

COSMOLOGY COURSE

LECTURES TO MEMBERS - Willi Sucher: from 1 Oct. '54 to 1 Apr. '55 (All drawings by Willi Sucher)

Rudolf Steiner House, London, England

(Notes from lecture, unrevised by author)

MARS-1 ~ 11 FEBRUARY 1955

Today we want to carry on with considerations of the planetary movements in the sky. You will remember that last term, and before, we had been speaking about Saturn, Sun, and Moon, and now we shall have to carry on with the planet Mars. But before we go into details, I would like to work out with you once more this order that we employ here, because it seems to be a bit strange. You realize that it is not the order of the planets in a spatial sense. In a spatial sense, the order would be Saturn, the outermost planet, Jupiter, Mars and the Sun, then the inferior planets Mercury, Venus, and finally the Moon. Now we have obviously been going along a different path: Saturn, Sun, Moon, and now we want to go on with Mars. Why is that so? If we go on with Mars, then Mercury, then Jupiter, and finally Venus, that is the order of the seven days of the week. The order of the seven days of the week has a certain connection with cosmic evolution; it is a dynamic aspect. We know from the indications of Rudolf Steiner that the aspect of the seven days of the week primarily means the seven great embodiments of the Earth—that is, Ancient Saturn, Ancient Sun, Ancient Moon, then the Earth, represented by Mars and occult Mercury (planet Venus), which make up the two halves of the Earth—the past and the future of the Earth—then Jupiter, the future embodiment of the Earth, and finally occult Venus (planet Mercury).

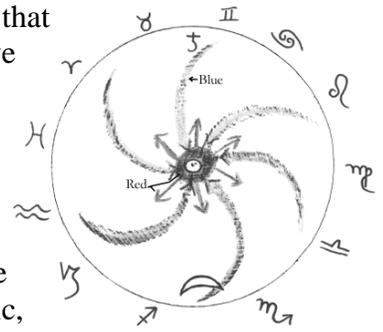
But how can we reconcile that with the order in the present cosmos? Has it anything to do with the present cosmos, with the planets in the present cosmos? Now you see, if in occultism one uses such names as Ancient Saturn, Ancient Sun, Ancient Moon, then those names have a certain connection with the names of the planets in our present solar system. It must be so, because it's not for nothing that Ancient Saturn is called Ancient Saturn, and so on. Let us see how we can work that out in connection with the planets of our present cosmos. We will then see that our present cosmos is indeed nothing else but a kind of miniature—well, of course, it is a macrocosm, but in the sense of world embodiments of the Earth, it is a kind of replica of the past.

Saturn is the outermost of the ancient planets, of those which the ancients knew. (We have discovered with our telescopes three more planets of which we shall also speak in the course of these deliberations, but that will come later.) It guards the threshold of the solar system, so we would have to imagine its orbit goes right around the periphery of the solar universe in which we live. Beyond that orbit there is the Zodiac of the fixed-star constellations. Therefore, Saturn would then be something that embraces the whole solar universe; the solar universe is held, so to speak, by this Saturn. It defines the position of our solar universe; and furthermore, as we know from Rudolf Steiner, Saturn is a replica of Ancient Saturn and especially that which is contained in its spheric orbit. We can even call it a memorial of Ancient Saturn. In other words, Ancient Saturn was as big as the sphere of that huge orbit of our present Saturn. In a certain sense, Saturn is the foundation of the whole solar universe. It is as if we have the foundation walls of that great building of our solar system indicated by the orbit of Saturn.

Our solar universe is organized, and it was organized by the spiritual hierarchies who put the Sun, as it were, into or near the center of the solar universe. We have spoken of the Sun many times, and we know that we, on the foundation of spiritual science, cannot regard the Sun as a solid body, a body that is filled with gases, or anything like that. We know that, from the suggestions of Rudolf Steiner—which can be supported from many directions—we speak of a Sun that is not only empty but which is a kind of anti-space. If we would be able to take away space, take it away entirely, then we would stand at the portal of the Sun. And that Sun is a cavity, in a sense, in the solar universe, which exerts a suctional activity in the cosmos.

