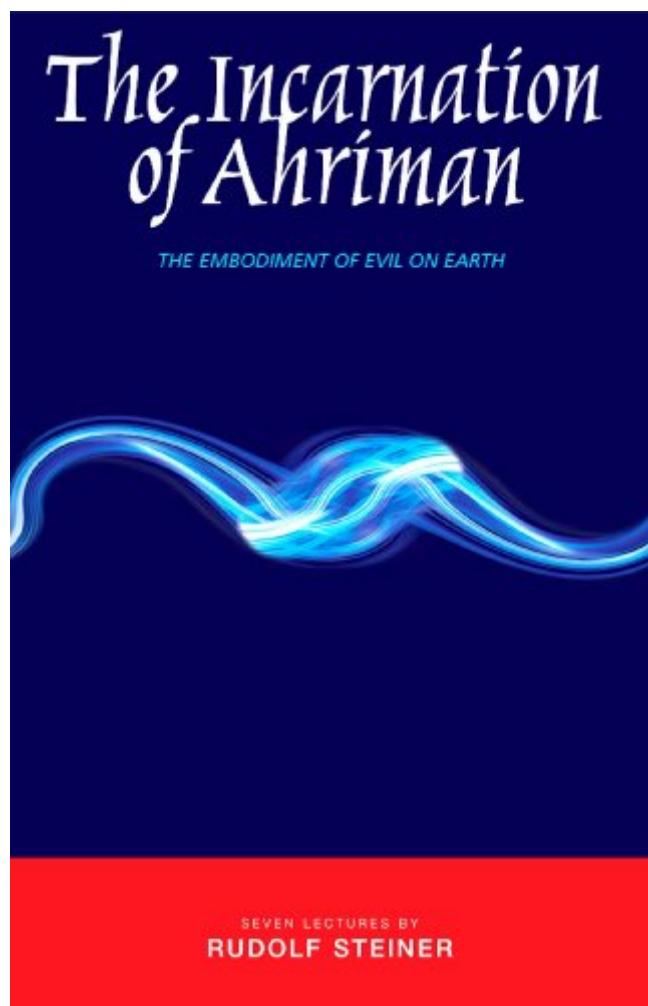


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The Incarnation Of Ahriman: The Embodiment Of Evil On Earth



Synopsis

While we know of Ahriman from Persian mythology, Rudolf Steiner spoke of him as an actual, living spiritual entity. This being, he said, works to embed people firmly into physicality, encouraging dull, materialistic attitudes and a philistine, dry intellect. In these extraordinary lectures Steiner, in rare prophetic mode, talks about an actual incarnation of Ahriman on the earth and the potential consequences. Just as Christ incarnated in a physical body, so would Ahriman incarnate in the Western world - before 'a part' of the third millennium had passed. Steiner places this incarnation in the context of a 'cosmic triad' - Lucifer, Christ and Ahriman. Ahriman will incarnate as a counterpoint to the physical incarnation of Lucifer in the East in the third millennium BC, with the incarnation of Jesus Christ in Palestine as the balancing point between the two. Over the period during which Steiner developed anthroposophy - a speaking career that spanned two decades and more than six thousand lectures - he referred to the idea of Ahriman's incarnation only six times. These six lectures, together with an additional supporting excerpt, are reproduced in their entirety, and under one cover, for the first time.

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Customer Reviews

Some time ago, I promised myself to stop reading Steiner, but it doesn't seem to be working. Do I have an unhealthy karmic bond with this outrageous character, or what? ;-) Rudolf Steiner was, of course, the founder of Anthroposophy, a new religious movement broadly derived from Theosophy. In contrast to all other religions I'm familiar with, Anthroposophy believes in two evil or negative forces in the cosmos, rather than just one. Steiner called them Lucifer and Ahriman. Of these, Ahriman seems to be closest to traditional Christian conceptions of the devil. He is depicted with horns and wings, lives in a dark cave and will be incarnated on Earth in the near future as a kind of Anti-Christ figure. This little book, "The Incarnation of Ahriman" deals with this presumably momentous event. In sharp contrast to the materialist Ahriman, Lucifer is a kind of fiery, ethereal air-spirit. Steiner believes that Lucifer, Ahriman and God are all mixed up in other spiritual traditions. Thus, he believes that Satan in Milton's "Paradise Lost" is Ahriman spouting the characteristics of Lucifer, while God in the same poem is really Lucifer pretending to be divine! Even Goethe (whom Steiner greatly admired) got it all wrong, letting Faust be confronted by one adversary only (Mephistopheles), who combines luciferic and ahrimanic elements. What struck me when reading Steiner's lectures on Ahriman, and also some other Anthroposophical material, is that neither Lucifer nor Ahriman are "evil" in the robust, metaphysical sense in which Satan is evil in Christianity. In fact, it's unclear in what sense Lucifer can be said to be evil at all. He brings enlightenment, gnosis and high culture to humanity.

Review of "The Incarnation of Ahriman: The Embodiment of Evil on Earth." 8/1/13 0730 hrs & 9/13/13 0830 hrs Rudolf Steiner, in 7 Lectures given in 4 different German towns (Dornach, Zurich, Bern and Stuttgart) from Oct.-Dec. 1919, paints for us the picture of the fall-out of mankind's eventual acceptance of a duality of heaven and hell archetypically depicted in Milton's "Paradise Lost" or Klopstock's "Messiah". Here is Steiner: "It makes no difference that Milton and Klopstock describe their heavenly being as 'divine'. They would be truly divine beings as human beings aught to experience them, only if they were presented as members of a threefold cosmic existence. Only then would it be possible to say that a battle was raging between the principles of good and evil. But, as it is, a duality is assumed. All good attributes are ascribed to one pole, and names are found and attached to the beings of this pole how are presented as divine, while the diabolical element antagonistic to the divine occupies the other pole. And what really happens then? Why, the divine is erased from people's consciousness and is replaced by a luciferic element, which is given the label of divinity. The actual result is that we have a battle going on between Lucifer and Ahriman, but Lucifer's characteristics are attributed to Ahriman and, Lucifer's kingdom is conceived as divine."

(Pages 6-7.) That is, "good" is now just "luciferic" impulses in the human being and "bad" is now just "ahrimanic" impulses in the human being. What are these impulses? When an imbalance of mind over matter presides in a person, they are coming under their own luciferic impulse too strongly.

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