



## Theme of the Year 2011-2012

**The General Anthroposophical Society's annual theme 2011/12 explores Christian Rosenkreutz, one of the greatest esoteric teachers of the Occident. Sergei Prokofieff looks at the importance of Christian Rosenkreutz for the potential appearance of the etheric Christ and at his relationship to Rudolf Steiner.**

## Anthroposophy – Rosicrucianism in Our Time

Following Rudolf Steiner's first proclamation in 1910 of the reappearance of the Christ in the etheric and the artistic production of his first Mystery Drama *The Portal of Initiation* (GA 14) which was subtitled "A Rosicrucian Mystery," he continued this theme in the following years with the disclosure of the secret of Christian Rosenkreutz, the founder of Rosicrucianism and the great servant of the etheric Christ.

### Christian Rosenkreutz and the Reappearance in the Etheric

In the two lectures held by Rudolf Steiner at Michaelmas 1911, on the occasion of the festive opening of the Christian-Rosenkreutz branch in Neuchâtel, he presented for the first time the esoteric roots of this mystical stream which are to be found in the unique initiation of its founder in the year 1250. To this day this illustration is of utmost importance for everyone who is looking for a closer relationship to Christian Rosenkreutz. In the same lectures Rudolf Steiner speaks of how Christian Rosenkreutz' mighty etheric body, created through this initiation, continued to be strengthened through the inner work of all true Rosicrucians over the centuries. He describes how, in our time, it plays a decisive role in the increasing ability of man to become aware of the etheric Christ. Those human beings, who are imbued by this etheric body, can achieve this higher spiritual awareness. "It is the work of the Rosicrucians that makes possible the etheric vision of Christ".<sup>1</sup>

Rudolf Steiner verified one of the most important research results by modern Rosicrucians, who continue to co-operate with Christian Rosenkreutz, as the discovery of the flow of the etheric blood of Christ which, since the Mystery of Golgotha, flows in every human being from his heart to his head and forms the basis for the perception of the etheric Christ today. This fact shows the current emphasis of true Rosicrucianism on the re-appearance in the etheric as the central spiritual event of our time.<sup>2</sup>

### The Rosicrucian Endowment

Rudolf Steiner also speaks of Christian Rosenkreutz' worldwide esoteric call which re-awakens his pupils at a moment of great biographical crisis to a new life and thus puts a seal on the relationship with him. This is the basis for becoming a direct, inner pupil of Christian Rosenkreutz. "This is how he chooses his community," says Rudolf Steiner. In conjunction with this stood the attempt in 1911 to form an esoteric group with the provisory name "Society for Theosophical Art and Way of Life." If the establishment of this had been successful, the group, in its later development, would have been under the direct esoteric leadership of Christian Rosenkreutz himself.<sup>3</sup> It was intended to reflect the esoteric principle of "Interpretation" as something essentially new. This allows complete

human freedom and the development of the purest forces of altruism which within true esotericism rest upon a "complete elimination of all that is personal." ?For herein lies the prerequisite for a spiritual cooperation with Christian Rosenkreutz. Rudolf Steiner comments on this at the end of the first Neuchâtel lecture: "If you can become an instrument of Christian Rosenkreutz, then you can be assured that the smallest detail of your soul activity will be there for eternity."

### The Link between the Spirit and Practical Deeds

In the same year Rudolf Steiner also carried his message about the etheric Christ to the public in his book *The Spiritual Guidance of Mankind*. Thus he links this event with the current task of a "new esotericism" which has its roots in the initiation of Christian Rosenkreutz and which today has the power to receive "new inspirations" from the spiritual world in the form of anthroposophy or Spiritual Science.<sup>6</sup> These can not only penetrate and spiritualise man's forces of perception but also affect and transform the spheres of practical life. Rudolf Steiner states: "Rosicrucian wisdom must not stream only into the head, nor only into the heart, but also into the hand, into our manual capacities, into our daily actions."<sup>7</sup> This is how the many fields of activity have arisen out of anthroposophy, where all areas of practical life are to be nourished by the spirit.

This makes anthroposophy into a modern representative of true Rosicrucianism which not only has a historical link but which also maintains and builds on the new spiritual sources from the spiritual world that only today have become available to mankind and which flow out of the sphere of our present time spirit, Michael, into humanity. "Rosicrucianism does not mean carrying forth certain truths throughout all centuries but it means developing a sense for that which each specific era can bring to mankind out of the spiritual world."<sup>8</sup>

### A New Relationship to the Spiritual Teacher

We can describe anthroposophy as a modern, Michaelic form of Rosicrucianism which today opens up a new future perspective of this occult stream beyond old traditions. Therefore Rudolf Steiner was able to correctly state in his lecture "What makes us Theosophists and what makes us Rosicrucians?": "We are the Rosicrucians of the 20th century!"<sup>9</sup>

The meaning of this word today can be seen, for example, in the completely new relationship between the spiritual teacher and his pupil, who now becomes a friend and guide to the developing human being. This also applies to our relationship to Christian Rosenkreutz. "The less you take on authority, the more understanding you will have for Christian Rosenkreutz."<sup>10</sup>

Through anthroposophy true Rosicrucianism gains a new force and creative potential which allow it to be effective and fruitful far beyond the 20th century.

