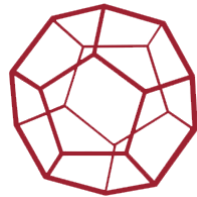


The Destinies of Individuals and Nations

GA 157



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GA 157

by

Rudolf Steiner

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Preface

Steiner started each of these lectures, given during the war years, with a verse for those who had died. He begins this volume with a consideration of the destinies of nations from a spiritual point of view. He goes on to consider the Christ-Impulse and the Michaelic Spirits that serve Him. Also included are lectures on the three stages of imaginative knowledge, the rhythm of sleeping and waking, the relation between our physical and etheric bodies, and the prophetic nature of dreams. The last lecture takes up the question of the cosmic meaning of our sense impressions and of our thinking, feeling, and willing.



Introduction

The lectures printed in this volume are those Rudolf Steiner gave to members of the Anthroposophical Society in Berlin immediately after the outbreak of the First World War. The atmosphere perceptible in these lectures was markedly influenced by the momentous events of the time. On the other hand the language is often personal and intimate, for a powerful bond existed between Rudolf Steiner and this group of people. From 1900–1902 onwards, Berlin had been the place where he developed and presented spiritual science in lectures and written works, and it was the centre of his activities in Germany. The Berlin 'Branch' of the Anthroposophical Society was the only one Rudolf and Marie Steiner (von Sivers) led in person until the General Anthroposophical Society was established in its new form at Dornach in Switzerland over Christmas and New Year 1923–24.

The year 1914 saw the collapse of many hopes. Austria declared war on Serbia on 28 July, and further declarations of war followed at a rapid pace. Germany declared war on Russia on 30 July and on France on 30 August. Great Britain then declared war on Germany on 4 August, Austria-Hungary declared war on Russia on 6 August, and Great Britain on Austria-Hungary on 13 August.

One year previously, in the autumn of 1913, Rudolf Steiner had laid the foundation stone for the first Goetheanum (referred to as 'the building' in a number of these lectures) on a hilltop in Dornach, near Basle in Switzerland. At the time when war broke out, artists and young people from many European nations had been working together for many weeks to bring Rudolf Steiner's artistic and architectural concepts to realization on that site in Dornach. Something very real had developed among them, a true fellowship in the reality of the spirit, irrespective of nationality or creed. The outbreak of war came as a tremendous shock to them and to the millions who lived in Europe.

This is the background to the lectures Rudolf Steiner gave in Berlin during 1914 and 1915. Particularly in the first lectures one is very much aware of his heart going out to all the people caught up in the maelstrom of war, people now finding themselves on opposite sides, facing great challenges both at home and in the trenches. Today different challenges have to be

faced, but the wider context and true spiritual background given by Rudolf Steiner, the great challenge to humankind from the spiritual world which he was able to show to be behind the events of the day — these are as relevant now as they were then.



1 The Destiny of Individuals and of Nations

1 September 1914, Berlin

Dear friends, my heart is deeply moved now that I am able to be with you for a while in these serious times and talk to you. Our first thoughts, however, shall be for our dear friends who have often been here with us and have now been called to the front where such an intense battle is raging over the destiny of individuals and of nations. Let us stand for a moment and remember our friends loyally and in love at this hour, letting our thoughts go out to them, thoughts filled with strength, to let them gain in strength out there at the front.

*Spirits of your souls, guardian guides,
On your wings let there be borne
The prayer of love from our souls
To those whom you guard here on earth.
Thus, united with your might,
A ray of help our prayer shall be
For the souls it seeks out there in love.*

Let us call out to our friends that the Christ, of whom we have spoken so often, is with them in the field, ruling over them where the destinies of individuals and of nations are now being decided and giving them strength.

Dear friends, you know that the original intention had been for the building that is to be a watchtower for the life of the spirit in our present age — that is how we envisaged it — to be completed by the month of August this year. [Note 1 See Rudolf Steiner, *Der Baugedanke des Goetheanum* (GA 290). In English as *The Architectural Conception of the Goetheanum* Rudolf Steiner Press (London) and Anthroposophic Press (New York) 1938.] Karma decreed otherwise and we had to accept this karma with composure. For a time we had thought that, in these days in particular, words might be spoken in this building of that certainty of victory in the spiritual life of which we have become more and more convinced, thanks to spiritual science. But the building at Dornach stands, or at the time stood,

uncompleted. The encompassing structures are there. The columns that are to bear the domes representing the cosmic spheres of the spirit are in position and joined up with the symbols of the canopy of heaven. The rest of the building still has to be completed.

In July a certain stage had been reached where I was able to feel that something I had aimed for would indeed be achieved: that this building was also to demonstrate how form and design can provide for really good hearing, a truly acoustic space. Hope then arose that this would come about, for when I spoke words at certain points to check how the whole enclosing structure would treat the sounds, the result gave us hope that the aim may be achieved and that the right sounds would be heard in the right places. It is our hope that the words consecrated to our school of thought may thus resound in that space.

The first sounds heard by our friends working at Dornach were echoes of the firing that went on in the immediate vicinity. Sounds of the first acts of war, part of the momentous events that have entered into our lives. Our building looks down on the field in Upper Alsace that lies on the other side of the border. Not only were the signals to be heard of the momentous events now taking place, but from a number of points on the building it was also possible to see the flashes of cannon-fire in Upper Alsace. The events happening there first of all announced themselves as an echo in our area. Meeting to discuss things in the midst of our work, the thought lived in our hearts that out of the dire events that have come into our lives the soil may be created for peace, where blessings may arise and come to flower for the development of mankind.

An event like the one we are now experiencing, dear friends, sometimes speaks to an individual person in symbols. Some of you may already have the first volume of my book, *The Riddles of Philosophy*. In this the intention was to show how mankind progressed in the search for the great universal riddles, to show how thought progressed in the hearts of men and of nations. The second volume has not yet come out as you know. It is, however, set up in print as far as sheet 13. On the last pages printed on this sheet the philosophy of Boutroux and Bergson is discussed, and then Preuss. So the last part printed before the present events began considers Preuss, the solitary in the evolution of German philosophy and science, who, I feel, had a much more profound grasp of what Bergson was after. This thinker, Preuss, was tremendously powerful in presenting the scientific view on the life of the spirit. Sheet 13 thus brought together the thoughts that have arisen in Western Europe and those that arose in the heart of

Europe. The printed material stops in mid-sentence, symbolically splitting apart, as it were, the intellectual life of peoples between whom the great struggle has now started on the physical plane, a struggle that concerns us so deeply. During the first days of August I often had to look at the blank pages of the sheet that remained unprinted, for this, too, seemed to my mind a peculiar symbol.

Dear friends, this is not a time when secondary issues in the life of man are decided. Events may have come upon us quickly, but they are profound in their effect and have arisen from a necessity no less than the one out of which the destiny of Europe evolved in the past — from the great, hard struggles that came with the Barbarian invasions. What the protagonist of spiritual science needs in these times is confidence in the victory and unconquerable nature of spiritual life and a firm faith that the spirits who are guiding world events will resolve the issues in a way truly in the interest of mankind.

Anyone needing consolation today, because people grown close in spiritual science are now under fire on opposite sides, may look for such comfort in the words that are spoken for us in the Bhagavad Gita. These refer to past times in human evolution, to the point where an originally primitive form of human life gave way to another form in which those who had earlier lived as brothers among brothers and sisters among sisters were united according to the spiritual laws familiar to us. A transition had occurred to another kind of life for mankind, a widening out of life. And within that new order people knowing themselves to be brothers were at that time, too, facing one another in battle. Yet the spirit that is always there in the evolution of mankind does find the right words to pour confidence and faith and certainty into the souls that find themselves on opposite sides.

Today we are once again living in a time where people have come together from many different parts of the world through the spiritual movement we have made our own, and because of the feelings they have experienced, because of something that deeply unites them from the very depths of soul, they have come to call one another brothers and sisters. And once again they have to stand on opposite sides. The karma of mankind demands this. But, dear friends, whatever we have taken into our hearts and into our souls of this spiritual movement of ours must have given us the certainty that the spirit moving everywhere in the evolution of mankind will strengthen us in these stormy days and fill us with confidence. This means that we may have faith in our hearts that events

will take the right course within world karma — that there has to be strife, that blood and more blood has to be shed, in order to achieve what he who guides the destinies of the world wants to achieve for mankind on this earth. It will again be the blood of sacrifice, the sacred blood of sacrifice. And those we love who are going to shed this blood of sacrifice shall be powerful helpers for mankind in the realms of the spirit, for the best and most sublime of goals. For there are many ways in which the cosmic spirits speak to us men. They speak to us in the way familiar to us when among ourselves, in the words taken from our spiritual studies and our understanding of the spirit. They also speak to us, however, through the grim signals and the thunder of war. Many a soul may feel instant regret that the cosmic guidance of man also needs to use this language, yet souls taken hold of by the spirit must be able to reflect that such language is necessary in the karma of the world. To understand the true meaning of this language in the individual case will be the task of later times. Then men will be able to look back and see what benefit it has brought them that their ancestors made a sacrifice of their bodies so that the transfigured soul would rise swiftly from the sacrifice brought in the field of war up into the realms of the spirit for the good of mankind. With this spark in our hearts of being deeply touched by the spirit, we can with new strength enter into all the cares, all the deep sorrows and troubles, and also into all the hopes, all the confidence, presented and revealed to our eyes by events of such great moment as we are experiencing at present.

Dear friends, on 26 July, following a lecture concerning the business of our building project, I was able to speak to our friends gathered there certain words that referred to the grave events that lay ahead. [[Note 2 See Rudolf Steiner, *Wege zu einem neuen Baustil* \(GA 286\). In English as *Ways to a New Style in Architecture*. Anthroposophical Publishing Co., London, and Anthroposophic Press \(New York\) 1927. \] Among those present on 26 July were friends who are now already at the front in the midst of those momentous events. Standing beside the building project at Dornach, a building that is to become a watchtower of the spirit, I was on that occasion able to call up in the hearts of our friends the words: May everything we have gained in our spiritual movement and through our spiritual outlook enable every single one of us, in what lies ahead, to stand in the place where destiny puts us in the world, full of strength and confidence.](#)

There has been evidence that our spiritual movement is able to give strength, real strength, even in the times we live in now and in the solemn events that have come to us. And perhaps it is also part of the forging of such strength that those who hear the bullets whistle past out there, who

have to live in the roar and thunder of war, can be aware of our thoughts being with them in steadfast love, nurturing in our hearts the thoughts that will help and strengthen them, and be aware also of the fellowship among us. What state would our movement be in if it were unable to remain strong in heart and soul at a time when such strength of heart and soul is severely tested in this world. Let us hope that the strength we ourselves have gained will at all times provide a firm bond between us and our dear friends out yonder. And let us hope that this strength will be such that it counts for something in the world of the spirit, that the spirit we sought to take into ourselves can count for something in the working of the world. Let us hope that the love we know to be part of our spiritual endeavour may prove particularly strong out there in the physical world where our friends have to make a holy sacrifice.

Dear friends, we shall see many things happen still in consequence of what is now beginning. We have on many occasions spoken of strength and composure — let us hope that these can now be achieved in our souls. We are not speaking of an easy-going composure, looking on events in an uninvolved way, but of an active composure, looking for ways and means — and in steadfastly looking for them in the spirit also finding them — to do the right thing in the right place.

Many times I had to ask myself this August if it was right to keep our friends at their building work in Dornach and whether the one or other of them should not be doing more important work elsewhere at this time. Yet it appears that it is a good thing, that it is connected with certain forces the spirit needs in these times that the building work does not stop. Work therefore continues steadfastly, even in these hard times. The building work shall actively continue in the thought that it is indeed to be a token of rightful understanding of the great deeds that are done in our day, a token of understanding that the power of the spirit also needs to be present in everything that is happening in our day. And we cherish the thought that all our friends who are continuing their allotted tasks at Dornach, because it appears to be their karma, will also be able to fill their place in everything important that arises out of the deeply stirring events in the midst of which we stand, each at his post, where his karma has placed him. Let us try, dear friends, and do everything that may emerge out of what the day presents to our souls, what the day leads us to observe, as our duty at the present time. Let us try and do our duty in every case, a duty we have to consider as one of selfless love for humanity, the duty to be prepared for sacrifice in a time when so many sacrifices have to be asked of man. Let us take part in the rite of sacrifice for the development

of man—whichever way karma appears to mete it out to us — according to our strength. Let us help wherever we are able to help. Let us look for opportunities where we may be allowed to help, and let us hold on to the conviction to which we have attained — that the help offered by human beings, service given in love, provides the spirit with an effective tool.

