

The Double, the Inner Earth: Of Ghosts, Fear, and Pandemics

By Richard Cooper

With the pandemic of 2020, we are facing major social changes. We are awakening as if from a slumber in a dream, perhaps a nightmare. Even when aware of the disasters of the last century, the rapidity of recent changes is apt to catch you off guard. But a resurgence of the dangers of the last century can be seen everywhere. Especially in light of the global push for a coronavirus vaccine that can limit work, travel, even participation in society, we face monumental challenges to a spiritual perspective on life.

The implications are threefold. They affect our spiritual life, our soul life, and our physical life. Yet without a deeper perception of the occult realities at play, humanity will inevitably repeat aspects of the above disasters because their ghosts - confined to a materialistic view of life, unresolved - haunt the edges of our consciousness. Of particular necessity at this time is the examination of occult aspects of Anthroposophy: The Double, the Inner Earth, and the question of Governance.

The Inner Earth governs those forces which have fallen from their spiritual origin. Over the last 100 years, humanity has increasingly developed a culture that seeks to embody and express the nine levels of the Inner Earth. On spiritual reflection, we can call such a perception an apocalyptic vision. Further elaboration on the nine levels of the Inner Earth and how they relate to the nine limbs of the human being can be found in the relevant anthroposophical literature. The key, however, is to work with such designations to bring these realities into consciousness, as Steiner himself did.

The difference from the 1920s to our time 100 years later is the fact that the spiritual effects of initiation affect all of humanity. The question of electricity, electromagnetism, and virtual reality all have a bearing on the question of global governance, which is now slowly coming into clearer focus. At the heart of such considerations is what Rudolf Steiner described as the crossing of the threshold of the spiritual world of all humanity. This crossing of the threshold of the spiritual world is connected in a spiritual path of development, with a conscious recognition of the *Double*. So our question must be how we can perceive the emergence and life of the *Double* for the individual, how it is affected by the life of society as a whole.

A journey across spiritual seas

Let us embark on an imaginary journey. Immigrants to America arriving in New York by ship in earlier centuries were confronted with the Statue of Liberty holding the torch and perched on the island guarding the entrance to the city's safe harbor - a welcome sight after the long, arduous sea voyage from Europe. The Statue of Liberty was given to the Masons of America by the French Grand Orient Temple Masons. The Masonic "Torch of Enlightenment" was also called the "Flaming Torch of Reason", by the Illuminati Masons in the 1700's and in 1884. The "Lady of Liberty", is in fact Hecate, a fact undoubtedly known to the Masons who were behind the commission and construction.

From an occult perspective, America represents the electromagnetic forces that form the double. In fact, this was a secret known to the Knights Templar who traveled to America for many centuries to research the effect of electromagnetic forces on medicine. If we put ourselves in the hearts, the souls of these immigrants, Templars and early settlers, from which we come across the sea, we can mentally perceive how New York rises before us after this long and arduous journey: that Hecate should be honored at this port, this gate, is therefore of profound significance.

"Hecate" is depicted as a trinity known in pagan mythology as a three-faced goddess. The three faces represented the "virgin", the "mother" and "the crone". She was also associated with Diana, the goddess of the hunt, pictured below with an accompanying hunting dog. Hecate was associated with the underworld, death, witchcraft, and the powers of the feminine that were hidden by the more masculine development of culture and society. She was considered taboo, dangerous, and creative. Hecate and the associations with the earlier Ishtar emphasized fertility and sexuality.



Luca Penni, **Diana the Huntress** - School of Fontainebleau, 1550s.

Hecate appears before us, often depicted at a crossroads, with her torch and her dogs in the depth of the night, the darkness. It is an experience of meditation that when we reflect and concentrate in silence on the impressions that have come to us from the sensual world, that out of this darkness, in time, thinking, feeling, willing can be perceived as independent of each other. This separation of the three forces comes through the development of the objectivity of our perceptions of ourselves, our subjectivity, as from without.

