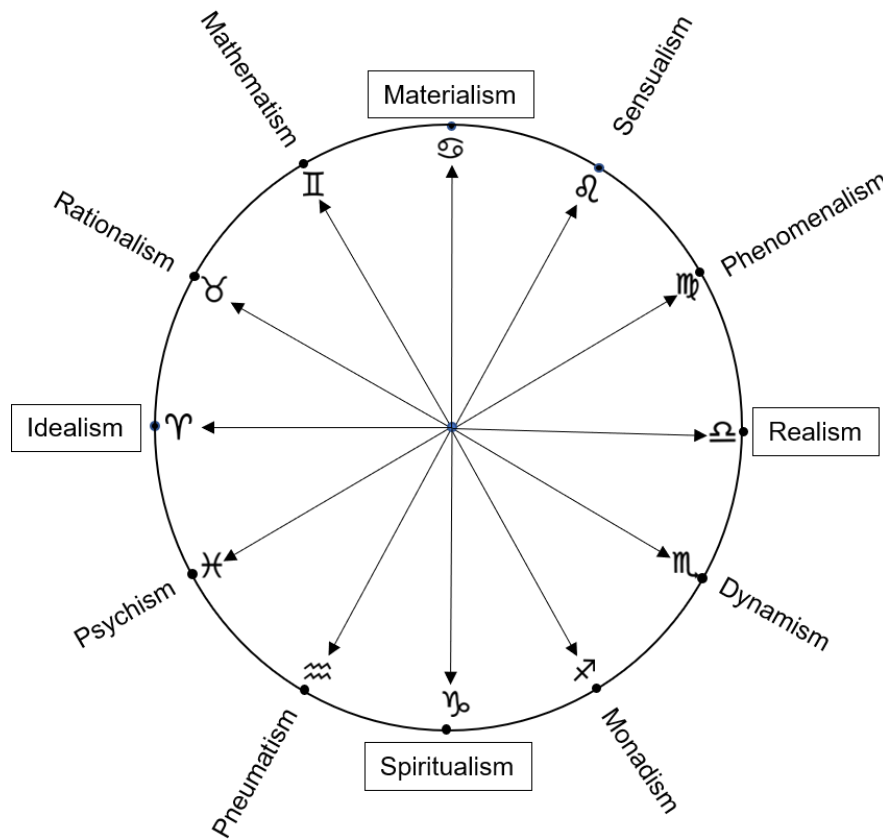


# The Twelve World Views that weave human life and the world together.

by Rev. Reingard Knausenberger

There is not one world view, which needs to be defended or is valid above all, but rather there are twelve world views. The world does not allow us to observe or think it from a one-sided point of view, but rather reveals itself when one can gather different viewpoints. As the zodiac offers the sun the opportunity to shine its light to the earth from twelve principally different places, so we human beings can practice taking on a stance that can 'go around' something and observe and cognise it from twelve different viewpoints. Only then will understanding be an act of revelation in which the reality of human and earthly life as one can be experienced.



The world views are paired as opposites. Three of the world views come from our senses, three from pure thinking and six from the complicated area of the soul. The whole – body, soul and spirit – is a reality.

Each month one of these world views will be expanded starting with:

## Monadism

The 'monas' is the unity with, and at the same time also the separation from, other monads (entities which are in relation to each other). It is a qualitative experience of the other, as all parts of the universe are in manifold relationships with each other. A monadist observes the world from the aspect of individualism and pluralism. Interest - 'Inter-est'- means 'what is between', meaning creating a relationship. Only the thinking monad can experience the highest form of this by realising how all human beings carry the same inexpressible name, with which their individuality and uniqueness is grasped inwardly. At the same time this name is universal to all humans. We say 'I', and we can experience what separates us and unites us, what is individual and universal *at the same time*.

## Spiritualism

The acknowledgement of a spiritual world is one of the pillars of spiritualism. The other pillar is the assumption that the Spirit – spiritus – is everything, and matter is nothing. In between these a

relationship can develop, even an interdependence, e.g. spirit densifies into matter, matter dissolves itself into spirit. Between these extremes would develop the balancing rhythm of creating in all its variations and nuances. Spiritualism in its pure form is the actual atmosphere and breath of religion.