When our friends in Dornach also wanted to know something about giving aid in an external way, about first-aid dressings, a number of lessons were arranged within the building, in case one of us was called upon one day by his karma to make use of such knowledge. [Note 3 Rudolf Steiner had given a first aid course in Dornach from 13 to 16 August 1914.] I also felt particularly concerned to speak to our friends the words that arise from spiritual insight, words arising in a soul as it gives loving aid, to allow practical spiritual love to pass from the hand applying the bandage, from the body of the helper — in a spiritual way — to the person who is receiving help. First of all I spoke of the healing powers present in the human organization as such, of the way the blood flowing from the wound also contains the living principle that has a healing effect on the wound. And then it was said that it is good if the heart is filled with the following words when healing is given to those in need of our aid:

*Welling blood,
Work in your welling,
Restless muscle,
Stir germs of growth,
Tenderest care
From warmth of heart,
Be breath of healing.*

I believe I can say that a soul filled with such intent will be able to lend healing powers to a hand reaching out to give help. And surely after all that has passed through our souls over the years we must carry the conviction that, being filled with the Christ spirit in our day, we shall be given the power to intervene in the right way wherever destiny demands, wherever destiny puts us. There will be many occasions in days to come when we shall be able to find out if we rightly have the Christ within us, the Christ who acts from our own hearts into the hearts of others, who will unite the suffering person, the person in pain, with ourselves to form a living unity. How often has it been said that as human souls advance into

spiritual worlds they also grow able to join their own feelings to the pain that lives in another. And indeed, the one or the other of us will often be put in a position where the events of our time are causing pain. We shall then be able to see if we are strong enough to unite in the right kind of feeling with the pain of the other, if the pain living in the soul of the other can become pain felt in ourselves.

The potential is there for mankind to gradually reach a point where the pain living in another does not spare us, but lives on in us. It is for this purpose that the blood flowed on Golgotha. This is also why at this very time we are endeavouring to strengthen the attitude of heart and mind I have described. This may be achieved with words like the following, spoken as though entirely to oneself and as often as possible when our thoughts are full of the gravity of the present situation, and in the first place addressing the other person. The words are:
Whilst pain is felt by you alone
And not by me.

*Christ goes unrecognized
To do his work within the world.
For the spirit cannot grow strong
If it has power only to feel
The suffering your own body undergoes.*

My friends, these are the days when every soul that has learned to look into the spiritual world needs to send imploring thoughts to the spirits it believes to be its guardians. These spirits may be asked to show us the right way into our age. And we shall know in our hearts what is right, shall be conscious of the right power in our souls, as we turn to the spirit that is to guide us through our incarnations on earth to what will be truly right for ourselves. You may ask how we are able to know that we are addressing the right spirit. We shall be able to be aware of this if we approach this spirit in a way that is in accord with the true Christ impulse.

For the spirit that guides us towards what is right — and we can be quite certain of this, dear friends — is allied with Christ, is in dialogue with Christ. This spirit is holding such a dialogue with the Christ in the spiritual world now — so that out of the purpose for which battles are fought and

blood is shed the right thing may come for the good of mankind. It is in the spirit of Christ that we turn to the spirit who we hope will protect us. Then it will be the right spirit.

The nature of a spirit is, in the language of spiritual science, referred to as the 'age' of this spirit. The word is used in this way in the formula you will be hearing next. The term 'age' is more or less synonymous with the 'nature' of the spirit, for we have come to distinguish spirits on the basis of their age. We speak of Luciferic and Ahrimanic spirits in exactly this way, knowing that they are now at an age when it is not right for them to develop something that during the right epoch would be the proper thing for the evolving world. This is why we speak of the age of a spirit when we mean its essential nature. The formula is as follows:

*Spirit of my space on earth,
Reveal the light of thine age
To the Christ-endowed soul,
That striving it may find
In harmony of spheres of peace
Thee ringing with praise and power
Of mind of man all given up to Christ.*

We must try and let the things that have been able to take root in our souls as we worked to attain to the spirit come to fruition, let them come to such fruition that we can hope to be able to face our trials. Let us try and affirm the belief that love is the soul of our efforts to reach the spirit, at a time when love is so much needed — Love and again Love.

That, my friends, is what I so much wanted to speak to you about tonight. May the love that we have invoked so often take firm root in us. May we find a way of keeping faith with each other in these difficult times and keeping faith with all that is sacred and good in mankind. I promise you, my friends, to keep this in my heart and again and again to unite my thoughts with yours in the times that lie ahead. May it be granted — after the symbols we have experienced and which I spoke of initially this evening, when the sounds of war echoed through our building at Dornach and the fires of war were reflected in it — may it be granted that sooner or later it will be possible to speak the Word in this building, of confidence that the spirit shall win the victory, shall be unconquered, aware that the

building from its eminence will then look down on a human race that has gone through severe trials and the bitter strife of this day to win from them something that is right, that is good, and is beautiful and true within human evolution. Let us hope that the days of strife may be such that in the days of peace to come it will be possible to look back with contentment on the sacrifices these times have demanded.

It is my hope that the words I have attempted to speak to you this evening may touch your hearts with the same depth from which I believe they have arisen. I hope they will mean something to you in times when many of us have so much to bear. It is my hope that they will also be to you what now fills with noble enthusiasm and the courage to fight all the hearts that are filled with noble enthusiasm and the courage to fight so that the spirits who know what is right shall feel content with what they see in those hearts. Let this be in our hearts and minds and we shall be able to do the right thing in the right place. The spiritual work we have tried to achieve for so many years now shall, and no doubt will, lend us the strength we need.

So it is goodbye, dear friends, with this in our minds and with these feelings arising in our hearts.



2

Nationalities and Nationalism in the Light of Spiritual Science

31 October 1914, Berlin

Dear friends, once again our thoughts must first of all be for those who are at the front, having to meet the challenge of our time with their bodies and their whole being. Let us therefore direct our thoughts to the spirits who are protecting the men who are at the front.

*Spirits of your souls, guardian guides,
On your wings let there be borne
The prayer of love from our souls
To those whom you guard here on earth.
Thus, united with your might,
A ray of help our prayer shall be
For the souls it seeks out there in love.*

And for those who have already passed through the gate of death in the course of these events, we say:

*Spirits of your souls, guardian guides,
On your wings let there be borne
The prayer of love from our souls
To those whom you guard here on earth.
Thus, united with your might,
A ray of help our prayer shall be
For the souls it seeks out there in love.*

And the spirit we have sought in our endeavours for so many years, the spirit who went through the Mystery of Golgotha, the Christ spirit, the spirit of courage, the spirit of strength, the spirit of unity, the spirit of peace — may he rule over everything you are asked to do these days.

More than at other times the serious purpose of our spiritual efforts must live in our souls during these days, these weeks — a seriousness which enables us to be aware how everything we aim for in our spiritual movement has to do with all that is truly human. We are aiming for something that addresses itself not just to human existence as it is for the moment, an existence that will pass with human physical body. We are speaking of laws, of forces in soul and spirit, that directly address the higher self in man, a higher self which is more than the self that may wither away with the body and its existence. We have frequently spoken of 'Maya' when referring to outward appearances, and it has often been stressed that outward appearances, the processes of physical life, become Maya because man does not properly penetrate them with his mind, his perceptive faculties. He therefore does not sense, does not perceive, what is really significant; the real essence of the things perceptible to the outer senses. Man uses his perceptive faculties to draw a veil, a tissue of deception, over the events of the physical world. This makes them become Maya.

There is one particular great truth that we should have in mind these days as we look for love and understanding, for a loving comprehension of what is happening all around us — an insight that, fundamentally speaking, is at the centre of everything we aim for in spiritual science. In our day this has to present itself to our souls with the full gravity and moral weight inherent in it. It is the realization — and this has by now become the simplest and most elementary fact in our spiritual life—that life on earth recurs. The fact that in the course of time our souls progress from body to body. The part of man that is eternal hastens from body to body through man's successive incarnations on earth. On the other hand, there is the part that has to do with human existence in a physical body, the part present on the physical plane that provides the configuration, the formation, the particular stamp to human existence in an outer physical body.

One particular thing that provides the outer stamp, determining the character of a person as it were, in so far as he is living in a physical body on the physical plane, is what may collectively be referred to as nationality. This is something we should never forget, especially today. If we turn the mind's eye to what we call man's higher self, the concept of nationality loses significance. For when we pass through the gate of death everything encompassed by the term 'nationality' is among the things we cast off. And if we do in all seriousness want to be what we think people with spiritual aims should be, it is proper to remember that in passing through

successive incarnations the human being belongs not to one but to a number of different nationalities. The part of him that links him to a particular nationality is among the things that are cast off, have to be cast off, the moment we pass through the gate of death.

Truths that belong to the realm of the eternal do not have to be easily understood. Indeed, they may well be truths which at times go against our feelings — truths we achieve with difficulty particularly in difficult times, and also find difficult to achieve and retain in their full strength and clarity in difficult times such as these. A true anthroposophist must do this, and it will be exactly in this way that he arrives at a real understanding of the physical world around him. The basic elements for such understanding have already been presented in our anthroposophical work. You will find that the lecture cycle on folk souls' in a sense contains everything needed to gain insight into the way human beings, in so far as they are in the eternal realm, are connected with their nationalities. Those lectures were of course given in peacetime when souls are more ready and prepared to accept objective, unvarnished truths. Perhaps it will be difficult to take these truths as objectively today as they could be taken in those days. Yet this is the very way in which we can prepare our souls to develop the strength they need today, if even today we are able to take these truths objectively.

Let us bring before our mind's eye the picture of a warrior going through the gate of death on the field of battle. We need to understand that this is very much a special case, to go through the gate of death like this. We need to understand that entrance is made into a world that we are seeking with every fibre of our souls in spiritual science, so that it may bring clarity even into physical life. Let us remember that death means the entrance into that spiritual world and that it is not possible to take other life impulses directly into that world, for they would bear no fruit. The only life impulses we are able to take there are those that animate the efforts of our hearts and minds and in the final instance aim to join all peoples on the earth in brotherhood. Then a simple popular saying can be seen in a new way in the light of anthroposophy. It is the proverb which says 'Death is the grand leveller'. It makes them all equal — Frenchmen. Englishmen, Germans and Russians. That is indeed true. Considering this in relation to what is going on all around us on the physical plane today, we shall indeed become aware of the solid ground that enables us to overcome Maya in this field and look to events for their essential meaning.

Consider it in relation to the feelings of antipathy and hatred that fill the hearts of the peoples of Europe at present. Consider it in relation to all the things peoples in the different regions of European soil feel about the others, expressing it in spoken and written words. And let us also see in our mind's eye all the antipathy coming to full fruition in our time.

How should we see these things with the eye of truth? Where in this field do we find something that will take us beyond Maya, beyond the great illusion? We do not get to know about each other on earth by an approach that considers everything that is generally human as something abstract. We get to know one another by getting in a position where we are able really to understand the peculiar qualities of the peoples who are spread out over the whole earth, to understand them in concrete terms, in what they are in particular. We do not get to know a person in this life by simply saying: He is a human being like myself and must have all the same qualities that I have. No, we have to forget about ourselves and really consider the qualities of the other person.

In the lecture cycle on the folk souls I showed how the different aspects of the soul within us — the sentient soul, the intellectual or mind soul, the spiritual soul, the ego and the spirit-self — are distributed among the nations of Europe and how every nation fundamentally represents a one-sided aspect. I also said that the different nationalities will have to work together, to become the soul of Europe as a whole, just as the different aspects of our own soul need to work together. Looking at the Italian and the Iberian peninsulas we find that the national element comes to expression in the sentient soul. In France, it comes to expression as intellectual or mind soul. Moving on to the British Isles we see it coming to expression as spiritual soul. In Central Europe the national element comes to expression as ego. When we finally look to the East of Europe, that is the region where it fully emerges as spirit-self—though that is not quite the right way of putting it, as we shall see later. What comes to expression there is something that lies in the national character. But the eternal in man goes beyond what is national and this is what human beings are looking for when entering more deeply into the spirit. Compared to this, the national element is a mere garment, an outer envelope, and the more a person is able to gain insight into this the higher he will ascend. In so far as man lives in the physical world, he does live in the outward trappings of what is national and this gives his body its configuration and, fundamentally speaking, also provides the configuration for certain qualities, character traits.

Today we see the members of different nations facing one another in dislike, in hatred. I am not at this point speaking about what is going on in the combat situation. I am speaking of what is going on in the feelings, the passions, of human souls. Here we have a soul. It needs to prepare for its reception into a spiritual world through which it will now have to pass between death and its next birth, a world that will guide it towards an incarnation that will belong to quite a different nationality from the one it is now leaving. This is a fact which shows very clearly, in the best and most powerful way, how man resists the higher self that is within him. Consider some real 'nationalist' today, someone with national feelings who directs his antipathy very particularly against the members of another nation and, indeed, may be ranting and raving against this other nation in his own country. What is the meaning of such ranting and raving, of such antipathy? It signifies a premonition—My next incarnation will be into this nationality! The higher self has already at subconscious level established links with the other nationality. This higher self is resisted by that part of us which on the physical plane. This is man raging against his own higher self. Wherever the ranting and raving is worst, wherever the hatred felt against other nationalities is greatest and where the most lies are told about them, someone seeing things not as Maya but in truth can perceive the true reason, which is that a great many members of the nation that rages most, is most cruel in its attitudes and lies the most, will have to assume that other nationality at their next incarnation.