Thus we would have two activities brought about by the Sun, and through these two activities the organizing of the solar system is achieved. First we have movement brought about by the suction (blue in diagram) toward

the surface of the Sun: a suctional activity that reaches out as far as the periphery of the solar universe and brings zodiacal substance into this cosmos in which we live. Thereby, everything that exists within this solar universe is permeated by zodiacal archetypes. In the twelve constellations of the Zodiac there live the astral and spiritual archetypes of everything that exists within this solar system; for instance, the species of animals, the species of plants, the great groups of substances that we find on the Earth, and the spiritual and astral essence of all that also comes from the Zodiac. That is all drawn into this solar universe by that Sun which is a super vacuum, a cosmic super vacuum, though more in a spiritual sense. Thus it is able to build up the existence within this solar universe, to strengthen it with substance of cosmic, zodiacal nature.



Further, we know that the Sun exerts also another activity. For instance, we can imagine that here around the Sun (red) there is a kind of congestion of that substance, which has been drawn in from the Zodiac and accumulated upon the surface of the Sun. That may well account for that which we see as the surface of the Sun, namely, that ball of fire which gives us light and warmth. It can be a process of some kind of combustion. We need not think of combustion merely in an earthly sense; it can be entirely different, but there may take place upon the surface of the Sun such a congestion that turns into some kind of disintegration. Now, that process of disintegration sends out light, warmth, and many other things into the solar universe in which we live, and by this lighting up, so to speak, space is created.

Imagine here in the stream that comes from the periphery, which is external darkness, is spiritual light. We cannot see that. Externally it is darkness. You see, for instance, it comes to the Earth by night, into that part of the Earth which is turned away from the Sun. There it is night, and it is just there where those streams of cosmic, of zodiacal substance come into the Earth. That is the strengthening of the Earth with astral and with spiritual substance. That is also what we receive during the night as the refreshing forces of the cosmos. But that is darkness, the in-streaming flow of astral forces; however, it is lit up by the light and permeated by the warmth coming from the Sun, and thereby space is created. Through this activity of the clash of these two streams—that which comes in and that which shines into it, which moves as counter force to it—space is created in our solar universe. That is why we say, as indicated by Rudolf Steiner, that the Sun is creating space in our solar universe. As we see Saturn as the all-embracing, as that which is the foundation, so to speak, that which contains the blueprint, in a spiritual sense, of the entire solar universe; then it is the Sun that organizes it and makes it spatial. As a matter of fact, space came into existence on Ancient Sun, and our present Sun continues with that activity, while time came into existence on Ancient Saturn.

Now we go on to the Moon. What is the Moon doing in the cosmos? Well we know, for instance, that out of all the metals, the Moon is connected with silver. There may even be silver on the Moon in some form. We know that silver has the capacity of working like a mirror; for instance, in photography we use silver in order to bring about that reflecting capacity which is needed in order to make photos. This reflecting capacity of the Moon, which is indicated in the silver (not only in silver but also in other substances), is something quite new within this solar universe apart from the activities of Sun and Saturn. Through the Moon we are reminded of the Ancient Moon; that is, the development of something like a mirror within that solar universe in which we live, something like a great cosmic mirror in which all the events of the heavens are mirrored. Of course this is in a very active sense, not in that sense as it is done in a dead mirror which we use, for instance, on a photographic plate; it is much more a living process. Anyhow, it is a process which made it possible that within the being (for instance in the Ancient Moon-ancestor) the capacity of inner reflection was established. It was possible because the Moon-ancestor was by then endowed with the astral body. The astral body made it possible for that creature to experience what was streaming through it, that which was going on around it in nature and so on. Because at one time that capacity didn't exist, and even the plants in our time don't have that capacity of inner reflection, of soul activity. It is perhaps better to call it soul activity.

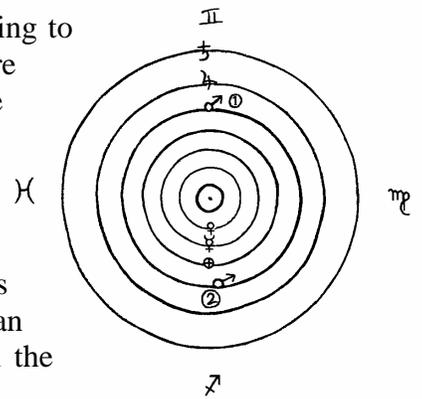
Now we have the three steps: Saturn, Sun, and Moon. We see the foundation, the organization, and then the inner experience of that which had been created—creation looking back onto itself, or at least taking the first step toward looking back onto itself. We can also say that existence, which is the endowment of our physical foundation, is Saturn; life is the Sun—during Ancient Sun evolution, humanity was endowed with life,

which is our etheric organization; and during the Moon evolution humanity was endowed with the astral body, that is, the capacity of inner relation, of the first steps toward soul activity. Therefore, the astral body is also called soul body.