The twelve apostles, which were called together by Jesus Christ at the beginning of his working on earth, can be seen to represent twelve different ways to finding and living with Christ. The most well-known disciples are Peter and John (see Jn: 21). They are polar opposites and have different tasks. Peter founds the church on earth, has the task of 'embodying' the pre-existing spirit of Christ, giving it another solid earthly home on earth after the crucifixion for its further unfolding in the visible world.

John walks a solitary inner path, becomes the only disciple able stand as witness under the cross.

He continues his inner development of 'walking with Christ' and becomes the visionary, who again becomes the witness, this time to the Cosmic Christ (as described in the Book of Revelation chapter 1). He recognises the spiritual dimension of Christ as the guiding spirit of our earthly cosmos and the One who gives meaning and purpose to its every expression.

In this way one could say Peter has a task of a birthing nature, to embody spirit in such a way that it leads to individualisation. John has the task of dealing with death processes, of accompanying the expansion of the individual out of the body while still maintaining its cohesion of Self. In this way John is a representative of spiritualism.

### **Pneumatism**

What does this world-view direct its 'view' toward? The Greek word 'pneuma' can mean: air, breeze, wind and their movements, motivation, breath, life-giving power, spirit... Therefore, one can say that the pneumatist essentially views life itself in its manifold expressions in nature of growing and wilting, in the rhythmical exchanges of all its processes. It primarily has to do with developing functioning organs of perception for the etheric, spiritual formative life forces which underlie all living processes of nature.

Why was Simon Peter singled out and asked so intensely by the Risen Christ: "do you love me?" (Jn 21) He had been given his calling at that time when he could suddenly 'see through' the physical appearance of the person standing in front of him and perceive his spiritual depth: "you are the Son of the living God, you are the Christ". Then he received the new name, Peter, the rock: "On this rock I will build my church" (Mt 16). As a fisherman he knew what it meant to deal with the unpredictable and fluid nature of the elements of nature and wrestle with holding one's balance. Peter had a spiritually awakening experience one night when a storm rocked the boat of the disciples and they suddenly saw Christ walking toward them over the water (Mt 15). Peter's total focus of soul reached out and embraced this upright power so in balance with itself and in harmony with its surroundings. For moments his conscious 'I'-guided will could immerse itself and unite with the life bearing spirit-soul power of the world as Christ moved with ease within the rhythms of creative forces. For moments only could Peter 'walk on water' through the rock solid inner 'I am, yet not I'- activity of soul, reaching out toward the Spirit I Am. He had a deep experience of communion with the spirit in All.

The natural world, human world and spirit are a unity in constant exchange with each other. This experience is life-changing and Peter is prepared to die for it. This pneumatic experience is hardly imaginable without powers of love unfolding. This is confirmed at another time when Christ gives his followers in general a new orientation how to achieve this unity with world and spirit: "love your neighbour as yourself; love your enemy". With his intimate disciples he goes even further: "can you love me, as I love you?"

The same power which rules over the elements of nature is the same power which buds and flowers in the inner core of the human heart, giving birth in the soul to the personal and universal Spirit of Love as we learn to embrace the power of *life and death* in its fullness.

### **Psychism**

In pre-Christian times, in the highly developed cultures of Egypt, Greece and far earlier cultures of antiquity, the leaders and initiators were those who were able to connect with higher Spirits in their soul. Thoughts and feelings were not experienced as subjective and personal productions, but rather as living Beings; powerful Spirit Beings – Angels, Archangels, and Archai.

Archai could permeate a human soul and body, inspire and speak through them. Great cultures were founded and guided like this. It was a time when the human being was not free, did not yet experience being an individual, separate from the whole community. What came about was therefore in complete harmony with the greater Cosmic Order and human beings were also imbedded in this cosmic order.

Today, we cannot have this kind of experience because of the Deed of Christ. It has changed everything. Now we experience ourselves as autonomous individuals and have freedom and cognisance. Now it is our task to reach out and “Up” to and learn to work together with the Angels, Archangels and Archai. This requires self-reflection and self development. In as much as this is the direction of spiritual unfolding, we are Psychists.

