

Anthroposophy, Rudolf Steiner and Waldorf/Steiner Schools **Collected references from the National Library of Australia**

An annotated bibliography

Bodensiek, Julius, "The Encyclopedia of the Lutheran Church", Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, USA, 1965.

Entry under Anthroposophy (2.0 columns¹) by Erwin Schneider. Tr. Vienna, Austria, is openly hostile with comments like "Christ's 'sun-spirit', so we are to understand, united itself with the twin-natured Jesus ..." and "In reality, however, anthroposophy is nothing else but unrestrained, phantastic *gnosis* of the type which the church on the basis of I Tim. 6:20 has always rightly disavowed. The historic Jesus was no gnostic, nor did he teach his disciples the secrets of an esoteric science, ..." this latter extract coming from the section on the Christian Community (which was founded by a Lutheran pastor and defector, Friedrich Rittelmeyer). There is no separate entry under Christian Community nor Steiner. The bibliography is mostly a curt reference to the Anthroposophic Press.

Bromiley, Geoffrey W, (English language editor), "The Encyclopedia of Christianity", William B Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids and Cambridge, 1999.

Entry on Anthroposophy (2.5 columns) by Karl Hoheisel, Bonn (Germany) including critical comment like, "Christ as a cosmic being is an integral part of this speculation ..." and, "... based partly on the Bible but mainly on traces of cosmic development (accessible only to Steiner) in the so-called Akasha Chronicle." Bibliography includes McDermott (1986).

Entry on the Christian Community by Hubertus Mynarek, Odernheim (Germany), including critical comments like, "... the building up of fellowship by cultic acts to offset an overemphasis on doctrine and dogma." and their, "... ethical claim ... is based on a certain elitist sense." "In Germany, ... the Roman Catholic Church totally rejects the CC." "... its baptism is not accepted as Christian baptism (by the Evangelical Church in Germany) (as of a decision in May 1949)." "(Its entry) into the World Council of Churches was refused (December 1950)." Bibliography dominated by German texts.

Cross, FL and Livingston, EA (eds), "The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church", Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK, 1997.

Entry under Anthroposophy reads:

anthroposophy. A system evolved by R. *Steiner (q.v.) based on the premises that the human soul can, of its own power, contact the spiritual world. The concepts of reincarnation and karma are central to it. It acknowledges Christ as a cosmic being,

1 All works are in 2 columns per page format unless noted otherwise.

but its understanding of Him is very different to that of orthodox Christianity; He is regarded as a 'Sun Being' ('Sonnenwesen') who became incarnate at the turning-point of man's spiritual evolution, bringing the impulses of the highest Divine love to earth. Anthroposophy has found adherents esp. among those in search of religious experiences outside the normal channels of Church life. It was condemned by the Roman Catholic Church in 1919.

G. Kaufmann, *Fruits of Anthroposophy* (1922); [L.] F. Edmunds, *Anthroposophy: a Way of Life* (Hartfield, E. Sussex, 1982); G. Ahern, *Sun at Midnight: The Rudolf Steiner Movement and the Western Esoteric Tradition* (Wellingborough, Northamptonshire, 1984). See also bibl. To STEINER, R.

There are no entries under Christian Community but under Steiner, Rudolf (0.6 columns of which 0.2 is bibliography) including, "He taught the original nobility of the human spirit and a doctrine of immortality, supporting his teaching by a claimed clairvoyance."

A 1970s edition edited by Cross alone reads:

ANTHROPOSOPHY A religious system evolved by R. *Steiner (q.v.) from neo-Indian theosophy, but placing man instead of God in its centre. It aims at leading man by a certain discipline of 'concentration' and 'meditation' towards an 'intuition' in which the lower ego receives the vision of the higher self. Anthroposophy teaches a highly elaborated and fantastic doctrine of the origin of the world, the various epochs of mankind, the 'sun being' ('Sonnenwesen') Christ, reincarnation, and 'Karma'. It has found adherents in Germany as well as in Britain and America, esp. among those in search of religious experiences outside the normal channels of Church life. It was condemned by the Roman Catholic Church in 1919.

