

COSMIC THINKING AND COSMIC WORD

Both cosmic thinking and cosmic Word are first mentioned in the early summer verses.

Cosmic Thinking

Verse 14, where cosmic thinking is mentioned, appears just after the cusp of the height of summer; it is the first verse of the descending part of the spring/summer cycle. At the other end, cosmic thinking is mentioned in verse 48, at the culmination of the evolution of thinking, emerging out of the winter and after the warning verse (46).

In verse 14 cosmic thinking comes as a gift requiring an attitude of devotion from the human being. In verse 48 it is an acquired capacity. Verse 15 indicates that enchanted weaving wants to bestow strength on us. Verse 16 enjoins us (stern command) to bear inwardly the spirit bounty in order to let the fruits of selfhood emerge. It asks to be mindful of gifts received and how we can integrate them in our destiny journey. Then in 17 cosmic Word can speak in us and a new phase begins.

The pre-Christian principle of ecstasy is transformed through intuition, allowing us to live contained within ourselves and effect those changes that render the gifts of the cosmos able to ripen in us. It's a whole gesture of conscious restraint.

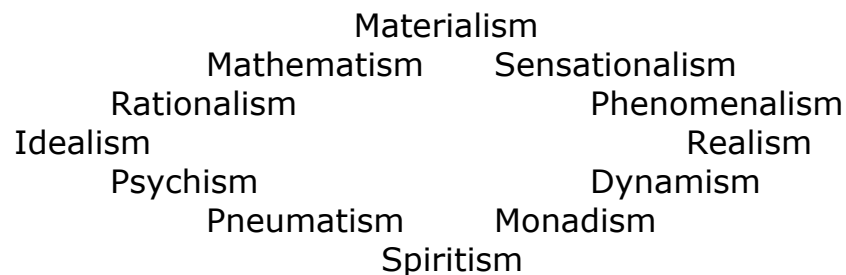
The gifts of cosmic thinking deserve further scrutiny. Referring to this Steiner says: "Man is built up according to the thoughts of the cosmos. The cosmos is the 'great thinker' which down to our last finger-nail engraves our form in us, just as our little thought-work makes its little imprints on our brain every day. . . . As our brain . . . stands under the influence of the work of thinking, so does the whole man stand under the influence of cosmic thinking." And further "in a certain manner we serve [the Hierarchies] so that they may be able to think through us, yet at the same time we are independent beings with identities of our own . . . Cosmic thought is such a regent that we belong with our whole being to that which it has to accomplish."¹ Obviously cosmic thought can direct its activity only in relation to what we offer it by virtue of our karma and our choices. In looking upon the individuals spread out in front

¹ Rudolf Steiner, *Human and Cosmic Thought*, lecture 4.

of them, we are for the Hierarchies like the individual letters of a book would be for us when we read. "We are links in the thought logic of the cosmos."

At the height of summer we lend ourselves willingly to the Hierarchies thinking through us, and we willingly seek our spirit kinship in them (verse 13). They, as it were, whisper to us what the future, what world karma needs of us. What they send us by way of suggestion can only emerge in our consciousness in an attitude of devotion indicated in the succeeding verses.

Cosmic thinking can best be understood in relation to the forces of the zodiac in the twelve "schools of thought"/world outlooks.² Any given issue can be considered from any of twelve perspectives. These are "fully justifiable standpoints." In between there are transitional perspectives:



In addition to the twelve outlooks, we can recognize seven planetary soul-moods that color the outlooks:

- Gnosis (Saturn)
- Logicism (Jupiter)
- Voluntarism (Mars)
- Empiricism (Sun)
- Mysticism (Venus)
- Transcendentalism (Mercury)
- Occultism (Moon)

Figure 8 summarizes the whole of the outlooks in relation to the soul moods.

² Rudolf Steiner, *Human and Cosmic Thought*, lecture 3.

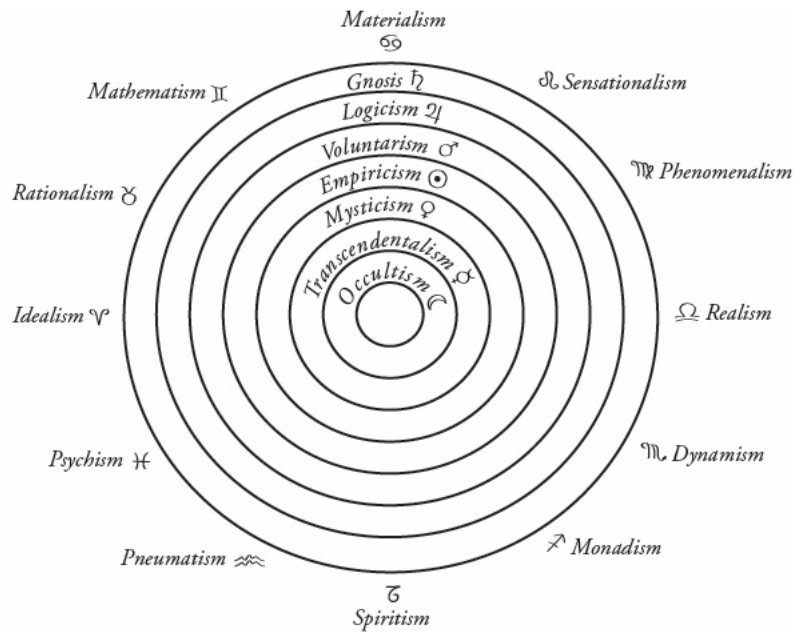


Figure 8: The Outlooks in Relation to the Soul Moods

No outlook or soul mood is bound to an individual for life. Such inclinations/influences can arise before birth or after birth. Steiner offers as an example that of Nietzsche's evolution in time. By virtue of his karma he was so configured that initially the outlook of Idealism could work on him through the soul-mood of Mysticism; he could become a mystical idealist. Later the mood changed to Empiricism in the outlook of Rationalism. Nietzsche changed his relationship to the cosmic thinking of the hierarchies; however, he fell short of his goal and ended up turning his back on his calling.