There is a descriptive direction in psychism which leads to observing and witnessing of the deeper layers of the unconscious Self where heredity and universal archetypes is met. Then there is a dynamic direction which leads to “over-consciousness” and requires active deeds of self discipline and conscious transformation. This source of “Self”, our “I” - our core being, is eternal and indestructible. It is “of God”. Though it is embedded in the garment of the soul and body, we can work at becoming aware of this Higher aspect step by step. It is accompanied by processes of “dying and overcoming”. It is a slow painful process of active practice which transforms our whole constitution. Every effort in this direction progressively strengthens our complete soul structure, which means, the quality and nature of our “I”. It will lead to the awakening experience which St. Paul describes as “I am, yet not this “I” but the “I am” in me.

The individual “I” is then in harmony with the Being of Cosmic Order. Striving towards a new unity with the hierarchies in the world of Spirit, we human beings can work together to form, inspire and create a truly new culture. That is why we are here together on earth now.

### **Idealism**

On the third Sunday of Easter, 26<sup>th</sup> April, Venus was sparkling magnificently in the west having reached its highest peak of rising and remaining visible beyond midnight. Close by was the chalice of the new crescent moon.

For Plato such an image would be a visible expression of a spiritual reality. For him the *Idea* is the true reality; an eternal immutable Being, which cannot be grasped with physical senses. The material world only shows us the images of Ideas, which then finally exist in us as reflections in concepts. Beyond this world of temporality shines the World of Ideas in eternal clarity. For Goethe it was also a continual discovery how the world reveals itself for the human being from two sides. To only study the physical world does not lead to a reality, but to really observe without pre-conceptions what nature expresses about itself and in the observation allow the Idea to rise up within the soul, creates a unified comprehension of a true reality. When the outer phenomena ignites the Idea it manifests in the beholder, then the experience is of one of having been grasped by a true, complete reality.

Rudolf Steiner formulates: ‘The world of ideas is the original source and principle of all existence. In it is eternal harmony and peace. ...Only that which derives its existence from the *Idea* is meaningful on the tree of creation in the universe. The *Idea* is the clear, *in* itself and *with* itself fulfilled Spirit. The individual must have the spirit within themselves, otherwise they fall off like a dry leaf from this tree, and were there in vain...’ (GA 40)

Ideals are Ideas, realities in another dimension, living beings which are already what we strive to become. Pre-Christian cultures had mystery schools where initiates learned to open their soul like a chalice for these beings of higher consciousness, so that their wisdom could live and work through them. This is how the cultures were founded which still influence us today. Since then these beings have withdrawn, are ‘far away’ like the stars, looking down on us, waiting...Because since the Easter deed of Christ human beings are free to choose how they look into the world and which thoughts and ideas guide their actions. *Every* thought and feeling connects with a spiritual being, which is its reality. Whatever our ideals are, we are engaged in a relationship with a corresponding spiritual being. Idealism is not just an abstract philosophy which suggests that reality is immaterial. Idealism is an activity of the soul which releases immense energies for manifestation, be they negative or positive. The images in the heavens we look up to can remind us of our ideals; how to open our soul in reverence and strive to work in conjunction with those higher beings who are already in reality what we still strive to be.

### **Rationalism**

We often don’t realise that light is not visible. We see it reflected from objects, but by itself it is not visible. We see the moon, a planet, but there is no ray from the sun that shines on it. We can rationally prove that. The rationalist will show through experiments that light is invisible as a self-evident fact.

We also experience light as thoughts and even feelings, yet there is no experiment to prove this light. The only way to prove this inner light to oneself is to develop love for our thinking, not for the content of thinking, but for the activity of thinking itself. Then this activity can be brought into our feeling. In this

way, what is at work in it becomes an experience, a perception of an invisible power which expresses itself as light and warmth simultaneously. So there is also invisible light of Spirit.

When Christ came after the Resurrection to his disciples through locked doors into the room, they experienced him as a light-being. He generated original light. But Thomas, the rationalist, wasn't among them. He needed to prove it to himself: I can only believe if I touch him and see for myself. When he had that opportunity, he immediately had a self-evident experience: this is the One I know, he is my Lord and my God! It was a light experience of comprehension and uplifted enlightenment which encompassed him wholly.

Truth and reality were in symbiosis. Sensory impression and moral meaning were attuned to each other in such superior harmony, that it was a self-evident, self-generating quality: a moment of enlightenment from within.