After these three steps have been taken—and our solar universe really manifests it; shows it; repeats it—then there has been a replica, so to speak, of the great process of evolution. This solar universe, in our time, is not only repeating the past, it represents also the present. Now we see the fourth step, which we all realize is the Earth evolution.

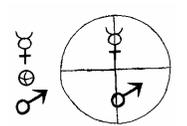
The ancient Indians called the Earth “maya”, or illusion. They experienced and regarded that which flows through the channels of the senses of the human being, that which is out there as a material world, as an illusion. For them the spiritual world was the reality. We, of course in our time, are no longer inclined to regard the external world as an illusion, and I believe we can be grateful for it. I don’t know how we could cope with this world if we regarded it as an illusion; I believe that in practice it is felt pretty strongly by everybody who lives in this present age. Nevertheless, from a spiritual point of view the Earth does not exist as something self-contained. It is made up, it is actually brought about, and it is constantly held in balance and in existence by those two forces of Mars and occult Mercury [planet Venus]. By the clash, so to speak, of forces of Mars and occult Mercury, Earth existence is possible altogether. Now that is a long story, and perhaps we can work it out as we go along with the description of Mars. Today I only want to show you how one can come by such a thing as the fact that in occultism we call the Earth evolution Mars-occult Mercury.

Let us see how that works. We have, as we are told in school and according to the Copernican system, Saturn and all the planets moving around the Sun. Here is Jupiter, the one below Saturn, then comes Mars, and then, as we know, the Copernican system places the Earth in the next orbit, below that of Mars. Well, you see there is the possibility—actually it happens every two years—that Mars comes into the neighborhood of the Earth. Mars can then be here (2). Here in this position (1) it is obviously very far away from the Earth, with even the Sun between the Earth and Mars, so it is very far away. But sometimes it happens that it comes very near, and then we see Mars as a very bright star, an exceedingly bright star; we see it as a fiery red, almost threatening point in the heavens. Those are the times when Mars makes a loop.



To this we must add another fact in order to find occult Mercury, that is, the Mercury half of the Earth, or that which actually makes the Earth. You see, nearer to the Sun there are the inferior planets, Venus and Mercury, on this side of the Earth. They are also moving around the Sun. Here you see I have put occult Mercury into the place where it is nearest to the Earth. It can be on the other side, and then it is furthest away from the Earth; that can happen too, and in rhythmic intervals of about 18-19 months occult Mercury comes very near to the Earth. So in such a moment we would then have occult Mercury as it is here. Now don’t worry, for the moment, that I have turned the planets around. Of course, according to Copernican astronomy, the planet Mercury is nearer to the Sun, and Venus is further away in the orbit above that of Mercury. But don’t worry about that; we shall talk about it when we come to discuss that planet.

Anyhow, we can see that the Earth upon which we live is really built, or created, by these two planets. It is only existent as far as these two planets are constantly creating it. This was very well known in occultism in the most ancient times. And it is true, Mars represents more the first half of the Earth evolution; that is, the time when the great repetitions took place—when first Ancient Saturn was repeated, then Ancient Sun, then the Ancient Moon—and when everything that exists now in the kingdoms of nature was brought up to that perfection in which we perceive it now. That is the first part of the Earth evolution. The second half of the Earth evolution is called Mercury in occultism, that is, the time which we have hardly begun, which will lead us into the future and that will also witness again the spiritualization, the dissolving of that which has been created hitherto. In this dissolution of the nature forces in creation, the forces of consciousness will be developed, and there one can imagine that human beings have a very important part in this Earth drama. Through the dissolution of creation, those consciousness forces will be developed that will be necessary for the Jupiter incarnation of the Earth, for the Jupiter embodiment of the Earth.