G. Kaufmann, *Fruits of Anthroposophy* (1922); H. Leisegang, *Die Grundlagen der Anthroposophie* (1924); A. F. Stoltzenburg, *Anthroposophie und Christentum* (1925).

Davidson, Gustav, "A Dictionary of Angels (including the fallen angels)", The Free Press, New York, USA, 1967.

Entries for Dynamis (citing Steiner's "The Work of the Angels in Man's Astral Body" equating Dynamis with Might), Exousia (citing Steiner's usage as "Spirits of Form"), Kyriotates (which we apparently only know exist because Steiner mentions them in "Karmic Relationships"), Thrones and Uriel (an angel important enough to rate a whole page when most pages hold around 20 angels).

Irresponsibly, the Appendix includes information which would be dangerous in the wrong hands like "A Spell to Guarantee the Possession of the Loved One" (page 360), "Spell for the Manufacture and Use of a Magic Carpet" (page 359) and "Conjuration for the Evocation of a Spirit Armed with Power from the Supreme Majesty" (page 359).

Douglas, JD, (ed), "New 20th-Century Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge", Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, USA, 1991.

Entry on Anthroposophy (0.5 columns) by Karla Poewe, assistant professor of anthropology, University of Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada, which begins, “A pseudo-Christian form of theosophy ...” and ends with, “... a small group ... reminiscent of the decadent intellectualism of the Weimar Republic ...”. No bibliography and no entry on Steiner.

Eliade, Mircea, (ed), “The Encyclopedia of Religion”, 15 Volumes plus index, Macmillan Publishing Company, New York, USA, 1986

Entries on Anthroposophy (2.5 columns) by Robert A McDermott² (Bernard M Baruch College, City University of New York), Steiner, Rudolf (2.5 columns) by Robert A McDermott, both are positive descriptions, bibliographies do not cite Ahern (1984), an entry on Ascension includes description of sex magic practiced by Phibionites (Gnostics) and is covered again under Sexuality with emphasis on the importance of retaining semen during Tantra ecstasy and ending with Aleister Crowley’s Ordo Templis Orientis and a few derivatives therefrom (not mentioning Steiner).

Ferngren, Gary B, et al (eds), “The History of Science and Religion in the Western Tradition: An Encyclopedia”, Garland Publishing, New York and London, 2000.

Entry under “The Human Body and the Body Politic” (4.5 columns including 1.0 column of bibliography headed by Ahern) opines, “... only the Anthroposophical Society ... incorporated the macrocosm/microcosm analogy as a significant part of its speculations.” And goes on , “... such occultist uses of the analogy ... merely reveal the preoccupations of the occultists themselves.”

Goring, Rosemary, “Chambers Dictionary of Beliefs and Religions”, Chambers, Edinburgh and New York, 1992.

Entry under Anthroposophy (0.5 columns) begins, “A modern spiritual and cult movement founded by Rudolf Steiner.” Entry under Gnosticism (0.3 columns) “... considered a heresy by the early Church Fathers ...”. Entry under Sexuality in Religion includes, “In some traditions, such as Gnosticism, sexuality was seen in two opposing ways. For those Gnostics who saw the material world as evil and the spiritual world as good, sexuality was to be avoided as part of the fallen material world; but for others it could be indulged in wantonly as being of no consequence in a sinful world.” Entry under Steiner, Rudolf (0.5 columns) includes, “His work helped inspire many other, still flourishing, educational and therapeutic enterprises ...”.

Griffin, Marion Mahoney, “Magic of America”, microfilm of unpublished manuscript, original held in Burnham Library of Architecture, USA.

² Robert McDermott is credited with the idea and with author support in Almon’s Foreword for Almon, Clopper, “A Study Companion to An Outline of Esoteric Science” (formerly “Occult Science”), Anthroposophic Press, New York, USA, 1998.

Hastings, Adrian, et al (eds), "The Oxford Companion to Christian Thought", Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK, 2000.

There are no entries under Anthroposophy, Christian Community or Steiner nor even under Rosicrucianism.

Johnson, Donald L, "The Donald Lesley Johnson collection of Walter and Marion Griffin documents, 1901-1988", unpublished manuscripts, original held in the National Library of Australia.

Lewis, James R, "The Encyclopedia of Cults, Sects and New Religions", Prometheus Books, New York, USA, 1998.