In the language of Plato, one would say that Thomas encountered the radiant, creating reality of the Idea of the Human Being, in its highest form of being: this is God. Plato compares the Idea of the Good, the most elevated of Ideas, with the sun. Like the sun is the condition for life and seeing, so is the Idea of the Good the condition for existence and comprehension. The quality of Good is identical with God; a meaningful symbiosis which enables knowledge and truth. Seeking and testing the harmonious balance between the cosmic-earthly powers of the Good, both in the visible and invisible aspect, is the real domain of rationalism. It is noteworthy, that this is essentially about inner moral and ethical qualities, which relate in a meaningful, reason-able way to both an outer and an inner reality. Rationalism appeals to the responsibility of the individual to seek within oneself, inwardly, the invisible reality that lives in visible earthly appearance. 'The Pharisees asked: when will the Kingdom of God come? He answers: the Kingdom of God does not come in an outer visible form. It also doesn't come in such a way that one can say: look here or see there it is. Behold, the Kingdom of God is within you.' (Lk. 17: 20...)

### **Mathematism**

In many ways we are all mathematicists, e.g. when we strive to understand and search for meaning; when we try to find consensus in a meeting or look for a common denominator in a complex of questions; or even hope to find the one formula that can apply to every aspect of the world. In conversations and debates we look out for the one point where our reasoning can attach itself to shed light on a topic.

The studies that Plato specified as most effective in preparing the mind for understanding are the so-called mathematical subjects, consisting of number itself, music, geometry, and astronomy. Geometry being the purest visible expression of number. The effect of its study is to lead the mind upward onto levels of Reason, where its premises are rooted. It then provides the bridge or ladder by which the mind can achieve its highest level in the realm of pure intelligence, or pure thinking. In geometry it is easy to experience the bridge between the One and the Many. The circle, for example, as the abstract model of the perfect form, the unchanging, unmanifest One. From this drives the Many: the expressions in nature where roundness manifests (berries, nests, dandelions, eyeballs, planet orbits), in art, design, architecture.

No wonder that there is hope that mathematics will find the answer for the great 'riddle of the universe' and distil from within the complexity of the Many the abstract simplicity of Oneness. This can also be turned around: to see in the One the hidden potential which appears as the active creative principle at work in the cosmos and human being, creating a world of wonder and beauty, synchronicity and harmony in every detail.

Among the disciples of Jesus, the tax collector Matthew suggests that he is a true mathematicist. The ingenious composition of the Gospel of Matthew shows the ability of someone able to grasp the essential while integrating finest detail into a whole meaningful complex. It will not go unnoticed by the attentive reader of this Gospel how it effects a very deep sense of order. In studying the precision in observation and the artistic weaving of detail into an overarching wholeness a masterly composition is revealed, built on a matrix of mathematical principles, opening up new vistas of understanding. One can well imagine why in Christian art an angel is attributed to Matthew as the inspiring genius, a being able to 'look from above', with the power of pure selfless thinking.

### **Materialism**

The importance of our daily experiences with the material aspect of the world is obvious and cannot be dismissed. Yet 'materialism' as a defined world-view is relatively recent, appearing only in modern times

and taking centre stage in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Mathematism has captured some of its domain in the meantime, as has dynamism, especially where it becomes the working theory for research. No doubt, materialism in its practical form is also permeating ever wider areas of our daily life. Something which the current pandemic is highlighting clearly, is how materialism is also occupying our soul life, often intrusively. It shows up particularly now how problematic it can be to generalise one world view over others as the guiding principle for everything else. It is worthwhile noticing in the composition of the twelve world-views the dynamic of being in this 'symphony', and that its polar opposite world-view creates a tension and possibility that opens up new insights and experiences, enhancing each other.

Every human being born into an earthly body is immediately confronted with the corporal density and 'hardness' and impenetrability of matter. Its compact space-filling capacity and stability is astounding, like the characteristic feature of always being 'surface', an outside, never showing 'inside'. Cut a tree, cut stone as many times as you like, dig as deep as you can, you always only encounter only new surfaces. This could be why ultimately materialism on its own will produce hunger, a sense of deficit and unfulfilled-ness.

This discovery was also the first experience of Christ Jesus as he began 'coming into himself' 40 days later in the desert after the overwhelming experience of the baptism in the Jordan.