That is the full seriousness of what we teach, the moral greatness that lies behind it. There is much in man — very much, infinitely much — that wants to resist having to recognize his higher self, the part of him that is eternal. This is what makes it so tremendously difficult to speak objectively at the present time. It certainly is a strange phenomenon that before this war started infinitely appreciative comments reached us from England, appreciative of the German character, German competence and particularly the intellectual life in Germany. I attempted to give examples of this in my last public lecture.⁵ It is possible to give many more examples, and this shall also be done. What was going on there?

From the occult point of view, there had been an instinctive feeling that an element was being striven for in Central Europe that had to do with regaining youth — I spoke of the Faust type of soul in that last public lecture — a search for the spiritual, preparing for the spiritual, something the whole of Europe would one day turn to, truly turn to. This is something people were instinctively aware of in times gone by. The desire has been to understand what is going on in Central Europe. Yet being wholly bound up

with the national element, we shall only be able to relate to this in full understanding in the life between death and rebirth. Then it will be possible to relate to this and understand, and the way will be found to the teachers of Central Europe. It is embarrassing to speak of this now for it may appear like boasting in someone who comes from Central Europe. Yet the objective truths must be told. So there is an instinctive feeling for something that will be looked for in the life between death and rebirth: a uniting with souls that have striven for what is altogether human — with the Goethe soul, the Schiller soul, the Fichte soul. [Johann Gottlieb Fichte, 1762–1814, German idealist philosopher.] There has been some awareness of the fact that, having passed through the gate of death, we shall look above all for the Goethe soul, the Fichte soul, the Schiller soul and other souls that had their last incarnation in Central Europe. This fact had come to expression instinctively, and now once more, for the last time, infinitely passionate nationalistic feeling is rising against it. When we realize that the words so often heard now from the west and the north west are but covering up this feeling of resistance we shall have come to understand the truth, to replace Maya, misconception. We shall then understand how earth man, having eternal man within him, does not want what the eternal man within him wants; how the love he must feel in eternity is in the temporal world transformed into hatred.

We shall find that the best way of achieving love in understanding, and understanding in love, will be to get to know the characteristics of European peoples' using the means spiritual science is able to provide. We are allowed to do so in so far as we are always addressing the higher self in man. And all who want to share in our way of thought or feeling will recognize this higher self and therefore be able to listen to everything that has to be said with regard to the outer garb, knowing that we are speaking of the outer garb.

In a certain sense every nation has its specific mission. — In due course we shall be able to enter the building in Dornach and find that the sequence of columns, their capitals and the architraves above them, express in their forms what comes to expression in the impulses we discern in Europe. But I am not going to talk about this now for it is best to talk about it when we have the building before our eyes. That is what I did there a few days ago. [[Note 6 Rudolf Steiner, 'Der Dornacher Bau als Wahrzeichen geschichtlichen Werdens und künstlerischer Umwandlungsimpulse' \(1914\) Dornach 1937 \(Proposed for GA 287\).](#)] — If we consider the impression our soul may gain even without seeing the building, we note above all that the inhabitants of the southern peninsulas — Italy and Spain — are, in a

way, bringing back in their modern mission the elements that in the past had appeared in the third post-Atlantean epoch, in Egypto-Chaldean civilization. As soon as we grasp this, we gain a true insight into the soul of an Italian or Spanish national. This can be traced down to specific details. It is possible to say that we find in reality what we have previously perceived in the spirit. What were the characteristic features of Egypto-Chaldean civilization? This is something we have spoken of many times. They had a feeling for the great, cosmic astrology. Stars and constellations were not seen the way we see them today. Instead, spiritual entities were perceived and the constellations were seen as their physical exterior. The spiritual was seen in everything. If this is to be repeated as the mission of a nation in the time after the Mystery of Golgotha it has to be repeated in such a way that it now is part of the inner soul — that the great cosmic tableau seen by the Egyptians and Chaldeans now presents itself as though born anew out of the soul. This is nowhere more evident than in Dante's *Divina Comedia*, a work representing the high point of culture on the Italian peninsula. [Dante Alighieri, 1265-1321.] Even in details, the elements of ancient Egypto-Chaldean culture emerge again as though born out of the soul, resurrected in the inner life.

The essence of Greek culture is today found in the French nation, down to the character of their leading personalities. Voltaire [1694–1778] for instance can be understood only if one compares him to a real Greek. And if you consider the form Corneille [1606–1684] and Racine [1639–1699] gave to their works you can see how they were wrestling with the Greek form. This is of great significance in the history of civilization. The struggle with outer form, with what Aristotle [384–322 BC] established with regard to form, lives on in Racine and Corneille. If we look to French culture to find again the culture of the intellectual or mind soul that set the tone in the fourth post-Atlantean epoch, we should find what was best in that culture. With the intellectual or mind soul coming to grips with the world, we should find exactly what relates to this. The greatest poet therefore, beyond compare in that respect, will have to be one whose creative work arises out of the intellectual or mind soul. A nation achieves greatness where its incomparables are brought to the fore. And the French poet who is unsurpassable is Molière [1622-1673]. With him the French soul reached its true, characteristic height — there it is unsurpassable. An echo of this was still alive in Voltaire.

An element that repeats nothing of the past but belongs to the fifth post-Atlantean epoch, something that has come up new in this epoch as it were, is the British soul. The principal aim of the fifth post-Atlantean epoch is to

develop the spiritual soul, to bring it out. The spiritual soul is particularly in evidence in the essential nature of the British folk soul. It is characteristic of the British soul that it faces events. Fourteen, fifteen years ago, when I was writing the first edition of my *Riddles of Philosophy* [Note 7 Rudolf Steiner, *Die Rätsel der Philosophie in ihrer Geschichte als Umriss dargestellt.* (GA 18) *Riddles of Philosophy.* Tr. F. Koelin. Anthroposophic Press, 1973.] I struggled to find a term to describe the British philosophers and it then became clear to me that they are onlookers in life. They face things the way the spiritual soul faces life as an onlooker. And the greatest creative spirit in the British soul, the man who stood there and faced the British character traits giving expression to all of them, down to the very depths of the soul, was Shakespeare. There the British soul is incomparable, in the onlooker mode.

Moving on to Central Europe we find '...what is forever evolving, and never actually is...' as I have already described it in the public lecture. It is the 'I' as such, the innermost part of man. How does this relate to the elements of man's soul? It relates individually to the sentient soul, the intellectual or mind soul and the spiritual soul, developing links with all of them. Let us consider this in the case of Goethe. We note how he longed to go to Italy. And as it was in his case so all the best minds of Central Europe always longed for Italy, to achieve fertilization of the ego and let it conceive from the sentient soul. And the ego also exchanges forces with the intellectual or mind soul. Let us try and observe how that close bond between ego and intellectual or mind soul has really always been there through the centuries. Note how Frederick the Great [1712–1786], that most German of princes, really only spoke and wrote in French, how he had a special appreciation of French culture. This is evident, for instance, from his relationship with Voltaire. We can also note how the German philosopher Leibniz [1646–1716] wrote his works in French. That is exactly how the ego relates to the intellectual or mind soul. And when the ego is from the depths of the soul seeking the thing it strives for, something pushes up from the depths of the ego, from unfathomable depths of the ego: the spiritual soul tries to grasp it. This can be seen in the case of Goethe. I have often shown how he tried to grasp the way organisms evolve one from another. He established a whole system for organisms. That arose from the depths of the ego. But it is not immediately comprehensible. People need something that is easier to understand, they need things presented the way they arise from the spiritual soul. So they did not take up what Goethe had to offer but took up Darwin [1809–1882]. We still have not reached the point today where we are able to give recognition to Goethe's *Theory of Colours*. [Note 8 'Goethe's Theory of Colours' in *Goethes Naturwissenschaftliche Schriften*, hersg. und kommentiert von

Rudolf Steiner (GA 1c).] Transposed into the spiritual soul in Newton's [1642–1727] work it became what is currently accepted as the science of physics.

These things indicate the way in which individual, in this case national, characters are facing one another. We rise above the outer Maya which holds men captive and come to the truth when we learn to look at things in the light of spiritual science. We come to a truth that will show us that just as individual soul forces are warring with each other in a human being so the soul forces incorporated in the folk souls are at war with each other. It is not by chance that now in our day — when the teaching I have just presented has emerged — war makes its appearance as the great teacher, telling mankind in such a bloody, such a terrible way the very thing we are also telling them in spiritual terms. It is not by chance that whilst we are able to discuss this here there rages outside what is probably one of the bloodiest struggles ever. Fundamentally speaking, it represents the same truths but we must first penetrate them in their Maya to understand them as they really are.

In speaking about these things we must for once remove from the words that are spoken every nuance of feeling, of sympathy or antipathy, and use words merely for characterization. Then we shall understand things rightly. For these are things contained within the self of man, in so far as it is wrapped in the national element. We can follow this through in detail. To begin with, to prepare for what we must come to understand, let me say the following.

Let us take a Central European living in the ego culture. In my public lecture I said that the Central European aspires to his god in such a way that he will be joined to him. He wants to be united with his god. With regard to the thinking process, we can make the I generally say: 'Man thinks'. Yet the statement 'Man thinks' really says very little indeed. We need to learn to look more carefully with the aid of spiritual science. We must gradually learn not to speak thoughtlessly but instead put things in the right way. For people who do not really care about the reality of things it is, of course, all right the way one just says it, but it is right only to say: 'the Central European or Scandinavian thinks' — with 'thinking' here considered an activity because it is the evolving of thought that matters. 'The ensouled being thinks' — that is what matters in Central Europe and in the Nordic countries. Man is so bound up with thought that this thought is the product of the soul's own activity, that the soul's activity consists of nothing else but the soul being caught up in thought.

The same cannot be rightly said for the Frenchman. In that case we have to say: 'He has thoughts'. For 'thinking' and 'having thoughts' are not the same — there is a subtle difference. My *Riddles of Philosophy* can help to make this clear. In Western Europe people have thoughts. Thoughts are something that comes; they are given just as sensory perceptions are given. That is how it is with thoughts. They enter into the soul, they are fully alive in it, people have them, even grow intoxicated with them, are delighted to have them. One accusation made against the Germans is that their thoughts show a certain coldness. That may well be. A German has to form them first in his individual soul. They need to be warmed through there and only stay warm for as long as they are part of the immediate activity.

So much in preparation. For, indeed, the expression of individual national characteristics will always be found to show something coming alive that has already been put forward in the principles of spiritual science, something you will find in my lectures on folk souls. Let us consider individual expressions of national character.

The Italian and the Spanish character is determined by the sentient soul. We can observe this in life down to the finer detail. Everywhere we come upon the sentient soul. (This does not, of course, refer to life in the higher self.) As soon as a native of those countries is wholly within his national element he is within the sentient soul. This is particularly attached to everything connected with home and sensitive to everything that is not home but, rather, 'alien country'. If you try, for instance, to understand all that is part of the national element in Italy you will find that an Italian sees another person who is not Italian as a foreigner who lives abroad. All the struggles that took place in Italy during the 19th century had specifically to do with home territory. Here we have a recapitulation of Egypto-Chaldean culture.

Next let us consider the people of Western Europe, those living on French soil. (Remember, we need to rid ourselves of anything to do with sympathy and antipathy.) They are recapitulating Greek civilization. Their attitude to someone from another country will be like that of the Greeks — they will call him a barbarian. Greek civilization is recapitulated here. We can understand this even if the wildest feelings of antipathy are raging. There always is a nuance present of the way people in ancient Greece considered non-Greeks.

The English people have the specific mission to nurture the spiritual soul and this comes to full expression in materialism. Here we specially need to rid ourselves of all antipathy. The nurturing of materialism results in men being simply positioned next to each other in space. This is something that was not experienced in the past: awareness of the rival. The spiritual soul is conscious of another person as its rival in physical life.

What is the situation as regards the Central Europeans, including the Scandinavians? It would be most interesting to go into full detail of this another time. What does a German feel when face to face with another national, in the position where the Italian sees the foreigner, the Frenchman the barbarian and the Englishman his rival? One needs to find the pregnant phrase always for these things. A German faces his opponent — this may also be in a duel and may have nothing at all to do with any feeling of antipathy even — it is merely an matter of fighting for existence or for something connected with one's existence. The enemy need not be denigrated in the least. Again it is possible to observe this even in fine detail. This war in particular shows how the German national faces his enemy as though in a duel.