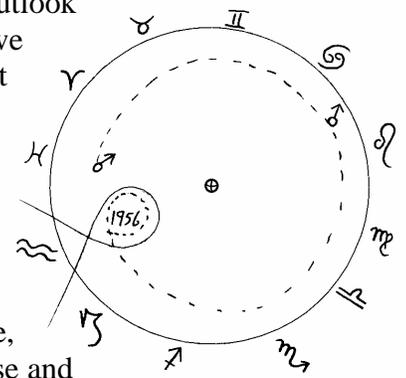
It is not difficult to go on. After this Earth was established, so to speak, existent through the sounding together of Mars and occult Mercury in the cosmos, the present Jupiter became the place of the sphere in the universe in which those exalted beings, who have prepared the Jupiter embodiment of the Earth, are already present and working. On Jupiter there exists a colony of spiritual beings who have already prepared that Jupiter phase of the Earth evolution. It is always, so to speak, a matter of coming from the periphery to the center, then a going out again, then a coming back to the center. It is a constant weaving, a rhythmical weaving, a kind of process that takes place between center and periphery in this solar universe.

The next step would then be that which is indicated by occult Venus (planet Mercury), the planet nearest to the Sun, the Venus embodiment of the Earth, after the Jupiter embodiment. Thus we can find in our solar system not only the past but also the future, all those great seven steps of which Rudolf Steiner has spoken in *Occult Science* and in other places. We can find them in our solar system. Our solar system is a replica, but not only a replica, also a kind of vision of the future—Jupiter and Venus, even Vulcan in a certain sense. We see it here in a dynamic fashion, so to speak, in a dynamic order. The spatial order would be Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, Earth, and then, of course in the neighborhood of the Earth, the Moon. That is a static, spatial order. But there is also a dynamic order, which is the one that is contained in the seven days of the week. And dear friends, I believe this is quite a legitimate approach, an approach that can lead us much further than the spatial aspect only. The seven days of the week is a dynamic aspect of our solar system, for it can give us the spiritual insight, the realization—rather than the matter-of-fact reason—of the spiritual background of the solar universe; and we attain the dynamic by inner devotion to such cosmic facts and to spiritual beings. I believe looking at the solar universe in this fashion, in the order which is indicated in the seven days of the week, is looking at the solar universe with the inner eye, with the organs of inner devotion. If one does this, then one can be sure that this solar universe will one day speak to us. We shall experience it speaking to us.

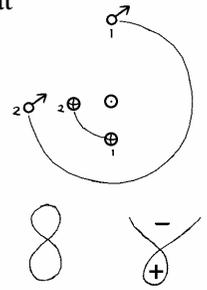
Now then, Mars. What is Mars doing in the course of this year? I shall describe the main features. At the present moment it is still in the constellation of Fishes, after coming around from the winter constellations of the Zodiac. It had made a loop last year (summer 1954) between the constellation of Scorpion and Archer, actually closer to Archer. In the meantime, it has moved into the constellation of Fishes. In the course of this year, it will come into a conjunction with the Sun; that will take place on the 17th of August in Lion, in which the Sun will stand in front of Mars. From there it will move on, and in 1956 it will make a loop, chiefly in the constellation of Waterman. This is more or less the main structure, the main picture of the movements of Mars in the course of this and the next year. I ought to add that in the case of a loop, Mars would then be near to the Earth, and the Sun would again be opposite there on the other side. It is not exactly in the same spot; it will be a bit deeper into Lion. We saw in the picture before how these conjunctions and oppositions (the loops) happen with regard to Mars. We have the Sun here in the center and now the Earth (see center figure, facing page). According to the Copernican picture, the Earth is moving around the Sun, and further out we have the orbit of Mars. An opposition is this: first the Earth has arrived here in this position, and Mars is over here, behind the Sun (1). That is what is happening here in August 1955. In 1956, let's say the Earth would be here and Mars in this position (2); now the picture is reversed with Mars nearer to the Earth, and the Sun is standing on the other side. That is why we then see Mars so near to the Earth during the night.

I don't want to tantalize you with an explanation of the loops as they are explained in Copernicanism. In Copernicanism they have no reality at all; they are considered to be only a sort of optical illusion brought about by the respective positions of Sun and Earth. That is, of course, a materialistic outlook simply based on the consideration of the universe, the solar cosmos in which we live, from the aspect of material bodies rolling through cosmic space. There it doesn't matter; there we can also imagine that anything of that nature, such as loops, is quite easily explained by mechanical tricks, so to speak, by optical illusions and all that.