The rulers of the earth, the spirits of resistance, the master of densifying, faced him: 'If you are the Son of God, then turn these stones into bread'. And the truthful answer is: 'The human being does not live by bread alone.' Acknowledging that 'stones' have their place and purpose, but are not everything. This aspect belongs to the mainstream of Christ's life and deed on earth, and is the underlying theme of the Christian path: penetrating the mystery of matter and corporality. What gives life, nourishes, builds from the inside out a stability of being? In John chapter 6 Christ has shown in the feeding of the 5,000 a first answer, but then wrestles with the non-understanding of the people around him, and with the disciples for comprehension: what manifests physically is first a spiritual manifesting activity. In the end, in the Last Supper, Christ makes bread to be his body. This presents us with the ultimate riddle of the spiritual-physical, birthed from the womb of matter. The materialistic world view will say: this is phantasy, while using 'stones: money and things' to create bread only to be hungry again. The spiritualist will say: it needs the rest of our earthly evolution to unlock this mystery in conscious human comprehension and to become creators of this ability to manifest living Spirit in matter and the laws of matter in Spirit reality. Materialism has its rightful place as a valid world view, necessary on our human journey to achieve who we can potentially be.

## **Sensualism**

What underlies the basic human existential need to be seen, to be heard, to be touched?

We are born into this world, which is a sensual world. The body we receive as our own is a finely-tuned sense organisation. Like buds opening, the chorus of twelve sense organs unfolds as the child's body grows, the youth's soul expands and the adult awakens evermore into unique selfhood. Our senses are the doorways which open us to engage and interact with the world around us. By nature, every human being is a sensualist.

The world-view of Sensualism as a philosophy, on the other hand, sees the human being purely as a sensual being and takes this view very seriously, sometimes to the extreme. Although the philosophy has many aspects and complexities, its basic parameter is clear:

'I and the world are only the result of our sensory experiences'.

A sensualist in this way experiences their own senses so strongly that there can be no consideration of the world conveying anything 'objective'. Everything is there only because of my senses.

Here it becomes clear how restrictive and exclusive a world view can become if it is declared to be the one and only valid one, but also how its contribution is highlighted, enhanced and enriched if experienced within the wholeness of the twelve world views.

It is through our senses that we 'make sense' of the world, they bring the light of meaning and warmth of fulfilment into our life, therefore becoming the basis for self-awareness and developing consciousness of being a Self. They are the central base from which we reach out and develop relationships with the periphery.

Christianity is the "the belief, that loves the earth" (as an inspired book title said). That means this earth which we can see, touch, feel, hear...the earth is made to meet all of our senses, our senses are there to meet the world. No wonder that the Gospels are full of everyday images, no wonder that the Creator came into his creation to teach us the full potential of our sense organisation. 'A sower went out to sow

his seed...’, depending on **how** we look, listen, come into an exchange with the earth and each other, our separateness is overcome and we are released out of isolation into a new enriched connectedness. When Jesus calls the children to be brought to him, speaks and touches them, how would he have looked at them, spoken to them? What would have remained in these children that touched their core, never to be forgotten again; what kind of affirmation of their being would he have given through this encounter? In this we have an expression of the gesture that emanates from Christ continually even today: Come. I see you. I hear you. Let your heart be touched by me.

The spiritual world always ‘sees’ us, but it is through the new spiritual Coming closer of Christ in our time, that human beings today are sensitised to the fact that the physical senses can be transformed into spiritual senses. Therefore, a deeper longing for ‘being seen and heard and embraced for who I am’ is awakened in us. Maybe it is also Christ who has this same longing towards us, too? Our sensual nature defines separateness, and yet it can also create connectedness and lasting relationship.

## Phenomenalism

This world-view has its roots in the fact that human beings are sensory beings, and ultimately in the founded experience that the world around us is also a sense world. Therefore the sense capacity of the human being corresponds to the sense expression of the material world. The sense world conveys objective truth. There is nothing ‘behind’ what we see or hear etc., no ‘real thing’, no mysterious metaphysical other world. It is when we train ourselves to use our senses selflessly, that we acquire the conditions to develop the world view of phenomenism: to truly observe and receive unadulterated *what is*.

The master in using and refining this method as the tool for his scientific research and discoveries is J.W. Goethe. “The senses do not lie.”