Let us now turn to the East. We have spoken of the sentient soul coming into its own on the two southern peninsulas, the intellectual or mind soul among the French, the spiritual soul in the British Isles. In Central Europe and up north in Scandinavia the national element comes into its own in the I, the ego. It shows differentiation between different regions but overall is experienced by what is called the ego soul. As I have said, it lives as spirit-self in the East. How do we characterize the spirit-self? It approaches man, comes down upon him. In the ego, man is striving. In the three soul aspects, man is also striving. The spirit-self on the other hand descends. It will one day descend upon the East as a true spirit-self. These things are true, as we have often said. But it needs preparation, preparation to the effect that the soul conceives, that it becomes well versed in its conceiving.

Surely the Russian people have done nothing else so far but conceived. We have had the works of Soloviev, the greatest Russian philosopher, translated within our movement. [*Note 9 Soloviev, Vladimir: *Gesammelte Werke* (Collected Works), tr. Harry Kohler, with an introduction by Rudolf Steiner; Stuttgart 1921. Also *Gedichte von Wladimir Solovjeff* tr. by Marie Steiner, 2nd edn (Dornach 1949).*] If we consider his works in depth we find that it is all Western European culture and philosophy. It is a little different because it has been born out of the Russian folk soul. What is it that is approaching in the Russian soul in contradistinction to western European culture? Italy and

Spain are a recapitulation of the third post-Atlantean epoch, the French people a recapitulation of the culture of ancient Greece. The Briton shows the new element that has come in, something we very definitely acquire on the physical plane. In Central Europe it is the ego that has to emerge clearly. In Russia we have receptiveness, conception. First it was Byzantine Christianity that was received, descending like a cloud and then spreading. And western European culture was received even during the reign of Peter the Great [1672–1725]. At present, one would say, only the material basis for conception is there. What we do have there is a reflection of Western European culture, and the soul's work consists in preparing itself for conception, making itself receptive. The Russian folk-soul will only be in its right element when it realizes that Western European elements have to be received the same way as the ancient Germans, for instance, received the Christian faith, or the way the Germanic people took in Greek culture through Goethe. It will be a while yet. The physical element in the people of the East is reacting against the things that need to be taken in, and so the East is still resisting what will be coming towards it. The spirit-self has to descend.

The element coming across from the West is not the spirit-self — but the soul uses it, in a way, to prepare, to practise, receptiveness. And how does a Russian see another national? As someone who stands in opposition, someone descending upon his consciousness. And so the person who is a foreigner to the Italian, a barbarian to the Frenchman, a rival to the Briton and an opponent to the German is a heretic in Russia. That is why, fundamentally speaking, the Russians have only fought religious wars until now — all their wars have so far been religious wars. The aim was to liberate all nations or bring them to the Christian faith — the Balkan countries and so on. And even now Russian country people feel the other person to be 'evil' incarnate. They see the other person as a heretic and always believe they are fighting for the faith — even today! These things are true down into detail and we come to understand them if we are truly willing really to look into things. And so we may also ask what it is we see confronting us in the East of Europe.

The way he is in physical life, man is in a way unjust to his higher self. Someone living in the intellectual or mind soul, a person whose imagination is particularly well developed, will 'have' thoughts. The concept of how he should appear to himself, in so far as he is a particular national, presents itself before his higher self. He feels that it is his glory; a third self as it were, a national self which stands between him as a higher self and as a national person. He fights on the basis of this. After death he first of all has

to be overcome this unless he has already overcome it beforehand through spiritual science. He must pass through something that first of all presents itself to his soul as the Inspiration of his own image of himself.

Someone living in the spiritual soul as a national will above all be inclined towards the things the spiritual soul has made its own in the physical world. This will be like a grievous memory in the world that lies between death and rebirth.

The Central European is a seeker. This is evident even from derogatory remarks made by his enemies who may say he is fit only to plough the fields and search among the clouds. However far he may have advanced, he is, even here, seeking the self in spirit. In the efforts he makes during his progress on earth he will therefore, in a sense, try already get rid of whatever has to be got rid of when we go through the gate of death and enter the spiritual world.

Someone who has been in a Russian body during his last incarnation must first of all, on passing through the gate of death, assume the consciousness of an *angelos*, merge into the inner being of an *angelos* — unless he has gone through a different preparation with spiritual science — and share in all that comes down from the hierarchies above him.

All these are reasons why we may say that if we look to the West of Europe it seems natural that strife arises out of the very nature of men in so far as they are nationals, for the national element is connected with something that is an outer covering. It is quite natural for strife to arise. In the spiritual world anything that rightfully belongs there can spread without hindrance. But external means have to be used to assert the image one has of oneself. It needs to be able to spread in order to emerge. Anything looking for competition must of course be able to spread. It is perfectly understandable that strife comes from the people who represent the spiritual soul. If we are really seeking the I, the ego, in Central Europe, let us see if the qualities of the ego can already be brought to bear.

I have already stressed, for example, that the ego needs to be fanned to life again every morning. It is in an unaroused state when we enter into the sphere of sleep with it and needs to be fanned to life again every morning when we wake up. If I may refer to Austria — I heard it said even when I was young that Austria would one day fall apart when occasion arose. We knew different; it might have any amount of centrifugal force within it but it was held together from outside, it could not fall apart. Let us

consider Germany. Does it show the ego character in its outer aspect, in its form? It is a fact of considerable import that for much of a century the Germans have pressed for unification. They did not achieve this from the inside. It took an external impulse, not from inside Germany but from outside, from the centre of France, to let the Germany of today come into being in accord with the ego character. We can only understand the world if we consider it in the light of spiritual science. Fundamentally speaking, the ego does not have the inclination to hit out; for the overweening forces from the physical plane would then go over into the spiritual sphere. This is something we could demonstrate over and over again in German history, in the history of Austria and the history of the Scandinavian peoples. The feeling is right, therefore, that a German, or a Central European, has to be made to come out in war. Fundamentally speaking, he is unable to start a war of his own accord. If he goes to war out of initiative, he does it the way the initiative does it in the ego, and there have of course been such wars in the interior. That is what we must feel the attitude of Central Europe to war to be.

And what emerges in the East for someone able to get a feeling for national character? For the Russian it is the most unnatural thing in the world to wage war. If he were to know himself he would feel it to be most unnatural for him to wage war. We of the West cannot become Tolstoyans, however well we understand all things Russian. But for the Russian it is unnatural to wage war. War has to be imposed on him, for it is totally against the national character. A Russian feels towards war the way he feels about religious war — it is something coming from outside. War cannot be made plausible to him for he would rather pray for what is to come to him. It is therefore quite natural to look for the motives that causes Russians to go to war not in the national character but in the motives imposed on them from outside. More than anywhere else we have to say in this case that it is not the people who make war — it is the people only in an external sense and seemingly — but rather whatever it is that they have to turn against most of all. In Russia war is always a 'Maya', illusion, in the worst sense. This is why we can state clearly and precisely what I posed as a question in my public lecture: Who could have prevented the war? — If we actually want to talk of the possibility of its being prevented. — For the French, war has been something natural since 1871 and it would not be natural to speak of their being able to prevent it. Anyone forced to fight his rivals naturally does not have the right to be indignant when neutrality has been breached in some place or other, and in this case the indignation needs to be reinterpreted into the national element. But it is natural for him to go to war. We cannot take that amiss.

In that case war can no more be rejected than when, in interpreting the nature of living creatures, one has to find a different phrase out of the element of the spiritual soul than from the the standpoint of the ego and therefore speaks of the 'struggle for survival'. Goethe did not coin that phrase, because from the ego point of view it does not apply. But where it is a question of war being a falsehood, where it even has to be reinterpreted first into a religious war, there we have to say that it has risen externally and therefore could also have been prevented externally. Looking into all the depths one is able to look into—the war has indeed been a necessity but that is another thing—we have to say: It is true that Russia could have stayed an onlooker, and the war could have been prevented. If Russia had remained an onlooker the war could have been prevented. For here a war has been grafted onto a national character when basically it is something quite unnatural.

Such things, as we speak about them, come from the spiritual world. They arise from it. But it is always possible to verify them, to confirm them, in the outside world. Anything we arrive at out of the spiritual world finds confirmation in the outside world. We could say that it would be a natural gesture for the Russian national character to pray and wait for what is to come. It is very strange; even Russian intellectuals are waiting in expectancy — I have already referred to this — in the feeling that something belonging to the future has to come towards them. What will have to come for them still lies far ahead in the future and we have seen how there is refusal to accept what has to be taken up now. It is perhaps more than just an outer symbol that now, when battles are being fought on the Black Sea, the Russian still looks in that direction — to see an embodiment, as it were, of what he may expect in the spirit — pointing to the Hagia Sophia. [Note 10 Santa Sophia. the Great Church of the Holy Wisdom, principal church of Constantinople, Built by Justinian in 532 –7, it was converted into a mosque when Constantinope fell to the Turks in 1453 (translator).] Merezhkovsky [1865–1941] describes two visits he has made to the Hagia Sophia. He felt the Hagia Sophia to be the outer symbol, as it were, of something he did not know in his feelings but was expecting, and he called it the Christianity that is to come for the Russians. He would have seen it rightly if he had realized that it is a Christian faith that has gone through the Faust nature which will have to take hold of the Russian people. But that is something he does not yet know. He believes it is the Hagia Sophia which represents it. What is his attitude to the Christian faith? If we consider what Soloviev has to say on this, then I am able to say that he shows a certain understanding of it. For when problems were once again created for him by St Petersburg and the Holy Synod, he said: 'Ah, that is

how you fare when you have problems in getting them to understand what you want to say. The one side calls me a liberal Western European atheist, the other an orthodox believer, and others again even consider me a Jesuit.' He concluded by saying: 'Amazing what you can turn into when seen through the eyes of the Petersburg blackguards.' These are not my words but those of a good Russian citizen, a Russian who shows us that it is not easy to rid oneself of feelings of sympathy or antipathy. But let us assume the Russian intellectual is left to himself. As I said, it is a world of expectancy, a natural mood of looking for what is to come, something not to be achieved with the sword and with cannon. That is why the Pan-Slavonic movement is such a lie. Left to himself, Merezhkovsky gave himself up to his feelings when face to face with the Hagia Sophia. He did however confuse it with the Christian faith of the Western European which has gone through the strivings of Faust. And how does he speak of it?

I have tried to find a succinct formulation for the feelings different nations may be seen to have towards war, saying that a Russian believes he is going to war for the sake of religion, an Englishman for competition, a Frenchman for the glory, an Italian or Spaniard for his homeland and a German to fight for existence. And we are therefore able to say that Italy wants to preserve the homeland; France conceives of its own idea of [glory] as the national ideal; the Englishman takes action and does business [Note 11 The German verb *handeln* means both 'to act, to take action' and 'to trade' (Translator).] the German aspires; the Russian prays — and that comes naturally. I am not speaking of external prayer, for it is a matter of the heart. What was it then Merezhkovsky said at the end of his book, which I mentioned the day before yesterday? [Note 12 Dmitri Merezhkovsky, *Der Antnarsch des Pöbels* (Tr. H. Horschelmann) Munich & Leipzig 1907.]

The Hagia Sophia — brilliant, sad and flooded with the amber-coloured light of ultimate mystery — lifted up my soul which had fallen and was frightened. I looked up into the dome that is like the vault of heaven, and I thought: There it stands, made by the hand of man, and in it men are coming close to the triune god on earth. This close approach has been made and more still of this shall come in time to be. Surely those who believe in the Son must come to the Father who is the world. And surely those must come to the Son who love the world, which the Father also loved so much that he gave his

Son for it. For they offer their souls for him and for their friends; they have the Son because they have Love, only they do not know the name.

They do not have it as a whole. And he concluded:

And I felt impelled to pray for them all, in the temple that at this hour belongs to the heathen but is the only temple for the future, to pray that my people be given that true, conquering strength: pray for conscious belief in the triune god.

So there you have the prayer. There you have the anomaly of a fight that goes from East to West.