The lemniscatory universe, of which Rudolf Steiner spoke in his lectures, is from quite a different aspect. There the loops have a reality, and it can also be very well demonstrated. One day we shall have the model of the lemniscate here, and I will show you how it can be demonstrated, and how the loops, for instance, can be experienced as realities, as something that really takes place in the universe and



is not only brought about by the relative positions of both planets, Sun and Earth. We know that Rudolf Steiner spoke of these kinds of movements in the universe. We would have then indicated such things as that which we have in the drawing. As we can see, in a sense the lemniscate is already here. It is only drawn apart through the movement of Mars. It disappears here, so to speak, in this part of the loop (the part which appears to go around \approx), and it comes back here. It is actually so, that if the planet is in a loop, then the other part goes out, so to speak, into infinite space. It just disappears, loses itself. In other words, the two parts of the lemniscate have different values. One can perhaps say that in the sense of earthly properties and earthly space, this part here where the planet Mars is making a loop (small drawing) has more the plus quality, also in a spheric sense. By plus (+) quality, we mean that which is more related to matter, to substance on the Earth, whereas here in this part it is more a minus (-) quality. In these main features of the movements of Mars, we have this conjunction that we have to expect in summer 1955. In this feature of its position behind the Sun, far out in cosmic space where the planet has more a minus (-) quality, it means that Mars has a much deeper connection with the world of the dead. The other feature, the loop in 1956, has more of the plus (+) quality; that is, more the quality of that Mars of which we have been speaking as making up the one half of the Earth that we see around us, which we take into our being through the channels of the senses, the kingdoms of nature, and all that. That is more related to this plus Mars, that is, the Mars in the loop. And the other (minus) is the Mars that is more related to the spiritual world, to the world in which the dead live, for instance.



To this, of course, we must add many more details. For instance, in the neighborhood of this conjunction of Mars and Sun in summer, a multitude of other conjunctions will also take place. It is really the most dramatic picture with regard to those summer months. Really a great number of conjunctions will take place there; for instance, this conjunction of Mars and Sun is quite near Pluto, one of the newly discovered planets, and also near to Jupiter. Venus and Mercury are also there, so it is a whole conglomeration of planets, about the time of this conjunction, in those constellations of Crab and Lion. All this must be considered in order to complete the picture, in order to make something of that event in the sky, because only then can we find the answer in the human realm. We are speaking here of a conjunction of Mars and the Sun, in the constellation of Lion, and here of a loop in Waterman (page 53). We are drawing in the Zodiac, and therefore I believe it is essential that we get a picture of the Zodiac. There are many indications from Rudolf Steiner about the Zodiac; there is quite a lot that one can study. I have tried in *Isis Sophia I & II* to approach the Zodiac from a certain angle, from the angle of the evolution of the world—from the angle of Ancient Saturn, Ancient Sun, Ancient Moon, and even the Earth evolution. All of that approach is meant to be employed; but it is, I should say, a work that demands quite a lot of study.

In ancient times one knew these things, too. If those priest-sages in the ancient temples in Egypt, or elsewhere, looked up to the stars and saw the planets in the constellations, they had deep impressions of all that which presented itself to them through the constellations. The constellation of Lion is not for nothing called Lion; it is not because one worked out in an arbitrary fashion that something could be the head of a lion and there is something in the constellation suggesting the body of a lion, and so let's make it a lion. That is more or less the suggestion that we find in modern descriptions of ancient sidereal mythology. It was by no means done in that fashion. In ancient times people realized from that direction, where we now see the constellation of Lion, forces were streaming down to the Earth giving the impression of a lion, forces that were akin to certain capacities, certain qualities, which one would otherwise find on the Earth in the species of lion. This was also the case with regard to the other constellations. There is deep, deep wisdom contained in ancient sidereal mythology, and if one really gets down to work and tries to study that ancient mythology, one is really surprised what an enormous wisdom, what a storehouse of wisdom is contained in it. Nevertheless, the ancients used a kind of shorthand description of the constellations of the Zodiac. They used those famous symbols that we have here on the blackboard: Υ , Υ , Π , \ominus , Ω , \mathbb{M} , etc. It was simply necessary for certain purposes to have the meaning, the capacity, the impact of a certain constellation, as it were, in a nutshell. It was a necessity because at that time one couldn't give lectures, so to speak, which lasted for an hour and sometimes even longer. With one grasp, one had to describe and to present something that was a fact in the cosmos and on Earth, and these were the symbols.

