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Anthroposophy from the Inside: What People Have Wanted to Know about Anthroposophy and Not Found in Wikipedia.

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I will not write long and beat around about the bush. The matter is very simple: Without Ken Wilber, I would not be an anthroposophist anymore. I am forty years old and on the road since my twentieth year as a teacher, lecturer and spiritual activist in anthroposophy. Almost exactly four years ago, I was just about ready to chuck it all and throw away everything that had to do with this spiritual impulse of Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925). Then came Integral Spirituality and it rescued me—for anthroposophy. How has Wilber saved me? He has shown me my spiritual home on the big map. I now know my surroundings, my treasures, my shadow, my ways and pitfalls, my unknown fields, shady bogs, cliffs and dead ends. And I know that I am not alone and where my friends live. And so I

write to you. Wilber helps me get the most out of my tradition, to leave behind the outdated, and to break new ground.

Steiner and Wilber: More than Words

If I have to say something about anthroposophy, then I am faced with a problem. You know this problem. With anthroposophy, it is about the same as with the Integral Vision: both are not explained in few words. Not only because very many words are needed, but above all because they go beyond what is expressed in words. We must understand Steiner—and I say this also applies to Wilber—not just literally. Both are, in a way, great poets. We can read their work from the top-left perspective. That means nothing else than that it is we who must bring their words to life. We need to learn to make their work sing in order for it to touch us. Poetry requires this and also Wilber always writes in a touching and artistic way. To me this is just the heart. Sometimes Wilber is not just true or false. Sometimes it is beautiful to cry. And that is part of the program. Spirit is in all quadrants and in the upper left spirit speaks as a poet. Steiner says that in his fundamental work, *The Philosophy of Freedom*, “All true philosophers are concept artists. For them, the human idea is the art equipment and the scientific method is an artistic technique.”

Grow and Be Alive!

Here we have arrived at the core theme of anthroposophy: namely, the desire to have everything and to transform what we have into a lively and evolutionary process. If you now read the follow-

ing three sets of Steiner and emphasize the second word in each case, then you will understand in an intimate way what is anthroposophy, “Live-be science! Expectant art alive! Animate expectant religion!”

Rudolf Steiner has dedicated his life to especially one subject: higher development of human beings. In the true spirit of a man whom he revered and visited at the bedside: “Not only onward shalt thou propagate thyself, but upward!” Here - with Steiner’s visit to Friedrich Nietzsche—we touch one other credo of his work: Let’s be contemporary! Deal with the deepest and highest, but most of all the latest! (And here we encounter the first glimpse of anthroposophy to be true to yourself. Faith is not fidelity to the incessant urge to evolutionary transformation.)

Steiner in the Same Breath

Allow me to introduce you now a man who can tell of the impressive things about Steiner. He is Prof. Dr. Walter Kugler. He is director of the Rudolf Steiner archive in Dornach, near Basel, and is Professor of Fine Art at Oxford Brookes University. I have known Walter for many years and he is my friend. He is the best connoisseur of Steiner’s life and work. If I let him come here a little longer so to speak, that is because no one else but he has the right to bring so much life and flourish to the work of Steiner. Listen to what Prof. Kugler says:

Steiner was one of the best researchers and Goethe, Nietzsche connoisseur of his time. Following his studies in natural sciences at the Vienna Technical University, he edited Goethe’s scientific writings for the great Weimar edition of St. Sophia. He was editor of a Schopenhauer, Wieland, Uhland and Jean-Paul, He was editor and author of several philosophical works. He was editor of a literary magazine in Berlin, taught for six years at the Wilhelm Liebknecht, founded a workers ‘education school and was for a time Secretary of the Theosophical Society. In 1912 he founded the Anthroposophical Society and titled his humanities research with the already Fichte and Schelling term, anthroposophy. In Dornach near Basel using his designs and under his leadership he created an ensemble of more than ten residential and commercial buildings, among which the Goetheanum—the most important building of the twentieth century—is one. After the First World War, he supported the movement through his work, founded the Waldorf School and continued his lectures on cosmology, philosophy, death and birth, but also in agriculture, economics, education and medicine...His talks were always free’a total of more than 5,000. Each was a cultural event in Berlin, Munich, Helsinki, Paris and Prague. Kafka and Max Brod have heard him, Kandinsky, Morgenstern, Tucholsky, Rosa Luxembourg and then many of the chroniclers of their time, as well as doctors and priests, workers and students, teachers and farmers.”

That was Walter Kugler in one breath. I think you can now understand what I mean by Steiner’s idea of contemporary.

Steiner: God has Never Bored.

You might wonder why I here given so much space for biographical information. Well, if you want to know quickly and in dry words, what is anthroposophy, then you could just go to Wikipedia and there you would find a satisfactory answer. As someone intimately involved with the work of Steiner I hope to offer a perspective from the left quadrant. And here it is my obligation to tell you that we have the greatest strength and biggest weakness at the same time reached in the anthroposophy. Unlike the theory of integrals Wilber, Anthroposophy Steiner is one less card, which works independently of its author. Steiner’s anthroposophy is one thing: the enormous and such a range and diversity may print a single copy of a person who has deeply lived out what we might call creative power, creativity or evolutionary urge. Steiner, God has never bored.

In the gigantic-evolutionary imperfection of his work and Steiner is a shining example. We should imitate him: “Do all things new,” have courage, use our ability and passion to be ourselves again and again in unique ways, be creative and work for the benefit of all beings. Imitating the work of Steiner creates copies. Not originals. As with all large evolutionary efforts, his work was an expression of his unique self, but above all always a gift to humanity. How the gift will appear in the world, you can see in the right quadrant or, as I said, read about it on Wikipedia.

Fortitude is Required for Enlightenment

What you certainly do not find in Wikipedia is this: Anthroposophy has two very great strengths and weaknesses and they are linked. One major strength is the social effect of this energy (right quadrant). This energy has produced Waldorf schools, Demeter, Weleda or Dr. Hauschka products. It has produced the GLS-Bank, special education institutions, and universities with a very solid business and membership structure. These significant external effects were accomplished at the expense of the left quadrants. There was stagnation. Eventually, anthroposophy became a form of spirituality that had complicated forms of thought. Time and again it was admonished for spiritual sobriety, but ultimately it remained in a Christian-magical-mythical world view.

Love of Evolution

The second weakness is again the second strength: Anthroposophy is hardly in a position as an initiative to “enlightenment.” Awakening and enlightenment were not Steiner’s interest. He wanted one thing: strong souls! The strength of the soul was his mission. People with fortitude to bear, from love to action, responsibility for “world progress.” Leadership is nothing without a strong soul.

Sometimes it was even the case that he deliberately prevented Awakening or enlightenment. Why? Because it is extremely important that we wake up on a high level. Steiner described the intense human and evolutionary drama when someone wakes up on a low level and are therefore lost to evolution or even were anti-evolutionary. Finally, Steiner was convinced that the degree of development of the soul, which makes the spiritual experience of awakening, more important than the experience itself, would result immediately in individuals who assume responsibility and leadership. Anthroposophy is designed to foster the personal expression of Rudolf Steiner through responsibility and leadership for the love of evolution. Or, in Steiner’s words: “For the love of action.”

About the Author

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