Entry on the Anthroposophical Society in America (4.6 columns) is generally supportive with comments like "Steiner's world-affirming approach has continued to flourish ...". Similarly so with some interesting facts: "Since the 1950s, soil scientists working with spiritual insights have successfully composted TNT ..." and "In 1997, an anthroposophical cancer therapy based on mistletoe extract was named to the National Institute of Health (NIH) short list of alternative therapies worthy of further study." and "more than six hundred Waldorf Schools worldwide, and more than 230 Waldorf schools and kindergartens in the United States and Canada."

Marthaler, Berard L (ed), "New Catholic Encyclopedia", 14 volumes plus index, Thomson Gale, New York, USA, second edition, 2003.

In association with the Catholic University of America, Washington DC

Entry on Anthroposophy (2.6 columns) by John A Hardon³ describing it as "a religious system" and spends 0.3 columns on Theosophy and 0.4 on the Christian Community in which the Eucharist is given prominence as "the communicant becomes truly human, whereas before he was only an image distorted by hostile powers."⁴ The entry ends with the same words as Cross and Livingston: "was condemned by the Roman Catholic Church in 1919" but adds no detail. There is no entry for "condemn" nor "condemnation" and the small bibliography omits Ahern.

Entry on Steiner, Rudolf (0.9 columns) also by Hardon is uncritical history but closes with a listing of the "Steiner inspired activities" and the naïve assertion that "Most of these projects have no direct connection with anthroposophy." The bibliography lists only two books (Shepherd and Wachsmuth) both from the 1950s suggesting this is a "fossil" entry from the first edition (1967).

3 John A Hardon is Professor of Dogmatic Theology, Bellarmine School of Theology, North Aurora, Illinois, and Associate Professor of Comparative Religion, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

4 No source is cited for this assertion but, if true, this would explain a lot of the apparent arrogance and disdain for unbelievers that Anthroposophists seem to act out.

Of direct interest there is an entry for Cherabim (2.7 columns including a half-page photo) and for Seraphim (1.2 columns including a quarter-page photo).

Of background interest there is an entry for Gnosis (2.4 columns by G W Macrae⁵) for Gnosticism (12 columns by G W Macrae) and for Manichaeism (17.6 columns by J Reis⁶) with the tantalising reference near its middle:

“The doctrine preached by Mani is not dead. The Swiss Rudolf STEINER (1861-1925), founder of ANTHROPOSOPHY, attracted numerous disciples. Thus, having adopted Manichaeism and Catharian teachings, they wish to unite again in an esoteric way with the prophet of Babylon who, according to them, is the true continuator of the message of Jesus.”

Most of its extensive bibliography is in French or German and none refer to Anthroposophy nor have recognisably pertinent authors.

Melton, J Gordon, “Encyclopedic Handbook of Cults in America”, Garland Publishing, New York and London, 1992.

There are no entries under Anthroposophy, Christian Community or Steiner but under Rosicrucianism there are four entries including “Rosicrucian Anthroposophical League formed in San Francisco in the 1930s which published a magazine, “Rosicrucian Quarterly” but “Recent information about the status of the League had been unavailable.” Melton is known for his pro-cult stands and active rebuttal of the “mind control” thesis of cult recruitment.

Urmson JO and Jonathan R (eds), “The Concise Encyclopedia of Western Philosophy and Philosophers”, Unwin Hyman, London, UK, 1989.

There are no entries under Anthroposophy or Steiner.

Whalen, John P, “Encyclopedic Dictionary of Religion”, Sisters of St Joseph of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, USA 1979.

Imprimatur by William Cardinal Baum, Archbishop of Washington DC.

Entry on Anthroposophy (0.6 columns) is uncritical – by Richard K MacMaster, Associate Professor of History, James Madison University.

5 George Winsor Macrae, Stillman Professor, Harvard Divinity School, Institute Antiquity Christianity, Claremont Graduate School, Claremont, Ca.,

6 Julien Camille Ries, Licentiate in Oriental Philosophy and History, S.T.D., Cure-doyen, Messancy, Belgium; Lecturer in Manichaeism, Institute Orientaliste, Louvain, Belgium.