Let us see how we can get on with the symbols in such a fashion that we can make use of them,  for instance in connection with these workings of Mars in the Zodiac. Now imagine that all is in unity, all is an integrated spiritual universe, no external stars, everything at rest. Then there comes a  moment when something is initiated, inaugurated. How can we imagine that? We would have to imagine it so, that in a certain moment a space is designed, a point in that universe is designed where something would come into movement, where something is supposed to have its own development. We can picture that there is some kind of surface, maybe a piece of glass, with water underneath it. It is damp; it can accumulate into a drop of water. In a certain moment, there would then be a first indication of a drop of water. Something is going to separate from that which is a kind of mirror, a kind of surface of dampness. It is going to separate, and the first intention is indicated in this kind of bulging out. We would have to see something like this in any kind of impulse that enters given facts. There is a certain setting and that setting is complete in itself, it is quite at rest; but now there comes an impulse, something shoots into it, and then we would have such a dynamic picture, as that of Ram—♈. Therefore, Ram is the first of the constellations, the leader of the  constellations of the Zodiac.

The next step would be that this, which has separated, is now independent (you see, we have now come to the point where the drop has really separated from that surface); yet it still has the connection with the upper world, with that from which it had come. We would have to imagine these symbols of Ram all around, so to speak, all pointing toward the center of this universe. A multitude, actually an infinity of Ram symbols would point toward the center; that would be the real thing, but we cannot do that of course, we must restrict ourselves. Now here in the next step there is independence already indicated, but there is still the connection with the great world above. It is the symbol of Bull ♉; I mean literally the head of a bull and the two horns. Now this was also the symbol of Isis in ancient Egypt. Isis was the queen of the heavens; she worked in the human souls, but she bore, so to speak, the heavens in her being, and thus we see her sometimes in ancient Egyptian representations as bearing horns; sometimes even with the head of a cow having horns. In this picture we see the intention to say, “There is this independence, this beginning independence, but still a strong connection with that which is above, which is actually almost overpowering what has separated in the course of evolution.”

The next would be Twins, and there we have already a stronger separation between upper and lower, left and right ♊. We see an upper world, and now for the first time there appears a lower world, an independence. Of course, one needs to go into much more detail concerning these things, and one can work out that independence in all precision. There is the upper world, which we have also here in Bull, but for the first time there is now a lower world. We see a contradiction with the being hovering in between and still connected with both. That would be the dynamic quality of Twins.

Now the next one is Crab, and it has come apart ♋. We see that a further rupture has taken place, which is essential in any kind of evolution; we can even observe it in the tiniest thing we do. It is like the Yin and Yang of Chinese symbology:  but here they are still joined.

With Lion it is always a matter of center, namely, that which has separated and now seeks to establish a relationship to the periphery ♌. Thereby it can come from the periphery into a center, or it can go out from the interior toward the periphery.

The next constellation is that of Virgin, and there we have this strange symbol: ♍. What has taken place is the fact that in Lion we have drawn away, we have drawn into our own interior from the periphery, and we are ourselves, in a sense. We have drawn the whole cosmos into our inner being. There it is, as small as, say, the circulation and the heart within the inner being, because that is also connected with Lion. Now in Virgin, something is going to happen in that microcosm. It is a very mysterious thing that is going to happen there, something like a mysterious new birth. This is something that one might liken to chemical processes, but chemical processes of an alchemical or spiritual nature, which take place in the soul behind three curtains, such as in the ancient mysteries—for instance, think of Egyptian temples. There it was so, that one had to go from, say, the outer yard—well, first the alley of the sphinxes, which may have been sphinxes but also perhaps different animals or beasts. Then we enter the outer courtyard, then we go through another portico into the inner courtyard and still deeper. It is a matter of going through stages of preparation, even in an external sense, until we are finally able to enter the innermost sanctuary. Thus the constellation of Virgin is that cosmic region from which forces flow into our Earth evolution and have flowed into our Earth evolution in the past that are

associated with tremendous changes, tremendous inner developments. These forces take up that which has been established through Lion as a turning into the inner, as a turning away from the greater cosmos, a coming to oneself; and then there is the establishment of, let us say, a microcosm within the macrocosm, a birth of maybe far-reaching importance, and that is Virgin.