### Christian Rosenkreutz and Rudolf Steiner

Finally, and on the occasion of Rudolf Steiner's 150th anniversary this year, his close spiritual cooperation with the great esoteric teacher of the occident has to be mentioned because it forms a significant part of Rudolf Steiner's spiritual biography. This can not only be seen in the direct messages from Christian Rosenkreutz which Rudolf Steiner incorporated in his esoteric lessons,<sup>11</sup> but predominantly in the founding of the Society for Theosophical Art and Way of Life which, as already mentioned, was to be under the direct leadership of Christian Rosenkreutz. Also the fact that he noted the first and second Mystery Dramas as written "through Rudolf Steiner" speaks of the direct cooperation between these two individualities. One year after the ground-breaking lectures in Neuchâtel, Rudolf Steiner speaks in the same branch about this great Master and his own relationship to him: "And he who is permitted to be close to Christian Rosenkreutz looks with admiration and reverence on how accurately Christian Rosenkreutz himself has fulfilled the huge Rosicrucian-Christian mission bestowed on him for our time."<sup>12</sup> And to fulfil this important mission in the 20th century, Christian Rosenkreutz had his spiritual brother and combatant – Rudolf Steiner – by his side. | *Sergei O. Prokofieff, Goetheanum*

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#### Notes:

1. Rudolf Steiner: *Esoteric Christianity* (GA130), Lecture of 27 September 1911.

#### Recommended Literature:

(adapted to reflect available US and English-language editions)

2. Ibid. Lecture 1 October 1911.
3. Rudolf Steiner: *Esoteric Lessons 1904 to 1914* (GA 264), 15 December 1911.
4. ibid
5. ibid
6. Rudolf Steiner: *The Spiritual Guidance of Mankind* (GA 15), Chapter III.
7. Rudolf Steiner: *Theosophy of the Rosicrucians* (GA 99), Lecture of 22 May 1907.
8. Rudolf Steiner: *Bilder okkultur Siegel und Säulen* (GA 284), Lecture of 16 October 1911.
9. ibid
10. Rudolf Steiner: *Esoteric Christianity* (GA130), Lecture of 28 September 1911.
11. See Rudolf Steiner: *Esoteric Lectures* (GA266/1), Lesson of 1 June 1907, Part A.
12. Rudolf Steiner: *Esoteric Christianity* (GA130), Lecture of 18 December 1912.

#### Conferences at the Goetheanum

The Rosicrucian Mysteries at theGoetheanum:

- Rudolf Steiner's 150th Anniversary:
  - «RudolfSteiner in the spiritual history of humanity», 25 to 27 February.
- Easter Conference «Gehoben ist derStein...», 21 to 24 April
- Christmas Conference 2011.

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#### Previous "Themes of the Year":

##### 2010-2011:

"The Destiny of the I in the Age of the Etheric Christ"

##### 2009-2010:

"Thinking of the Heart as an Organ for Perception of Development and Metamorphosis"

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**The image at the top of this page** is a detail from "The Polish Rider" by Rembrandt.

#### Rudolf Steiner:

1. *Esoteric Christianity and the Mission of Christian Rosenkreutz*: Twenty-three Lectures (GA 130). Lectures of 28 September & 1 October 1911. Rudolf Steiner Press, 2000. [An earlier edition, *Esoteric Christianity and the Mission of Christian Rosenkreutz*, Rudolf Steiner Press, 1984, does not contain the lecture of 1 October 1911, "The Etherization of the Blood," which is otherwise available in the collection titled *The Reappearance of Christ in the Etheric* (lecture 9), SteinerBooks, 2003.
2. *The Spiritual Guidance of the Individual and Humanity* (GA 15). Anthroposophic Press, 1992 [also earlier as *The Spiritual Guidance of Man*].
3. *From the History and Contents of the First Section of the Esoteric School, 1904-1914* (GA/CW 264). Lecture of 15 December 1911. SteinerBooks, 2010. (Earlier edition 1998).
4. *Rosicrucianism Renewed: The Unity of Art, Science, and Religion* (GA/CW 284). Lecture of 16 October 1911. SteinerBooks, 2007. Also available in a 1920 typescript translation.

#### By Other Authors:

1. Hella Krause-Zimmer: *Christian Rosenkreutz. Sich kreuzende Lebenswege*, Dornach 2009. Available only in German.
2. Sergei O. Prokofieff: *The Foundation Stone Meditation*, London, 2006, chapters 6 and 11.
3. Virginia Sease: "Das esoterische Rosenkreuzertum als kulturbildende Kraft" in: *Anthroposophie und Kunst: Der Münchener Kongress 1907 und die Gegenwart*, Munich, 2008. Available only in German.
4. Virginia Sease: "Karmische Biografie Christian Rosenkreutz: Durchchristung des Menschen," in: *Das Goetheanum* No. 46/2007, Dornach. Available only in German.
5. Peter Selg: *Rudolf Steiner und Christian Rosenkreutz*, Arlesheim 2010. Available only in German.

#### Note:

All the above titles, both by Rudolf Steiner and by other authors, including those in German, are available from:

**The Rudolf Steiner Library**

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