Represented by the torch held by the threefold Hecate, Hecate stands at the crossroads. We stand before the independent forces of thought, feeling, and will, which henceforth may shape our path in life. In the ancient mystery schools, Hekate supports and accompanies Persephone in many stories on her journey through the underworld to Hades, the lord of the underworld. Hekate stands between thinking, feeling and willing, as a representative of the forces which, through the hunt (as above with Diana), represent that objective view of the self which leads to the rediscovery of the spiritual self. Just as the sun was reborn through the seasons, through autumn to winter to rebirth in spring, so these natural realities were and are spiritual experiences that the spiritual aspirant must pass through on a spiritual path. This hunt of Diana, depicted with dog and bow in hand, shows what has been so identified on our path to raise our motivations, feelings and actions to consciousness, the goal: a true refinement of character.

Cybernetic Governance

Today, New York has not lost this spiritual significance. Since the late nineteenth century, skyscrapers have grown tall as singular representative testaments to the power of commerce and capital. Grouped around the twin towers of the World Trade Center, their double squares form a symbolically closed system in which the code of finance and capital reverberates upon itself. Here, Jean Baudrillard characterizes three stages of a simulacrum: fictional reality: from surrealism, to hyperrealism, to virtual reality. ⁱ Systems lie within systems, as if reproducing themselves ad infinitum, forming a never-ending complex of meta-systems in relation to each other. The terrorist attacks 9/11, 2001 erected One World Tower an external testimony to how a global cybernetic system in a vast system of surveillance and control reflects a deeper descent of humanity into the underworld.



Delacroix 'The Barque of Dante' 1822

The original Greek term for cybernetics is "rule," which is extensively cited and developed as "helmsman" in Plato's Republic. This double meaning is explored in Plato's dialogues; the distinction between rhetoric and truth in thought is the basis for Plato's account of the struggle between the sophist and the true philosopher and, above all, the statesman. It is the ship of the state that Plato turns to in the Republic, and it is the book of the statesman that follows the book of the sophist. Over the centuries, our knowledge becomes a philosophical battlefield in which the seeker must be both detective and navigator.

The stormy creativity of the painting, with the fire in the background and the three central figures, is above all dramatic. Dante stands with Virgil on a vast, stormy sea; the helmsman, with his back to us on the right side of the boat, is Phlegyas (Greek: Φλεγύας), who set fire to the Apollonian temple at Delphi, whereupon Apollo killed him. The parallels to the First Goetheanum are obvious in the mythological themes surrounding Phlegyas, but also in the gravitas of the painting. The torched temple, the spiritual leader, the romantic passion, the descent through hell, it's all there. Where do we stand today in our connection with the starry world above us, the helmsman as "navigator"?

Gregory Bateson was a biologist and thinker who was influential within the cybernetic movement and the intellectual group that included Aldous Huxley, author of *Brave New World*, *Doors of Perception*. Norbert Wiener defined cybernetics in 1948 as "*the scientific study of control and communication in the animal and the machine.*" The term cybernetics comes from (kybernētēs) "*helmsman, governor, pilot, or helm*" (the same root as 'government'). As with the ancient Greek pilot, independence of thought is important in cybernetics. Gregory Bateson said in 1966 in a lecture to the "*Two Worlds Symposium*" at Sacramento State College, USA :

"We are talking about serious things here. I call this lecture "from Versailles to cybernetics" - naming the two historical events of the twentieth century. The word "cybernetics" is familiar, isn't it? But how many of you know what happened at Versailles in 1919? Now consider the difference between my generation and you who are under twenty-five. We all live in the same crazy universe whose hatred, mistrust and hypocrisy (especially at the international level) goes back to the fourteen points and the Treaty of Versailles. But from your point of view we are absolutely crazy, and you do not know what historical event has led to this craziness. The fathers have eaten bitter fruit, and the children are having their teeth knocked out. For the fathers, everything is fine, they know what they ate. The children don't know what was eaten." ⁱⁱ

Bateson, reflecting our understanding of the 100-year cycle of history to which Rudolf Steiner drew our attention, has given here essentially an Old Testament rendering of what we call karma. "The sins of the fathers shall afflict the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me" Exodus 20:5.