It is already late, and we shall stop here. So we have now discussed the first six constellations of the Zodiac, and we shall then carry on with the last six next time. We need this in order to discuss the movements of the planet Mars in the course of this year. We want to know what it means, what our answer can be to that event of Mars standing behind the Sun in the constellation of Lion and equally of that loop of Mars in Waterman. It is important to realize that we need the quality of the constellations in which these events take place, because what takes place, what happens in the cosmos is always a composition of two elements: the one is the planet, and the other one is the constellation. These two components must come together in order to make that sound which is there in the cosmos. Neither the planet alone nor the constellation alone would give the keynote.

Answers to Questions

Have these signs always been used?

They have changed, and even the constellations have changed. The Chinese, for instance, and the Tibetans have quite a different Zodiac from ours. We cannot really say when this came into existence or where it came from. We find the first traces only in historic times, only as far as documents go, but I do think that they go back, some of them at least, to ancient India. You see the Chinese and the Tibetans, who are really Atlanteans who have not joined, so to speak, the community of the post-Atlantean epoch, have retained something that was possibly valid in Atlantean times. They use animals exclusively in the Chinese and Tibetan Zodiac. One knows how they are associated with the twelve constellations of the Zodiac, I mean what the equivalents are at present, but we must also include another fact in this, which is that the fixed stars are moving too. If we take that familiar constellation of Plough or Great Bear—the seven stars, or septemvrians—we do not expect that those seven stars would be found in a different “assortment,” so to speak. We know, and we rely on the fact that they are always in the same composition in the cosmos. That was not always so and won’t be so in the far future. After many thousands of years, the stars will have moved apart and into a different composition. The Great Bear will look quite different, and so we can imagine that in Atlantean times the constellations of the Zodiac had a different appearance; they spoke differently, they presented different visions or different imaginations, and that is probably the Zodiacs of Tibet and China.

There are some suggestions which support the idea that some of the constellations of the Zodiac, and also near the Zodiac, were recognized as such already in Ancient India. Such a myth as that of Hercules goes back, I believe, into the dim past. It is not of Greek origin; we find it already in Phoenicia, and I am sure we would find it also, for instance, in the myth of Marduk and his battle with Tiamat. That is not the same as the Hercules myths, but somewhere in the neighborhood, of course more elevated, more in the realm of the deity. Those twelve labors of Hercules are associated with the twelve constellations of the Zodiac. There have always been attempts to associate them. Some of them are quite easy; for instance Bull of Crete, which is, of course, the constellation Bull; it has a certain connection with the constellation Bull. In the beginning Hercules killed a Lion, and that is connected with the constellation of Lion. Then one of the labors is the destruction of the Hydra, the Lernean Serpent, which is just underneath these constellations Crab, Lion, Virgin, and right into Scales. Under Scales is the tail, and underneath Crab is the head.

What are they really, all these features of the twelve deeds? They are all battles in the astral world, which will clear the astral world. To put it into a nutshell is rather an involved task, but remember that in Atlantean times the Earth was covered by mists and dense fog. Now imagine that these condensed, and the consequence was those tremendous rainfalls and the floods of which we hear, which in other places worked as the ice age. Then suddenly the constellations become visible. Imagine what a deep impression that must have made on Atlantean humanity. They didn’t see the stars, and suddenly there they were! And we know that they still had gifts of clairvoyance; they realized the constellations not as we do, as pin points of light and ever so far away. For them it was really a world of astral forces working down onto the Earth. That may

well have been a frightening, even terrifying experience. Then certain heroes went out in order to fight those monsters. Their deeds are a picture of the astrality of humanity now placed into such a position that it could put, so to speak, a soul distance between that which worked from the depth of the cosmos into the Earth. These are the deeds of Hercules for instance, which cleared the astral atmosphere, and that is how the constellations came about.