In making this attempt to gain inner understanding of what meets us here, in attempting to escape from Maya and enter into the truth, we can indeed say to ourselves that we are not pursuing an abstract anthroposophy that is afraid to see. For it would be fear of seeing the truth if we were to shrink from seeing national characters in their true foundations, because of our 'First Principle.' [*Note 13 First Principle: When he established the Anthroposophical Society in 1912/1913, Rudolf Steiner formulated the First Principle as follows: 'The Society provides for all people to work together in brotherhood who consider the basis of their work together in love to be a common spiritual element that is in all human souls, irrespective of differences of creed, nationality, class, sex, etc.'*] We are exactly following that Principle if we approach man as he is and endeavour really to look into his soul. Then we are most of all addressing the immortal aspect of man and we shall then also find the part of him that goes beyond the national, that goes towards the eternal, and the fine feelings that turn to the eternal in man. And then we shall find a way of bringing about what after all has to be brought about. For do you think progress and the good of mankind will not suffer if the temper now prevailing among nations is to persist? Tempers which in any case are merely born out of Maya? From the point of view of the necessity which demands that men get to understand one another again, that there shall be a continuation of what in a certain sense had already been started, arising from Central Europe, it is essential that this atmosphere we live in — a spiritual atmosphere that is one of such dreadful tumult today— receives also other elements into it and not only

those of tumult. We cannot help but sense, if we have entered into spiritual life, the tumult that exists in the spiritual atmosphere today. The more deeply one has entered, the more one will be sensitive to this. Profoundly disturbing things may arise out of the spiritual life. The occultist has been able to learn much, but never has so much been experienced that was so deeply disturbing and has such impact as in the last three months.

Many is the time I have stressed the occult truth that things presenting themselves one way in the physical world are the opposite by nature in the spiritual world. Some of our friends will also be able to recall how often I have said that war was hanging in the spiritual air and was really only being held off by something which is a spiritual impulse also in physical life — by fear. Force of fear held it back for as long as it was astral by nature. Fear stopped it from breaking out earlier. Externally speaking, the war started of course with the assassination in Sarajevo. That, too, has its significance. That is what is so disturbing in this affair. We are among ourselves here, and so it must also be possible to say these things. The individual personality who was murdered on that day [Archduke Francis Ferdinand of Austria, assassinated on 28 June 1914] and went through the gate of death afterwards presented an appearance I had never before seen myself nor heard described by others. I have on several occasions described the appearance of souls as they pass through the gate of death. This soul however showed a peculiar feature. It was like a centre of crystallisation, with everything by nature of fear elements crystallizing around it, as it were, until war broke out. Afterwards it showed itself to be something quite different. Where before it had been a great cosmic force attracting all fear, it had then become something that was the opposite. The fear which had prevailed here on the physical plane had held everybody back. But once this soul had ascended to the spiritual plane it acted in the opposite way, bringing war.

It profoundly disturbs the soul to experience such things. And there are many such things that now exist within the heaving swell of the astral impulses that rise up into the spiritual world from the hearts and minds of men. And among ourselves I am able to say that I have never experienced anything like the things I experienced in these last months, something that stirred up the waves in human souls to such a dreadful extent. From this it is of course apparent what is going on in the spiritual atmosphere. And if that which has to be in the spiritual atmosphere is indeed to come about, thoughts must enter into that atmosphere that can only arise from souls that have grasped the spiritual world. Pleading with utmost passion, therefore, your souls are asked to conceive ideas, ideas we try to stimulate

with reflections like those of today or of the last occasion. These are ideas arising from spiritual insight and only souls that have gone through spiritual science are able to send such thoughts up into the spiritual world. The souls will need such thoughts now whilst war is in progress, and even more so afterwards. For thoughts are reality!

The great wish is to send the most fervent prayer into the spiritual world that whatever arises out of this war and after it may originate not from human Maya but from the truth and from spiritual reality. The more you send such thoughts up into the spiritual world the more you are doing for what shall be the fruit of these worldwide struggles, and the more you are doing for what is needed for the whole evolution of mankind.

This prayer, then, shall be the culmination of all I intended to present to your souls with these thoughts. If the questions we have considered have truly entered into our souls, if our souls, as souls that have now lived in spiritual science, allow to stream up into the spiritual world that which brings peace to man. then our spiritual science has stood the test in these fateful times. It will have stood the test to the effect that our fighters out there have not in vain given full rein to their courage; that the blood of battle has not flowed in vain. Then the suffering of those who mourn, the sacrifices which have been made, will not have been in vain in the world. Then spirit fruit will grow out of these fateful days, all the more so to the extent human beings are able to send thoughts like those I have indicated up into the spiritual world.

I want to make it clear that the words I am about to speak form a sevenfold structure, making a kind of mantram. Please note that in the last but one line the words '*Lenken Seelen*' should be taken to mean '*wenn Seelen lenken*' (if souls turn).

This is what I wanted to put before you: that these events, which speak so much of reality, appear in the right light to us if we rise above Maya and to the true reality. Oh, the souls will be found that are able to see our present time in that way. Souls will be found if they are found also in the sense Krishna was teaching [*Note 14 In the Bhagavad Gita. See also lecture of 1 September 1914.*] with regard to warrior-souls. And if it should truly prove possible for souls that have gone through spiritual science to send thoughts to fructify the spirit up into the spiritual world in these difficult, fateful days, then the right fruit will develop out of all that is happening in those hard struggles and cruel sacrifices. And so I am able to let the things I

wanted to put before your souls today culminate in what I would so much like to see as the state of consciousness, the innermost consciousness, of souls that have gone through spiritual science:

*Out of courage shown in battle,
Out of the blood shed in war,
Out of the grief of those who are left,
Out of the people's deeds of sacrifice
Spirit fruits will come to grow
If souls with knowledge of the spirit
Turn their mind to spirit realms.*



3

The Nature of European Folk Souls

28 November 1914, Berlin

Our first thoughts must once again be directed to the guardian spirits who are guiding those who are at the front where the events of our day are taking place. We address ourselves to the spirits protecting those who are with us in this movement but are now out there, and have to stand up with their life and the whole of their physical being in response to what the time is asking of them. And in a wider sense we are also turning towards the spirits who protect all who have to offer life and limb out there in the field, even though they are not part of our community.

*Spirits of your souls, guardian guides,
On your wings let there be borne
The prayer of love from our souls
To those whom you guard here on earth.
Thus, united with your might,
A ray of help our prayer shall be
For the souls it seeks out there in love.*

And for those who have already gone through the gate of death we say:

*Spirits of your souls, guardian guides,
On your wings let there be borne
The prayer of love from our souls
To those whom you guard in the spheres.
Thus, united with your might,
A ray of help our prayer shall be
For the souls it seeks out there in love.*

May the spirit we are seeking in our movement, the spirit we have been seeking in coming together through the years, rule over you and spread his wings over you, so that you shall be able to complete your task according to your karma. Dear friends, I do not know how many of our friends were able to sense that it is much harder than usual to speak in public lectures in the present day, lectures like those given yesterday and the day before [*Note 15 Lectures given on 26 November 1914 ('Die Menschenseele in Leben und Tod')* and *27 November 1914 ('Die Seelen der Volker')* both in *Aus schicksaltragender Zeit* (GA 64). *The Human Soul in Life and Death* (tr. V. Compton-Burnett, C. Davy, D.S. Osmond and K. Wegener) London, Rudolf Steiner Publishing Co. 1935 and *The Soul of the People* (tr. not mentioned) London, Rudolf Steiner Publishing Co. 1934.] — especially in public lectures of the type given yesterday. The reason is that the things which have to be said may only too easily be subject to misunderstanding. It is particularly when we are within our movement with heart and mind that we need to let a thought I also made reference to the last time I was able to speak to you here, enter more and more profoundly into our souls. It is the thought that, fundamentally speaking, external life — life on the physical plane as man normally encounters it, not in its reality — is Maya, a kind of ghostly dream, and that the truth, the reality, lies only behind this. It must be clear to us that this truth of the Maya cannot be grasped by theories only, nor indeed just with the intellect. It has to be grasped with all the powers of our soul, the whole of our soul-life and, above all, also the impulses of our heart and feelings. Our intellect is focused on things physical and finds it impossible to grasp that this world that surrounds us is not to be regarded as the true, real world. And our feelings, our will impulses, find this truth even more difficult to grasp. Entering into the life of spiritual science we not only have to learn to think differently but also to feel differently and go down to the wellsprings of our will activity in a different way.

It is difficult to find adequate expression for these things, for no words exist for what pertains to the spiritual world. It is therefore only too easy for the things I said yesterday to be taken to show a certain bias, a certain sympathy or antipathy, in the characterization of one folk soul or another in these days when human thoughts and feelings are so strongly tinged with the sympathies and antipathies that arise out of the mood of the time. And yet, when spiritual science is spoken of in the right frame of mind, it will have to be believed that things like the characterization of folk souls in fact cannot be presented in sympathy or antipathy in the usual sense, even if it is necessary to characterize them sharply. If they were presented in sympathy or antipathy they could not be true, they would have to be untrue, a lie. Why is this so?

It is very easy to think that someone developing his soul life in a certain way to attain to perception of the spiritual worlds, to an objective view of these spiritual worlds, might dry up in his inner feelings and will impulses. That definitely is not possible, however. It would be quite impossible for someone to attain to an objective vision of the spiritual world if he first allowed himself to dry up in the sphere of his living will and feelings, dry up in the inner fire of the impulses that are normally arising in the world of human feelings, sentiments and passions. On the contrary all the inner feelings there are, all the inner will activity, must be firmly taken hold of, must become as fiery as possible. But they need to be transformed in the soul. They cannot remain the way they are in ordinary life. They need to be transformed to such effect that through this life of feeling and will impulses the person achieves something of a new synthesis in the sphere of his will and feelings. It is exactly in this way that something must evolve which we may call the inner eye, the inner ear. It is impossible to become inwardly dried up when seeking the spiritual world. Yet once that world is perceived, once it has been reached after all the inner struggles, all inner victories, then it does present itself in such a way that, for example, it may still evoke sympathy and antipathy in us, but that any characterization given of it has as little in it of budding sympathy and antipathy as you would find of budding sympathy in a rose you are looking at. We are able to experience sympathy with it and antipathy, but it is there before our eyes as an objective presence and if we wish to grasp its nature we are merely able to characterize. For a person who is forced, as it were, to characterize the spiritual world, it is in every single case an impossibility to speak in either sympathy or antipathy.

Yesterday the attempt was made to characterize the Italian, the French, the British and the German folk souls. There will, of course, have been some people in the audience who felt that what was presented was not objective characterization but sympathy and antipathy. Yet if sympathy and antipathy were to come to expression the characterization itself would have to be a lying one, it could never be reliable.

You will be able to understand this very well in this individual instance if I tell you the following. You all know that man is not merely the entity that stands before us when we look at him with our everyday eyes. There he is living in his physical body by his very nature, there he looks at us, as it were, through his physical body. Yet he has another reality, one he is not conscious of in ordinary life on earth for reasons you are aware of. This reality essentially lies within his ego and astral body, and he lives and passes through it quite independent of his physical and etheric body

between going to sleep and waking up. A spiritual scientist obtains the results of his researches by illuminating for himself what normally remains unconscious between going to sleep and waking up. This gives him inner experiences of things that normally remain hidden behind the outer impressions of the world, the ghostly dreams of the world.

One thing I said in yesterday's lecture was that the folk spirit, the folk soul, lives specifically in the etheric body of man, and we are within this body from the moment we wake until we go to sleep. On waking we become immersed in the folk soul as we enter into the body. When asleep we are not in the folk soul — only between the moments of waking and going to sleep.

The question is: If the spiritual scientist brings inner life and light particularly into the aspects that are not within the physical body, what is the situation with regard to his life in the folk soul when separate from the body? There the folk soul has a divisive effect. The spiritual scientist cannot live within the folk soul when consciously going through the things man goes through in his sleep. The peculiar thing is that at any time, at any particular moment, a certain number of folk souls may be said to be reigning. The way these folk souls behave toward one another actually makes up the whole earth life of mankind, in so far as it is on the physical plane. Entering into the physical body we also enter into our folk soul. Coming out of the physical body, and having conscious experience outside it, we also enter into the folk-soul element — this is one of many experiences one has—but not into our own folk soul. We enter into the other folk souls and never our own, that is the one we live in during the day in our physical bodies. Accept the full weight of these words. On going to sleep we do not enter into one particular folk soul but into the concerted action, the dance as it were, of the other folk souls. The one soul which does not contribute to the dance is the one we enter into on returning to the physical body. In doing his researches, the spiritual scientist actually joins those other folk souls — which are acting in concert and with them lives through the same things we normally experience on the physical plane in relation to our own folk soul, the soul belonging to the nation within which we ordinarily find ourselves.

Let me ask you then: If a spiritual scientist really knows of life not only in his own folk soul but also in those other folk souls, if he has to go through this, would he then have any real reason to describe his own folk soul with a different kind of objectivity than other folk souls? He does not. Here the potential is given to rise above the prejudices of sympathies and

antipathies and be objective. Of course it is not only the spiritual scientist who goes through this — and he does it consciously — but all human beings go through it. Between going to sleep and waking up every human soul lives in the sphere where all folk souls act in concert, except for the one his soul lives in when awake in the daytime.