The nine layers of the inner earth

With these preliminary remarks, I would like to begin by characterizing a series of challenges that are broadly related to the nine realities of the inner earth, with notes of Rudolf Steiner's terminology to be found in more detail in his book *Theosophy*: 1. the world before us as *maya*, 2. the mystery of death; 3. the sensory challenge to intellectual thought. (*Sentient Body*); 4. The social challenge of governance, cybernetics and karma. (*Sentient soul*). 5. creativity

in relation to the subjective-objective split of consciousness. (*Mind Soul*). 6. the etheric world as it relates to a new experience of Christ. (*Consciousness Soul*). 7. The resurrection as a path to a totally new-world experience. (*Spirit-Self*). 8. brotherhood as it relates to man in communion with the spiritual. (*Life Spirit*) 9. The Transformation of the Earth (*Spirit-Man*).

Underlying the mysteries of death, illusion and fertility, as they were called in pagan times, are themes that are rather foreign to modern consciousness. Our ideas of love, sexuality, creativity, as developed through Romanticism to our own day, are far removed from the Greek understanding that was nurtured in the Mysteries. The libidinous urge for knowledge is a force that has been neglected and undermined in the modern world, giving way to a passive indulgence in comfort, technology and sensuality, while the inner earth reveals the need for a greater appreciation of the elemental forces of passion, as spiritual fire: the enthusiasm and urge for powers of transformation and initiation that are essential for us to begin to perceive the realities there. Rudolf Steiner describes in the second hour of the meditations of the first class. Thinking, feeling and willing are brought to a higher level through inner work. He characterizes these new abilities with the following: *Courage for Knowledge, Fire for Knowledge, Creation of Knowledge.* ⁱⁱⁱ

1. The Washing of the Feet

With interest in the world before us, in humanity as a whole in what it is still historically confronted with, we can come to the experience of death, of evil as a confrontation of acceptance, of resignation. With resignation we may observe what is happening in the world. We bow in this sense as a higher form of consciousness before a lower one. It is this distance that is necessary to see our own subjectivity not only bound to me as a single individuality, but as part of a diversity of being, of humanity and cosmos as a whole.

2. The Flagellation



Piero della Francesca, **The Flagellation of Christ**, ca. 1445 - 1450

When the economic system based on capital and labor begins to revolve around itself, value itself begins to make its own reference to itself. The experience of the body becomes alienated from itself. The Christian experience of flagellation is how we can experience the beginning of a new perception of a spiritual body through strokes of fate. By balancing our own karma, we begin to perceive the body of Christ anew in relation to our double. As we see from the painting here, this brings with it a new awareness of our sensory environment, especially to space, color, and yes, perspective.

3. The Crowning with Thorns

Rudolf Steiner describes this experience as the mirror earth. When all the values of the characters that live around us can be exchanged, it can happen that everything is duplicated as in a mirror. When man lives in a society dominated by the mass production of goods with the advertising and marketing that goes with it, the ideas themselves can spread to infinity in the inner earth as in a mirror earth, thousands of images, each in essence a duplicate, exactly the same. On the spiritual path, the essential experience here is from renouncing 'normal' sensory

impressions, to recognize the unique; to focus on what we choose, rather than from the mass produced culture of images that surrounds us.

4. Bearing the Cross

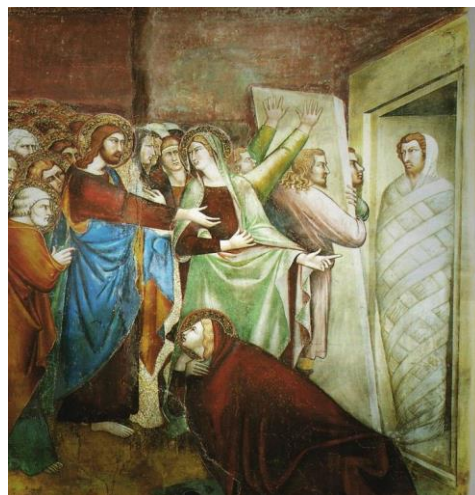
One of the significant experiences explored in modern philosophy has been the exploration of how subjectivity is formed. Martin Heidegger, for example, in *Being and Time*, introduced such ideas as "Being in the world" and "Being unto death," while Alain Badiou developed further ideas around the analysis of the event. Psychoanalysis from Freud to Jung to Lacan has focused on how we experience ourselves, how subjectivity is constructed in modern society. The end result of such thinking is that we can come to see ourselves from the outside, to such an extent that we actually carry ourselves through the world, as objectively as if we were carrying a piece of wood.