In short: “The universe in its greatest and smallest detail is an objective reality. In its sensory expression it reveals truth. This congruent ability of authentic Being is available to human beings when they use *all* their senses to guide them in going deep and far enough into grasping what reveals itself.” *Mario Betti*

An example: I am looking for the car keys, search everywhere, again and again. Nothing. Then, instead of just searching outwardly, I can stop and search differently: become still, go inward and begin to think along the phenomena. What was I doing, where was I ... more senses become active in my inner searching, until I can ‘see’ where the keys could be. Then the outer world confirms it when I find them there. We can see outwardly and inwardly, when both correspond we experience truth. Inner and outer sense world belong together.

We can take this further: in Luke chapter 4 Jesus stands on the banks of the Jordan River where an event is witnessed and experienced. And he is Joseph’s son. He is a human being of flesh and blood with a father and mother, is a child and grows into an adult. One can observe outwardly and inwardly—both observations are true and belong together. Now Christ is in Jesus, just like in every human being an ‘I’ incarnates at a certain biographical stage. Yet now *the I Am* is in Jesus. Together the inner and outer observation reveals a bigger, wider and more saturated, ‘more real’ understanding. Thinking and observation need, yes, seek each other.

## Realism

The Gospel of Matthew speaks of *becoming* like children. When Christ calls a child to him and places him in the circle of his disciples, he then points out a reality worth engaging with literally. “Whoever receives a child in my name receives me.” (Whoever, confident in my being, immerses themselves into the being of such a child will discover *me* in the child.

Matthew 18: 5

Realism as a world-view is as basic to all world-views as the young child is to the rest of its yet unrealised life. Still like a bud, holding the potential to open up and grow beyond *what is* at the moment, yet at every stage perfect, complete and authentic with no ‘hidden agenda’ or criticism involved. At the beginning of every human life realism is wrapped in innocence. Though this will change, we still retain this ‘child-sense’ throughout our lives, e.g. in an ability to face challenges with openness freely and directly...realistically. We are not asked to *be* like children, but rather to bring about new buds to flower in *what is* with this ‘child-sense’.

What do young children show us? Inquisitiveness, exploration with no prejudice, no pre-conception, no inhibition, exposing all the senses to absorbing untainted pure *experience*, with no fear and total openness. This is what is needed in order to face life with tools to immerse oneself wholeheartedly in *what is* and engage with it.

Realism begins where the human being, in encountering the world, accepts and receives it as it is. Everything is approached with this initial unprejudiced openness, the outer as well as the inner phenomena. This is where all new creation begins. Where matter and spirit meet, revealed as two sides of the same thing. Where we meet the *Genius of Realism*, our Entelechie (as Aristotle coined it), our eternal Child: a being that carries its goal within itself.

### **Dynamism**

This is maybe an especially relevant world view at this moment in time as the whole world seems to be living through a major shift. The field of observation for dynamism is energy, power, vitality, movement. How much thinking happens in the categories of power: electrical-, atomic-, mechanical-, chemical-, magnetic-, sun- and wind-power, gravity; muscle-power, stamina, emotional and mental strength; even in our product packaging we see these words, like energy drink, turbo-, power diet, and much more. Our universe from the depth to the height manifests in some expression of energy. The human being is a 'bundle of energy'. Plato says: both the idea of Good as well as the idea of Evil are effective, active world powers.

The science of the twelve world views shows us in every aspect that it is imperative to include the principle of balance here. Every world view is part of a whole, while it also has its justified dominance in a unique area of life. Seeing them in relationship with each other, complimenting one-sidedness, shows how the wholeness determines the individual placement in the circle. In the case of dynamism, energy on its own in its natural state is potential, particularly in the human being as the raw untamed power of will, unformed, chaotic, irrational. Dynamism needs Rationalism, its complimenting opposite to be balanced: irrational becomes rational, chaotic becomes ordered, the unformed receives form, etc. The power potential of dynamism can lead into the uncharted depths of our will to harness it, so that it may lift the soul into special heights of self-knowledge, understanding and wisdom. One might say, that in its balanced state, this would be the place where a normal human being begins to birth itself into an initiate.

(This completes the cycle of contemplations. With gratitude towards the many sources found in Rudolf Steiner's works and other authors, particularly Mario Betti and his work on '*Twelve Ways to See the World*').