This is something spiritual science offers so that the horizon of our feelings and sentiments can be truly widened. We often say that spiritual science is able to provide for genuine love, with no distinction of race, nation, class and so forth, because of the nature of the insights it makes possible. This statement is so profound that anyone who clearly sees himself as a human being in that part of himself that is of the spirit simply cannot shut himself away in hatred and antipathy from that which is humanity. He will have to say to himself that it is really senseless not to love. Yet in order to be able to say 'It is really senseless not love' spiritual science simply must come to us as something we live, not something we merely know. That is also why we pursue spiritual science not merely as knowledge but in such a way that in living together for years in our branches it truly becomes one with us, a spiritual nourishment that we take in and digest.

I have said that between going to sleep and waking man usually lives in the interplay of folk souls other than the one which is his own folk soul at the time. That is the usual way. There is a way, however, of living one-sidedly, as it were, in just one particular folk soul. There is a way in which one is forced, in this state between going to sleep and waking, to live not within the whole interplay of those other folk souls, within their dance as it were. Instead one is more or less under a spell to live together with one or several folk souls that are taken out of the total concord of all folk souls. There is such a way. It consists in our feeling a particular hatred for one or several folk souls or nations. This hatred we produce lends the special power that forces us in our sleep state to live with the folk soul we hate most or even hate altogether. There is no better way of preparing ourselves for entering completely into one particular folk soul when in the unconscious state between going to sleep and waking, and having to live with it the way we live with the folk soul we know when in our physical bodies, than to hate it —but to hate it sincerely, at the level of our feelings, not merely persuading ourselves that we hate it.

When such things are said we become aware how the reality of Maya has to be taken with profound seriousness. It is not only that our intellect, being what it is, does not want to see that things are different in their

depths than in the outer ghostly dream they present, but our feelings, our will, also rise in protest against something which holds true for the spiritual world. If we consider such truths as the one of having to live in other folk souls, and particularly in the one we hate, we have to say to ourselves that the vast majority of people reject spiritual truth not only because it is not accessible to the intellect but also because they simply do not want it, because it upsets them also in the sentiments they ordinarily live with on earth. As soon as one enters more deeply and seriously into the realities of the spiritual world, they are not the least bit comfortable; they are not in the least the kind of thing man really likes when he desires to live on the physical plane only. They are uncomfortable. They shake us up and shake us through and the more profound they are the more they demand of us, really at every single moment, that we must be different from the way we usually are on the physical plane. As a living inner entity it demands something different from us than we are on the physical plane, and that is usually one of the reasons why people reject spiritual reality. We cannot do other than see ourselves linked, not with just one part of the world or of mankind but linked with the whole world and the whole of mankind.

Fundamentally speaking, our physical existence is merely the swing of the pendulum to one side. The swing of the pendulum in the other direction is in many respects the opposite, only we do not know of it in our ordinary life. It can be said that things are getting serious as soon as we consider the deeper truths of spiritual life. These deeper truths can become infinitely important in pointing the way for what human evolution, progress for mankind, demands of us at this very time. Let us take a particular example from spiritual science that can be of special importance for the present time.

Things being the way I have just described to you — so that in entering into physical body and ether body we join in experience what is normally called the folk spirit, the folk soul — you will easily understand how sharing in the experience of the fate of the individual folk spirit is one of the things we will gradually shed after death. Many things have been spoken of that man will shed after death; and one of these things is the link with the folk spirit. The folk spirit is active in the progress of earth evolution, it is active in the way mankind develops on earth from generation to generation. After death, between death and rebirth, we have to come free of the folk spirit in the same way we also grow out of other things. This at the same time lends significance to the hero's death, on the field of battle for instance, a significance that is felt. Any who feel it in the right way — and those going through such a death in the right frame of mind surely will feel this — will

know that this death is a death of love. It is not suffered for personal reasons, not for the things one can keep with one for. the whole period between death and rebirth—it is suffered for the folk soul, in that this physical and ether body is given up selflessly. It is impossible to think of death in battle without knowing that it is filled through and through with genuine and most heartfelt love, with men being upheld by something that contributes to the future good of mankind. That is what is so great, so utterly tremendous in this death on the field of battle, if it is experienced in the right frame of mind. For it is impossible to conceive of it except in conjunction with love.

The association with our particular folk spirit has to be cast off between death and rebirth. It has to fall away from us. We have to reach a region where we do not live with the individual folk spirit as such. We shall not, however, be able to enter immediately into other folk spirits. That only happens between going to sleep and waking up. We have to free ourselves altogether of everything that is wholly of the earth, and enter into a life that is separate from anything to do with the evolution of mankind on earth. We must also free ourselves of everything that links us to folk spirits. And this again is something that widens and enlarges the horizons of our feeling life, if we make it something we know, for it lets us look towards the other element, an element we seek that is not around us when we live on the horizon of physical existence.

As you were able to see from the characterization of individual folk spirits given yesterday, it is so that in conscious awareness one of them may be more inclined towards the individual personality of man, to what man is as an individual personality, whilst another is less inclined that way. I have compared it with the way one person looks more into his inner life whilst another lives more in the life of the outer world. One particular folk spirit is more concerned with individual human personalities, another less so. As we belong to one folk spirit or another, this determines the way we relate to what the folk spirit is doing in our ether body, what is in preparation there. As a result there are certain differences in the casting-off process after death, in the gradual emergence out of what the folk spirit has made of us.

Let us take the French folk spirit, for example. It is a folk spirit whose Inspirations are connected with a highly developed culture, a culture that can only be seen as arising because this folk spirit is looking back to ancient Greek civilization. I have discussed this already. This folk spirit now works on the people belonging to that particular nation in such a way —

and that is the very nature of the folk spirits that go hand in hand with highly developed civilizations — that deep impressions are made on the human ether body, that the signature of the folk spirit leaves a sharp imprint on the ether body. This has to do with something I pointed out yesterday, that the Frenchman becomes attached to the image he has created of himself. The consequence of the sharp impressions left on the ether body by the folk spirit is that when the soul leaves the body when death occurs, sharply distinct features are left in their ether body and also in the astral body of man. It is particularly if one belongs to a nation such as the French that the soul emerges from physical life with an astral body bearing distinct features. The consequence is that it takes a lot to cast off all that is left of the folk spirit after death.

If we compare the shedding of the essential folk spirit as it occurs in a member of the French nation with the same process for a soul that has been under the influence of the Russian folk soul, for example, we get really the opposite effect in the latter case. The Russian folk soul is young, as it were, and as yet concerns itself less with the individual human beings put in its care. Because of this, individual people passing through the gate of death bear little of the stamp of the Russian folk soul in the ether and astral bodies. Looking at the overall situation in the spiritual world we find, in looking at the souls that have passed through the gate of death, that we encounter sharply defined ether bodies and also sharply defined astral bodies in the souls of the French people whilst Russian souls show little of the imprint of the folk spirit on their ether and astral bodies. Because of this the different souls can be used for different purposes by the guiding spirits that have the task of furthering the evolution of mankind.

We are now in an age that truly cannot progress unless a certain sum of spiritual truth reveals itself to mankind. That has been discussed on many occasions, even to the point that it has been said that by a certain time-span in the present century the revelation of Christ will be made to man in the spiritual world. But we can take it in such a way that we say: A spiritual element has to come into the world. This spiritual element entering into human evolution is first of all the fruit of a struggle won by the spirits in the supersensible sphere. Higher spirits, spirits belonging to higher hierarchies, are fighting in this supersensible sphere to enable the spiritual stream to enter into human evolution. In this struggle they also bring into play forces deriving from human beings who have passed through the gate of death. In the life between death and rebirth man is always participating in the work that brings about what happens in the world. Being individual in his constitution he will also contribute in quite a different way, depending

on whether he comes from a French body, for example, or a Russian one. That is why the spirits of the different higher hierarchies are able to use these souls in different ways.

The future development of mankind does, however, depend on a tremendous struggle taking place in the spiritual world at this moment. A struggle in the spiritual world does have a different meaning from one in the physical world. A struggle in the spiritual world means working together to give form and function to something fruitful. It is a struggle necessary for human evolution; in short it is a struggle that gets somewhere. It is being fought by certain spirits belonging to the higher hierarchies. They are fighting it by making use of certain young souls coming from the area of Eastern European civilization and certain souls coming from the Western European civilizations. It is a struggle that will go on for a long time yet, a struggle between Russian souls that have gone through the gate of death and French souls that have gone through death; a war waged by spiritual Russia against spiritual France. It is a terrible war if we use the words belonging to the physical plane. Looking into the spiritual world today one sees this struggle between spiritual Russia and spiritual France, and the spiritual world is full of it. It is a distressing struggle.

And now, in the light of this, let us look at what is happening on on the physical plane. An alliance is made. That is the mirror-image of the struggle in the spiritual world. Now this is the kind of problem one has to cope with in spiritual science. Please do not think that it is possible simply to generalize and say: 'It is easy to arrive at spiritual truths by always thinking the opposite of what is happening on the physical plane'. If that were made the rule we would get the most silly and erroneous results. For it may hold true in five out of a hundred cases, but not in the other ninety-five. All spiritual truths are individual and have to be considered individually! They cannot be determined by mere dialectics. But the truth I have spoken of is one of those that make a particular impact today, for it can make us aware once again how very different the world looks when we see behind the veil of Maya and how the external doings of man may present the opposite of the true reality, of the spiritual.

If we take this point of view it is inevitable that our feelings must change in the contemplation of external happenings. We come to understand that proper discernment must first be used with regard to external events if the truth is to be seen. A cloud formation may look undefined when seen from a distance and quite different from near by. And that is also true for things that happen on the national scale. And right in the middle, I would say,

between the warring parties in East and West, lies the German area in the spirit, and this exists for the purpose of mediating between the two sides, truly to mediate between the two, and also does this. And whilst in the spirit there is mediation between the two sides we see them hitting out from both directions and in both directions in the physical world.

In a sense the events we are now experiencing have to do with the deepest impulse in present-day human evolution. I have often said: Why do we actually pursue anthroposophy? We pursue it because it is a cosmic mission, a work the spiritual world demands of man. A number of Imaginations have to be conveyed to mankind; within the near future men will have to take in a number of spiritual truths. That is part of the plan, I would say, for human evolution. Against it there is the objection, the very real objection, the opposing view, that men have to mature gradually and that this takes a long time. But the Imaginations want to come in now into human evolution. Something has to enter into human evolution that lies a bit above the physical plane, I would say, something higher. Men are still rejecting it today, rejecting it as comprehensively as possible. As a result the counter-image appears. And the counter-image of Imaginations are passions, are emotional outbreaks arising from the depths of human nature, from a point as far below the physical plane as the Imagination are above it. When we see human beings face one another in hatred today, in genuine untruthfulness — what is this hatred, this untruthfulness? They are the mirror-images of the Imaginations that want to burgeon forth and are now emerging in this form because men resist them. An element present at a certain height above the physical plane emerges as a product of transformation, as something that lies at the same distance below the physical plane; it has to work itself out. Again it is possible to find the reason for these disagreeable events in the general karma of mankind.

Why does it have to be now, in our present age, that men receive a certain sum of spiritual truths? The question can be answered as follows.

Two things are possible. One is that a person has a certain feeling for spiritual truths and does not meet them with deaf ears, but rather takes them into his heart and his soul. That he becomes an anthroposophist, as it were, the way it is possible now to become an anthroposophist. Or it may happen that a person rejects spiritual truths, that he will say perhaps that all this is foolish, stupid nonsense; that it all comes out of the heads of a few foolish dreamers who would do better to take up something else.

When a person passes through the gate of death he does of course enter into the spiritual world. If someone were to say: 'Do we only enter into the spiritual world if we acquire knowledge of that world in the time between birth and death?' we might perhaps say to him: 'Of course, a person who knows nothing of the spiritual world will also enter into it.' But what is the difference between these two types of people? The difference is considerable. I am now always speaking only of our own time, for spiritual truths are individual. And if someone were to say in relation to what I described earlier: 'I assume Imaginations unable to come through will therefore always be transformed into a war of malice, like the one we have now?' that would be the wrong view. At other times they may behave quite differently. Spiritual truths are always individual and what I am going to say now represents a truth that is individual to our time.

