

The Rose Cross in Europe III.

Questions of Spiritual Identity

A three-day conference examining
the deeper historical challenges facing
Europe in the 20th and 21st centuries



Prague

18 – 21 November 2010

This is the third conference on *The Rose Cross in Europe*, again a freestanding event, and it is therefore not necessary for participants to have attended last year's conference. This year's conference seeks to explore and confront the darker aspects of our recent past and immediate present. Today it is necessary to sharpen awareness for the ways in which evil works, in order to resist and overcome its temptations.



The Great Temptations: Occult Aspects of National Socialism and Bolshevism.

The Crisis of Tradition and Mankind's Crossing of the Threshold.

Markus Osterrieder

Markus wants to explore the situation of mankind, especially in Europe, that unfolded during the 20th century and was described by Rudolf Steiner as the Crossing of the Threshold. There are "historical reasons" for the appearance of National Socialism in Central Europe and Bolshevism both in Russia and East Central Europe, but the importance for today is to realize how both ideologies and their "leaders" were able to abuse deep spiritual expectations by exploiting images and symbols which found a deep resonance in people's souls. At the same time, since the end of the 19th century we have experienced a turning point in the spiritual evolution of mankind. Outwardly, it manifests in the destruction of the "traditional way of life" and the complete reversal of everything mankind had taken for granted in the centuries before. Why is this so, and what does mankind's Crossing of the Threshold mean for our awareness of ourselves?

The 2012 Phenomenon: Truth or Hype?

Terry Boardman

An apocalyptic doomsday date signifying global extinction or global tyranny, or the beginning of a

golden age of bliss and higher consciousness for humanity? Is there any truth to either of these claims, or are they just delusions or mere money-spinning ventures? 100 years ago, the New Age was being presented by the Theosophical Society on the basis of mostly eastern, Indian philosophies, and the boy Jiddu Krishnamurti was said by the Theosophists to be the coming World Teacher. The recent publicity surrounding the emergence of Barack Obama shows that there is still a great appetite, even yearning for such a 'Messiah'-figure, and this time from the West. What is the relationship of the coming 'age of light' heralded by spiritual teachers a century ago, including Rudolf Steiner, and that claimed by proponents of the 2012 phenomenon today? Where does Europe find itself between these two historical phenomena, from the East and from the West? 600 years ago (c.1412) saw the birth of Joan of Arc and the deaths of the first three Hussite martyrs. 400 years ago, in 1612, the Rosicrucian Manifestoes were being prepared in Central Europe, as Elizabeth Stuart of England was engaged to the Elector Frederick of the Palatinate. 200 years ago, in the year of Kaspar Hauser's birth and abduction (1812), the West (Napoleonic France) marched across Central Europe to attack the East (Czarist Russia). How does the 2012 phenomenon relate to the essential motifs of the Rose Cross? These are the questions that will be addressed in Terry's two lectures.

The Rose Cross in Europe and the Crossing of the Abyss or Threshold of the 20th Century.
Talk performance: „Why, then, complain?“
The Crossing of the Abyss or Threshold of the 20th Century as witnessed in European Culture.

Richard Ramsbotham

Rudolf Steiner described the most important event of the 20th Century as being the reappearance of Christ, not in the physical world but in the etheric world (that interweaves with the physical world)

beginning in the mid-1930s. He described that much would depend on whether this event could be recognized by people or not. Yet these years, as we know, ushered in the darkest years of the whole century, making it extremely difficult to see how this Event took place - and therefore what changes it brought about. Various artists, however, ('the antennae of the race' - P.B. Shelley) across Europe, without naming the Event the way Steiner did, nonetheless bore witness to changes not only in the catastrophic worldwide political situation, but also in the surroundings of the earth and in the consciousness of human beings. They can be a great help in seeing what it was that took place and in what way things have altered since before that time. And these changes have often very much to do precisely with the encounter with evil, and with ways towards its overcoming or transformation.

There will be one lecture on this theme - and one talk-performance where, through poetry and prose, we will attempt to experience the theme artistically.

Confusing the truth and lie as a sign of our time

Anežka Janátová PhD.

