it, towards an ever-expanding horizon. We really must come to understand the way everything happening here on earth is connected with events taking place in the spiritual world. This will give us a feeling for the tasks set for us in the difficult times of the present.

Some people have a facile way of saying that present events need not have anything to do with the spiritual development individual nations are undergoing. To anyone able to see through these things and discern their true course, everything happening in the external world is an expression of something spiritual. Let us hold on to this more and more, let us try more and more to use the very experiences that can come to us through spiritual science to take our self out of those narrower confines and to unite this self, a self, freed by spiritual science, with the great events now taking place. Let us forget purely personal concerns and grow together with the profoundly disturbing events mankind as a whole must now experience.

This is the note I wanted to strike in your hearts with the things put forward in these lectures. I very much hope that they will be pondered before we meet again in April. An element put through the test of the great events of our time is now ascending into the spiritual world and bringing an influence to bear from up there. It must be met with the kind of understanding that can be won through spiritual insight, for only then will it be possible to achieve what these events are challenging us to achieve. It is true that:

Out of courage shown in battle,
Out of the blood-shed in war,
Out of the grief of those who are left,
Out of the people's deeds of sacrifice
Spirit fruits will come to grow
If souls with knowledge of the spirit
Turn their mind to spirit realms.

Newsletter

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