A person going through the gate of death without having made use of the opportunity to take in spiritual elements that exist in our time hands over his soul to the higher worlds on passing through the gate of death in almost the same state he received it when he went through birth to enter into physical existence. The higher worlds receive nothing from him but what they have given him on his incarnation. On the other hand, a person may make his own here on earth what it is possible to obtain from the spiritual world, not by mere faith, but by entering into the spiritual worlds in a living way. On his death he will not hand over his soul to the spiritual worlds the way he received it at birth. He will also hand over to the supersensible beings the concepts, ideas and feelings he has achieved here. These belong not only to him, they belong also to the supersensible beings. Any who do not bring these with them will, of course, also live into the spiritual world but make no contribution to human progress, and if people had always lived like that, or done so from a certain point of time, mankind would have remained as it was. There is progress, further development, and souls will always find something new on entering the earth in a new incarnation because they find opportunity to take in the particular mission of an age. In the final instance, a decision always has to be made as to whether we relate to the spiritual world or not. For instance, someone might say: 'What do I care about the progress of mankind! What does the evolution of the earth matter to me? Let the earth come to a stop! I shall go on regardless.' That is how a person may speak who has no real love, no interest in earthly progress. Any, however, who bear within them the love for human progress as their highest responsibility will be unable to choose that road. There is also freedom in this sphere. And souls will come to anthroposophy only through freedom and love for man's true progress and man's true good. So it is not possible either to become an

anthroposophist out of mere egotism; in becoming one we contribute something to the progress which one otherwise withdraws from. One is active in love therefore — not merely for oneself but for something else.

This is something I hope will always shine through in all our discussions of the spiritual knowledge we are seeking: that this spiritual science is a living, active force. I am not talking about visions; I am talking of this science. Vision merely yields the results. I am speaking of the results coming alive in man. Spiritual science is something alive, something active, that takes up its abode in our souls, that is working and active in our souls.

I have often used the comparison that merely to speak of love — considering particularly the talking that goes on in the theosophical movement — is like standing in front of a stove and preaching that it shall grow hot, this being its duty as a stove. Even the best of sermons concerning its responsibilities as a stove will not make it grow hot. It will grow hot, however, if we put some wood in it and put a match to it. Basically that is how it is with all preaching of human love, and such preaching will prove hardly more successful when directed at men than a sermon directed at the stove, telling it to grow hot. Such preaching has been done at all times and the results can be seen. But anything that is not mere knowledge of the spiritual world, not mere idea, mere word, but is instead something alive, something active in the word, that is the wood we give to our soul, and it will burn if it is rightly taken in by the soul. This can be learned particularly from conflicts like the present one. There knowledge is set aflame, knowledge becomes love, for man is transformed by the spiritual life he has recognized in his depths, in his foundations. This profound transformation is indeed most uncomfortable for him; he rejects spiritual truth and would rather remain in Maya.

Basically, that is also the next reason for the often-heard statement that spiritual truths should not be offered too freely to the public. After all, these are not truths that act as neutrally as physics or chemistry when they are spoken, but truths towards which the human soul cannot maintain a wholly neutral attitude, having to either reject them or take them in. To take them in, however, the soul has to change in a certain way from what it is in ordinary physical life. So it is true that the world does get somewhat stirred up, excited, when the deeper spiritual truths are presented. Yet our age is ordained not to shrink from such excitement and really to go through this excitement. This will be the only way of preparing the ground for a new spiritual life, a spiritual life we must live towards, for we are now indeed at its starting point. And the signs of the times indicate that it is

necessary to understand certain things. We may find many of the things that are happening in the outside world particularly in these days incomprehensible and senseless. Just try and take a number of things together. It is my task here, as it were, to speak to you in more intimate fashion than is possible in a public lecture. I have the task of formulating the things I said in my public lectures that were in the context of current events in such a way that they become effective truth; to formulate them in such a way that the words are the right ones for this our time. If you try and take a number of things together, you will see that one particular aim has been present all the time: to call forth ideas that are a little more the right ones, sentiments and feelings that are more the right ones, with regard also to current events, than those that come so easily and are so widespread.

Try, for instance, to hold on to the fact that in my first public lecture I endeavoured to show how the German people at heart really had a very strong inclination towards peace, towards peaceful progress, and how it really is quite accurate to say: the German people as such did not want the war. Though if we listen to our left and to our right we find they all say, they all stress: 'We did not want the war!' The French did not want the war. The English did not want the war. They had to go to war for 'moral reasons'. But those moral reasons were produced in just eighteen hours! They all stress they did not want the war. Let us hold fast to that — there is a lot of truth in it, a great deal of truth — and consider what I did when I said: the German people did not want the war. I did not follow this with the conclusion: this means the other side did want it. Instead, I said quite expressly in that first lecture that at most we could raise a question, the question as to who could have prevented the war. And there I pointed to the Russian East, for they could have prevented the war.

I have drawn special attention to the fact that the right answer depends on the right question being asked. If someone insists he did not want the war this does not necessarily mean the other person did want it. It is possible that both did not want it and yet it came about. Leaving aside the peculiar situation of Russia, we are basically able to say that the war really had not been wanted or intended — what we call 'intend' on the physical plane. This war arose with elemental necessity out of opposing forces; quite incomprehensibly out of forces in elemental opposition. Basically, it has never before happened in world history that an event popped up as though out of a box within such a few days. This has shown that whatever takes place in external events arises from spiritual contexts and presents itself as something physical.

From this point of view the events of today may serve as a lesson, to show mankind that we will never get the right answer by asking: 'Did he do it?' or 'Did another do it?' Instead you have to accept the premise that something else has been involved as well; you will have to make the effort and go somewhat deeper. Only then will we learn to speak of events in the right way.

There is yet another reason why it will be necessary to go to the effort of taking a deeper view of things. We are now experiencing how the world appears divided against itself. People are not yet able to do other than always blame another person. The time will come when the deeper truths relating to karma will have entered into the hearts and minds of men. Then this way of blaming the other for whatever has to be lived through will no longer exist. Then people will know that every nation is, in its karma, living through the things it has to live through for its own sake. A nation will be aware of the necessity to gain strength in battle — not because of another but for its own sake — to progress; the other is in a certain way only the agent. This will focus attention on the karma of folk souls. And seen from a higher point of view, the statement: 'I am standing here and the other is standing there. It is his fault. He is responsible for my having to go through these events, these struggles. It is his doing' is like a man of fifty looking at a child. The child is young, he is old; when the child did not yet exist he was not yet old, and as the child grows he is getting old. It is then as though he were to say: 'It is the child's fault that I am getting old; for if the child were not to grow and get older I also would not get old!' But the child can merely make him aware of getting old.

This is what we must take note of. Every nation has to experience whatever it does experience out of its karma, even the most serious of events. Do not say that such a truth, when it enters into the hearts and minds of men, will be something comfortless that enters into their hearts and minds. Instead, it will lead to a heroic view of life, a courageous view of life, a view of life that encompasses evolution. Once men are able to hold such a view of life it will appear to them as a waste of energy always to seek the fault in another and always to carry on to the usual conclusion. They will call upon the energies that can help them onward. They will learn to identify with their destiny in every sphere. We have seen, in my public lecture, that this destiny, generally seen as something external, can only be properly grasped when we surrender to this destiny. And it is the same with the karma of a nation. When love comes to earth then this attitude will arise among men.

Again, as on former occasions, I would appeal to you, dear friends, who have dedicated yourselves to a spiritual movement, to consider that in future it will be necessary to fill the mental horizon we live in not merely with the kind of thoughts that existed before, but to fill it with new thoughts. These, however, can only be thoughts arising from the spiritual world. It will not be immaterial whether or not a number of people send up thoughts into the spiritual world like those deriving from such considerations as have been presented today. In deciding to meditate on these truths you will help the events that are to happen in the future to happen in the right way, for the good of man. You are anything but inactive with regard to human progress if you meditate on the thoughts the present time calls for in order that man may truly progress. Let us hope that a good many of us succeed in doing spiritual work side by side with the work that is done with blood and death; spiritual work which consists in filling the World with the right thoughts, with thoughts that relate to the mission of age. We shall then be able to feel that these are the true thoughts of love. Looking for a quotation, many people have been reaching for the popular volume by Buechmann these days to find the right phrase and quoted the words of old Heraclitus, according to which war is the 'father of all things'. [[Note 16 Heraclitus \(c. 540–480 BC\), Greek philosopher of Ephesus: Fragment B53 in H. Diels *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, Vol. I.](#)] Heraclitus was right in saying this and those who quote him are also right. Yet a father on his own cannot produce a child. The child has to have a mother. As war is the father, so anything achieved in peace-filled work is the mother. Unless the father is to remain sterile, there has to be a mother. And she in turn will have to come from the hearts and minds of those who understand the mission of our time in the spirit and know how to come to love out of understanding.

That is what I want to put into your souls in today's gathering, so that in keeping with the demands made in the present day our spiritual science shall not serve merely to satisfy our curiosity or thirst for knowledge but give us the right living energies, energies that we develop to make them a true comfort in the sorrows our time is bringing. True comfort does not result in weakness but leads to strength, courage to be active — spiritually active or physically active, but in any case active. Over and over again we have to remember how important it is in our time for a number of people to feel the free impulse to enter more deeply into the spirit. For this in itself means that progress is made not by the individual but by the whole of mankind.

And in this attitude of mind let us in conclusion return once more to the thoughts we are sending forth, in the way I have indicated, to those who are at the front.

*Out of courage shown in battle,
Out of the blood shed in war,
Out of the grief of those who are left,
Out of the people's deeds of sacrifice
Spirit fruits will come to grow
If souls with knowledge of the spirit
Turn their mind to spirit realms.*



4

The Nature of the Christ Impulse and the Michaelic Sprit Serving It — I

17 January 1915, Berlin

Dear friends, as on other occasions when I have been able to speak to you since the serious events of the present time took their beginning, let our thoughts go out at this moment to those who are at the front offering their souls and their bodies in sacrifice for the tremendous demands made in our time and having to take up, with the whole of their physical existence, the challenge of the time:

*Spirits of your souls, guardian guides,
On your wings let there be borne
The prayer of love from our souls
To those whom you guard here on earth.
Thus, united with your might,
A ray of help our prayer shall be
For the souls it seeks out there in love.*

And the spirit who has gone through the Mystery of Golgotha, the spirit we have long been seeking in our movement, may he be with You and guide you to the goals that you have to seek.

*Spirits of your souls, guardian guides,
On your wings let there be borne
The prayer of love from our souls
To those whom you guard here on earth.
Thus, united with your might,
A ray of help our prayer shall be
For the souls it seeks out there in love.*

My particular intention with the words I spoke here on the last occasion was to let a truth flow into your minds, a truth to be found through spiritual science, that the great and serious events in life really enable us to see how outward appearances have to be regarded in the light that comes to us from spiritual science. It is only then that they will no longer appear to us as Maya, the great illusion, but in their profound truth. This is not to say that these outward appearances in themselves are Maya or illusion — that is an erroneous view people often pick up from a philosophy with a more oriental orientation — but that our senses and our intellect err in the interpretation, in their comprehension, of outer events unless we illumine those external events with the light that comes to us from an understanding of the spiritual world.

Today I want to take certain individual facts that have already been touched on during the years of our anthroposophical work and present them in a perspective that is somehow in accord with our time.

We are fully conversant with the thought that since the Mystery of Golgotha intervened in events on earth, the impulses, the forces and entities that have gone through this Mystery of Golgotha have played an active role, as living forces, in all that happened in human evolution on earth. In other words, and to put it more concretely, I want to say: In all major events, in all the important and essential things that have happened, the Christ impulse has been active through those who are his servants, his spiritual helpers. At the present time the term Christianity is generally understood to cover only what men have been able to comprehend. But, as I stressed on many occasions, what has come into the world through Christianity is so great, so tremendous, that human reason, the human intellect, is in no position, or has not been in a position to the present moment, really to grasp even the most elementary aspects of the powers of the Christ impulse. If Christ had worked only on the basis of what men have been able to grasp of him, he would have been able to achieve little. But what matters is not what has entered into mankind through human reason and understanding, what concept men have been able to form of the Christ, but rather the fact that he has been present since the Mystery of Golgotha, active right among men and in their ways of doing things. It is not a question of how far men have understood him but that he has been present as a living entity and has entered wholly into all significant events in evolution.

Of course, our spiritual science enables us to grasp only a little of the profundity of the Christ impulse even today. Future times will come to understand and see more and more. There is no reason to feel pride in such understanding of the Christ impulse as we have so far achieved. Spiritual science will grasp a little more today than it has been possible to grasp of the Christ in the past. In past times people were able only to reflect on the Christ by using the means available through external intellect, external reason, external research. Now we have spiritual science as well, and with this we see into the supersensible worlds, and out of the supersensible worlds we are able to provide many answers concerning the significance of the Mystery of Golgotha. Immediate comprehension of what the Christ is, and what the spiritual powers are that serve him as folk souls and the like, has been least possible for the peoples living in regions where the Christ still had to enter, as it were. Yet the Christ impulse had to come in, for instance in the Roman world. And there is one particular example which we have already considered in another context that will be the best way of demonstrating how the Christ is at work as a living power, directing his spiritual servants when events have to be brought about that are essential in evolution, to bring real progress for mankind.