Goethe shows in his Faust the way the truth is changed into a half-truth, in the end becoming a lie. Doctor Faust, having gone through the profound Easter experience of Resurrection, is translating Gospel of St John. However, Mephistopheles is already there, resting at the hearth in the form of a poodle. The sacred work with the Divine "Logos" is unbearable for the poodle. That is why it inspires Faust to a false process of translation. By the end of the work it can manifest itself in the shape of a student. The animal and adverse power demonstrates itself as a student.

Yes, Mephistopheles causes the false process of learning and in the end he puts into the translation Deed instead of the Word. However, if Deed is not inspired by the knowledge of the Word, it goes astray and leads in the end to the loss of the meaning of life.

Rudolf Steiner recalls in his lecture of December 2nd 1923 the burning of the Goetheanum from December 31st 1922 and the burning of the temple in Ephesus on February 6th 356 BC and reminds us of the mystery of the human word, which emanates from the Logos, Divine Word, which has become God. Study the mystery of humanity in little words in Micrologos to get ready for obtaining the mystery of the great word, Macrologos.

The loss of the meaning of the word leads to the loss of the mystery of the meaning of human life on the earth, which is exactly the goal of the adverse powers. A spiritual vacuum, which has been created by the adversaries, makes us fail to experience childhood in the right way so that we cannot gather enough strength for the deeds in adulthood, deeds that each one of us, before we are born, decides on with the help of the highest hierarchie. We can very often see the sadness in the eyes of children who have been born into this kind of spiritual emptiness, children who cannot find the right nourishment for their souls in families where parents strive for material values, and engage in vacuous celebration of festivals and meaningless holidays by the sea. Then it is easy for Mephistopheles to bring these children to schools where their souls go astray through the use of twisted words. Perhaps one day, however, through such vicissitudes, they might begin to remember what they decided on in the Divine Worlds before they came to this sacred earth. The endeavour to fulfil these tasks helps us in the fight against the adverse powers, because it strengthens the consciousness of our souls, and the consciousness of the true origin of human I, which, after death, is taken to the spiritual world.

Markus Osterrieder, PhD., M.A.

(Munich University), b. 1961, Munich

is a freelance historian, lecturer and writer, active in many European countries from Norway to Romania and from Britain to Russia. He has a particular interest in the spiritual, geopolitical and cross-cultural exchanges between the continents of America, Europe and Eurasia.

His web site: www.celtoslavica.de

Terry Boardman (b. 1952)

has been a long-term student of history and of Rudolf Steiner's Spiritual Science. He was a university and college lecturer for thirteen years in Japan and England, a eurythmist for 11 years, and is now a freelance writer, lecturer and translator of Japanese and German.

Web site: www.monju.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk

Richard Ramsbotham

is a writer and theatre practitioner, UK. He lectured in English literature at Warsaw University (1989-1993) and worked as performer and writer with the Rose Theatre Company. He runs Amador, offering theatre, education and research.

Web site: www.amador.co.uk

Anežka Janátová, PhD.

after graduating from Charles University (Prague), she worked as a psychologist and later, as a director at the Jedlickas Home, for people with learning difficulties and physical handicaps. In 1993 she conceived of the Curative Education and Social Therapy course and started it immediately. In 1997 she and her students set up The Tabor Academy of Social Arts, where she has been active ever since. Since 2008, she has been the head of the Anthroposophical Society in the Czech Republic.

Akademie Tabor site: www.akademietabor.cz

Venue: Anthroposofická společnost, Hošťálkova 392/1d, Praha 6

Organiser: Anthroposophical Society, the Czech Republic

Applications: ruzeakriz@akademietabor.cz

Co-ordinator: Tomáš Petr, Akademie sociálního umění Tabor, Jana Zajíce 32, 170 00 Praha 7, tel.: (00420) 233 382 492, web: www.akademietabor.cz

Price: € 80, 40 (student)

Czech/English translation provided.

Programme: The conference will start on Thursday evening and will end on Sunday afternoon. The programme will be accompanied by plenums and artistic performances. You will receive exact information after your application.