5. Mystical Death

In *Inner Earth*, Rudolf Steiner speaks of infinite fertility. The constant creation of new ideas, borne of the mass production of images that flood the modern urban environment, creates a world of hyperreal, cyber creativity. Here we are in danger of surrendering to worlds and lifeworlds that are simply sustained by a mental consciousness far superior to our own limited understanding. Supercomputers, AI, robotics, and digital complexity far beyond the ability of humans to follow and consciously control. Building on the previous stage, being able to look at how our task here is to let our transformed thinking perform our own crucifixion, that something can flow through the individual.

6 The Entombment

In the inner earth, this layer is called the fire earth: As the double grows in power, it can usurp the power of creation within the folds of reality in which it has been encased. That which is represented by the biblical expression, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I give you." This is the new spiritual responsiveness that takes place when the double is able to take over creation from itself, the beginning of an awakening to the formation of the three higher limbs: spirit-self, life-spirit and spirit-man. It begins here, as a response to what happened in the life of the rich young man - Lazarus. Christ answers his question to the Heavenly Kingdom that it is as difficult for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven as it is for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. Lazarus goes away disturbed with this message, "for he was very rich". In his soul a deep rises, a longing for which Lazarus henceforth in a "disease to death". With the entombment the way of the initiation begins by the different realms of the nature.



Duccio di Buoninsegna, **The Raising of Lazarus** (1310-11)

7. The Resurrection

The reflector is that part of the inner earth which at first sight may appear similar to the mirror earth in the descriptions, in the sense that both refer to the reflected repetition of multiple visions. The difference is that here the reflector, the will reflects, the possibility of true sacrifice, while in the mirror earth the images are reflected concepts. Rudolf Steiner points out that this part of the double has the ability to mirror in a counter-image that

which lives in the soul as a karmic self-impulse. In initiation, this karma is the beginning reversal of all perception into its spiritual counterpart, as when Christ in the Bible suggests casting the net on the other side of the boat and then it comes back full of fish.

Brotherhood

Exactly 100 years before the fateful year of 1922 and the burning of the First Goetheanum, Delacroix's "The Barque of Dante" initiated the Romantic movement in painting in 1822. The date reflects the similar 100-year mark of 1920, the opening of the First Goetheanum, the Treaty of Versailles, and looks forward to the monumental events of the 2020 pandemic. Concomitant with this and building on it, both for the old Mysteries and the new, is the power of brotherhood. The cooperation of man as part of the Great Work of Humanity, in light of the distant prospects of cosmic history, can be contrasted with the cold technocratic aspect of technological control with which we seem to be more urgently confronted. In times when propaganda and group dynamics through the media exert such influence, such an appreciation of the aims and methods of common spiritual enterprise in a community of spiritual seekers, is a vital concern.

ⁱ Jean Baudrillard, **Symbolic Exchange and Death**, 1976. Brave New Virtual World. We live in the age of simulation, says Jean Baudrillard. Signs and values are arbitrary, work no longer serves production, death is displaced from life. Symbolic Exchange and Death is among the best-known works of French sociologist and philosopher Jean Baudrillard.

ⁱⁱ Gregory Bateson, **From Versailles to Cybernetics** (1966).

ⁱⁱⁱ Rudolf Steiner, **The Meditation Path of the Michael School** Perseus Basel, edited by Thomas Meyer, 2011. Second Hour, p.31.