That cosmic thinking should come toward us "in world appearance" has been something that made me pause and wonder. Some inkling of answer has emerged only from experience with the verses in relation to my biography when a change of direction occurs through the maturation encountered in the summer, and I will put it out tentatively.

When life has been centering on an important decision and theme during the summer months of the year, karmic events present themselves in such a way as to close certain doors and open new ones, if we can seize the moment, though it all may continue to revolve around the same theme. In between the two the soul experiences a certain time of powerlessness. In fact, that a theme disappears and returns in a new form could go completely unperceived. It is only an effort of recollection that brings this matter up to consciousness. It is in this sense that cosmic thinking in sense appearance—through the external

events of our biography—may become a reality. It is not a surprise therefore that verse 19 at the end of the Summer Solstice quadrant explicitly asks us to “encompass with memory what I’ve newly got.”

At the other end of the year, cosmic thinking appears in verse 48. This is what we know as fully spiritualized thinking. It is that force which redeems our Self and allows us to fully unite with the powers of nature and the inner world of others. It works from our Spirit Self and no longer divides us from the world and from our fellow human beings. The effort of the soul in developing this spiritualized thinking allows it to meet the sphere of cosmic life when it emerges at the end of winter.

At the summer end of the year the human being lives as if immersed in the cosmic creative thoughts from which the world of appearance takes its expression. Without full awareness the soul is as if immersed in a web of world creative thoughts. At that time the soul is in dialogue with cosmic thoughts that form its spiritual milieu. Intuition offers the soul guidance in the delicate dance of surrender and awareness. Surrender alone would not allow the soul to gather the gifts of cosmic light, cosmic warmth, and cosmic Word. Intuition offers the ego presence necessary. On the other hand too strong an ego presence, without ability to surrender, would preclude the dialogue between soul and world that is the goal of summer’s nature consciousness.

At the opposite time of the year self-consciousness gathers what it has received from the creative world thoughts around the kernel of the growing self-awareness. In the sense of Self the receptacle is formed for the Spirit Self and the ascending power of thinking can become cosmic thinking consciously achieved. The power of thinking can consciously unite the human being with the creative forces at work in nature to defy the separation between subject and object and offer a new kind of knowledge that no longer divides.

Cosmic Word

Cosmic Word is one of the central and most encompassing spiritual beings of the Calendar, and one so elusive that it can only be approached tentatively and in stages. Here, and later, we will do so from some of Steiner’s lectures, in which cosmic Word is equivalent to the Logos, and from some of his most significant mantras.

“The Word,” Steiner indicates, “lies at the very foundation of the whole plan of our creation.”³ What the human being has presently developed—physical,

³ *The Gospel of St. John*, lecture 2: *Esoteric Christianity* of May 19, 1908.

etheric, astral, ego—was once carried by divine spiritual beings, and by what the Bible calls the Logos.

In Old Saturn the Logos was the very first beginning of the physical body. And it is the Logos that is still active in the human being in sleep when the astral and ego desert him. In the Sun period the ether body was added because the Logos became Life upon the Sun. Upon Old Moon the astral body was added, which is a body of light, spiritual light. At this stage life became light; the Logos became Light.

It is in the present cycle of Earth that the human being gained the power to express in sound what lived in his inner life. In the old Moon he had been mute. The power of speech had originally been with the divine, but it was already present in germ within the human being.

During the Earth period the human body was able to confront the Logos as Life and Light because everything became material for him. "And the meaning of life upon Earth is this: That Men should overcome this darkness of the soul, in order that they may recognize the Light of the Logos."⁴

The Logos descended to humanity only once at the time of the Intellectual Soul. The Christ reveals the original and eternal Logos "who works for the unfolding of the Spirit-being of man in the sphere of the Divine Spiritual Being bound up with man from the beginning." And further "Christ's descent is the ensouling of Mankind with the Logos of the beginning and of Eternity, whose working for the salvation of Mankind shall never cease."⁵

The ineffable Logos/cosmic Word is present at key moments of the Calendar of the Soul. He is our ultimate destination as much as He is our guide. In the latter function he appears in what is called the First Tablet, which serves as introduction to the lessons of the First Class of the School of Spiritual Science:

O man, know yourself!
Thus speaks the cosmic Word.
You hear it with strength of soul,
You feel it with might of spirit.
Who speaks so powerfully through the world?

⁴ The Gospel of St. John, lecture 2: Esoteric Christianity of May 19, 1908.

⁵ *Anthroposophical Leading Thoughts: A Christmas Study; The Mystery of the Logos.*

Who speaks so tenderly within your heart?
Does it work through the far-spread rays of space
Into your senses' experience of existence?
Does it sound through the weaving waves of time
Into your life's evolving stream?
Is it you, O man, who of yourself,
By sensing in space,
By experiencing in time,
Begets this Word,
Feeling yourself a stranger in the soul-void of space,
Because you lose the force of thinking in the destruction stream of time.

At the height of summer, around St. John, cosmic Word suggests to us the direction to take through cosmic thinking, the combined activity of the hierarchies, which we could call the cosmic intelligence. Here we see cosmic Word "speaking powerfully through the world." At the heights of winter, around Christmas cosmic Word can awaken consciously within us. Here cosmic Word "speaks tenderly within our heart." The Calendar of the Soul is thus a journey through time inviting us to transcend time by meeting the Spirits of the Cycles of Time, which we find in the realm of the First Hierarchy.