The event I mean is one I should like to mention again. It happened in AD 312 that the man through whom Christianity became the official state religion, Constantine, [*Note 16 Heraclitus (c. 540–480 BC), Greek philosopher of Ephesus: Fragment B53 in H. Diels *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, Vol. I.*] son of Constantinus Chlorus, entered the field with his army against Maxentius, then the ruler of Rome. Of course, if one considers those two armies facing each other one would have to say that the situation was the worst possible for Constantine, his army being five times smaller than that of Maxentius. It is possible to imagine, however, that considering the state of the art of war at the time, both armies had a number of outstanding generals. Yet what mattered particularly at that time was not the the skill of men but that opportunity was given for the ongoing Christ impulse to influence mankind in a way commensurate with the needs of the time.

It is possible to see how much of the Christ impulse could be understood at the time, how much of that Christ impulse human hearts had been able to absorb in the state of consciousness then prevailing if we consider what happened a few decades later around Rome and out of Rome. Julian the Apostate [*Note 17 Constantine I (the Great) (274 –337), Roman emperor 306-337 (sole ruler from 323). Victory over Maxentius at Pons Milvius, a bridge crossing the Tiber to the north of Rome, in 312. See also the lecture given by Rudolf Steiner at Dornach on 30 January 1915 in *Wege der geistigen Erkenntnis und der Erneuerung**

künstlerischer Weltanschauung (GA 161).] fought Christianity out of honest conviction, on the basis of what could be gleaned from human knowledge in those times. Anyone considering the way Julian and his followers fought Christianity can say to himself: 'There is no doubt that as far as human knowledge was concerned, Julian and his followers were very advanced for their time; they were much more enlightened in this respect than the Christians of their day, although they had reverted to worship of the old gods.' They stood for what might be considered to represent human knowledge at that time. Yet in AD 312 it was not the stand of human knowledge that determined the issue; it was rather that the potential had to be there for the Christ and his servants to intervene in the historical evolution of mankind. However much Maxentius and his army were able to rely on the skills of their generals and on anything else human knowledge and human wisdom may have achieved at that time, if nothing else had happened, then, undoubtedly, something destined to emerge at that time would not have emerged. And what did happen?

What happened was the following. The continuing Christ impulse flowed into soul activities that were not within men's consciousness, into activities men were not aware of. And it did indeed guide men in such a way that what had to come about did come about. The battle between Constantine and Maxentius was fought by the Red Rock, the *Saxa Rubra*, on 28 October 312. It was decided not by human skill, but — and enlightened minds may refuse to accept this as much as they like — by dreams; that is by what is generally called 'dreams', though they are not just dreams to us. For through their dreams there entered into the souls of the two army leaders what could not enter into them out of human reason. Maxentius had a dream before the battle that he would have to leave his city. He consulted the Sibylline Oracle and was told that he would achieve what was to happen if he dared to join battle outside the city and not within it. It was the most unwise thing he could have done, particularly as his army was so much more powerful than Constantine's. He should have known that anything received from the higher worlds first had to be interpreted and that the oracle would mislead him. Constantine in his turn was told in a dream that he would win if he led his troops into battle under the sign of Christ. He acted accordingly. What had entered into the souls of these men by the roundabout route of a dream became deed, and as a result the world was greatly changed at that time. We need only reflect a little to be able to say: What would have become of the Western world if supersensible powers had not taken a hand in events in a way that is indeed perfectly apparent.

Let us now look at those events in more details. At the time souls had incarnated in the West and South of Europe who were destined to be bearers of Christianity. Even the most enlightened souls were unable to become bearers of the Christ impulse at the time by using their minds, their intellect, because the time for this had not come. They had to find the way to Christianity through what had been created around them, externally. We may say they assumed Christianity like a garment. Their deeper nature was not greatly affected by it. They became serving members rather than receiving the Christ impulse into their innermost being. Fundamentally speaking, that was to hold true for the best souls in the western parts of Europe for a long time to come, into the 8th and 9th centuries and beyond. They needed to assume Christianity as a garment, to wear this garment of Christianity in such a way that they wore it in their ether bodies and not in their astral bodies. You can judge what it means when I say they bore Christianity in the ether body. It means they assumed it in such a way that they were Christians when awake but were unable to take their Christianity with them when outside their physical and ether bodies. The way they went through the gate of death also was such that we can say: they were able to look down from the realm through which man has to pass between death and rebirth, look down at what they had been in their last earth life. But one thing that was not immediately possible for them at the time was to take the Christian impulses arising from their former life into their future life. They wore Christianity more as a garment.

Because of something I will come to shortly, let us hold on to this way in which the souls accepted Christianity in their outward lives and the way Christianity was not part of what souls were able to take with them through the spiritual world, when passing through the gate of death, to prepare for a new life on earth. Let us remember that these souls were only able to enter into a new earth life having forgotten Christianity. For we do not in a later earth life remember what we merely wore as a garment in our former life. If it were otherwise our children would not have to learn Greek again at grammar school, for many of them did once incarnate in Greece. They have no memory of their Greek incarnation, however, and therefore have to learn Greek again. Those souls who had incarnated in the West of Europe were unable to carry their Christianity through the life they had to go through between death and rebirth because they had not integrated these impulses inwardly with their ego and astral body. That was the particular way in which those souls lived on into later incarnations. Let us remember this and now move on to another fact, one I have also mentioned before.

We know that the time we live in now, the fifth post-Atlantean epoch, began mainly around the 15th-16th centuries. That was the time when preparation was to be made for the European world for elements that were predominantly to lead to the development of the spiritual soul. That is really what our fifth epoch of civilization is about. Whatever had to be achieved there had to be achieved with regard to the fact that in the external aspect of earth life, too, conditions were arising on earth that were particularly favourable for the evolution of the spiritual soul — the soul able to develop by directing itself towards material earth life, the external facts of physical existence. That had to take its beginning and it did take its beginning. We merely need to recall how horizons expanded in Europe as the great discoveries were made and with everything they brought with them. The spiritual soul, therefore, had to develop primarily under the influence of the material world. We merely need to think of one thing, and again reference has already been made to this: the evolution and development of the spiritual soul is the special mission, the one-sided mission, of that which belongs to the sphere of the British folk soul. Considering all the details, one could hardly imagine anything proceeding more according to plan than the way the British folk soul was directed towards these material roles in life. This was definitely predestined in the evolution of mankind.

Let us imagine, for instance, that during the 15th century England had been deflected from its propensity for those regions of the earth towards which it had been directed as the vast lands outside Europe were discovered, and that the British folk soul had instead experienced large territorial gains on the Continent of Europe. Let us imagine that the map of Europe had been changed to this effect. Then it would have been impossible in the first place to achieve what had to be achieved in the sphere of material civilization and, secondly, to achieve what had to be achieved in Europe by developing the inner life. This inner development proceeded specifically from that point onwards, overcoming all kinds of obstacles, with a role played also by Protestantism which in turn was influenced in many ways by German mysticism. Intervening in the process of evolution the Christ impulse had to ensure that the British Isles were kept away from the region where souls still had to be prepared to become outward, external bearers of the Christ impulse.

The Christ impulse had to flow into the deeds done on the Continent of Europe. It had to act in such a way that it achieved a great deal more than could come about through mankind, through the arts and skills of man. And what happened?

The marvellous thing happened that a poor shepherd girl from Orleans, Joan of Arc, [16 January 1412–30 May 1431] did everything those who were very advanced for their time had not been able to do. At that time it was indeed the Christ impulse acting in Joan of Arc, through its Michaelic servants, that prevented a possible merging of France and England, causing England to be forced back onto its island. And this achieved two things: first, France continued to have a free hand in Europe. This can be seen if we study the history of France over the following centuries — the essential element of the French spirit was able to influence European culture entirely without hindrance. The second thing which was achieved was that England was given its domain outside the continent of Europe. This deed, brought in through Joan of Arc, was a blessing not only for the French but also for the English, compelling them to take up their domain.

If we consider this in connection with what is implied by the advance of the Christ impulse on earth, the deed of Joan of Arc achieved something about which the following may be said: The degree to which she understood those things in a genuine human intellectual way was as good as zero compared to the deed which has given the map of Europe its present form. Events had to take that course so that the Christ impulse could spread in the right way. There we see the living Christ erupting into historical events out of the subterranean depths of human nature. That is not the Christ men think they know, for the Christ impulse may be seen in two ways. On the one hand we may ask ourselves: What did the people of that time understand of the Christ impulse? If we open our history books and study the history of mankind we find that over the centuries theologians were in dispute, defending or contending all kinds of theories, attempting to show how human freedom, the Holy Trinity and other things should be understood. So we see countless theologians fighting each other, acknowledging each other as orthodox theologians or else accusing each other of heresy. We observe how Christian doctrine spread entirely in accord with the situation as it was at the time. That is one side of it. But it is not the thing that matters, just as now it does not matter what people are able to do with their ordinary intellect. What matters is that the Christ lives among men, unseen but a living entity, and is able to stream up from depths beyond our perception and enter into the deeds of men. And he has done so at a point where there was indeed simply no need for him to come in through the human intellect, through a reasoning mind, but where he was able to come in through the soul of a girl of simple mind, through the soul of the Maid of Orleans. And when he came in like this, what was the attitude of those who were able to grasp Christianity in form of the orthodox doctrine? Well, they found they had to burn the girl who bore the

Christ impulse at the stake. It has taken some time for official doctrine to take a different view. There may have been a point to it where official doctrine is concerned, but canonizing Joan of Arc is not exactly the right response to the events of that time.

This is a real example of how the Christ intervened in human evolution through his servants. As I said, he acted through his Michaelic spirit in the case of the Maid of Orleans. He intervened as a living entity, not merely through whatever men were able to understand of him. This particular example also shows something else, however. Christianity did exist. The people who were there around the Maid of Orleans, as it were, did call themselves Christians. Their Christianity did mean something to them. But all we can say about their understanding is: He whom you seek is not here, [[Note 19 See Matthew 28:6; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:5,6.](#)] and the one who is here is not the one you seek, for you do not know him.

It must be clearly understood, however, that it was essential for Christ evolution to proceed within the evolution of Europe also in the form of an external garment. Souls were part of this development that were able to assume Christianity exactly as such an outer garment, who were able to wear it on the outside as it were. They were souls trailing behind, souls that had been incarnated there earlier and still did not take the Christ into their ego, merely into the ether body. The great difference between Joan of Arc and the others was that she had taken the Christ impulse into the very depths of her astral body and was acting for the Christ impulse out of the deepest forces of her astral body. This is one of the points where we can gain a clear understanding of something that really must become clear to us: the difference between the progressive evolution of nations and the progressive evolution of individual human personalities.

If we consider the French as they are today, for example, it is of course true that a number of individual human personalities exist within the French nation. These individual personalities were not, of course, part of the nation in their previous incarnation, part of a nation that had assumed the outer garment of Christianity there in the West of Europe. It was because a number of people had to assume Christianity as an outer garment in the West of Europe that they were in a condition on passing through the gate of death that necessitated their being united with Christianity in their astral body and ego in their next life, under different conditions. It was because they had been incarnated in the West of Europe that the necessity arose for them to have their next incarnation somewhere else. It is indeed very uncommon — note that I am saying uncommon,

though it does not always have to be so — that a soul belongs to the same community on earth through a number of consecutive incarnations. Souls pass from one earthly community to another.

We have one example, however — and I am saying this without wishing to rouse sympathies or antipathies, and with no intention of flattering anyone — we have one example of souls actually assuming the same nationality a number of times. That is the case with the people of Central Europe. These Central European people include many souls that are incarnated among them today and have also been incarnated in the Germanic tribes in the past. This is a fact we are able to trace. It cannot always be fully explained with the means now available in occult science, but it exists nevertheless. A fact like that presented in last Thursday's public lecture on *The Ancient Germanic Soul and the German Spirit*, [[Note 20 Lecture given on 14 January 1915 'Die germanische Seele und der deutsche Geist vom Gesichtspunkte der Geisteswissenschaft'](#) (GA 64).] for example, is illumined when we know that souls make repeated appearances within the Central European community. The fact is that cultural epochs were cut short within this particular community.

We only have to realize what it means that there was an epoch at the dawn of Germanic culture when the writers of the German poem the *Nibelungenlied* lived, or Walther von der Vogelweide (German lyric poet, minnesinger, c. 1170–1230) and others. And we need to realize that later there was a time when a new flowering of German culture began and the first had been completely forgotten. For when Goethe was young nothing was known, as it were, of the first flowering of Germanic culture. It is because the souls return to the same community that it was necessary to forget what had gone before, so that the souls would find something new on their return and could not pick up the threads of what remained from earlier times. It has not happened with any other people that a metamorphosis was gone through, as it were, the way it happened in the case of the Central European people: from the height that had been reached in the 10th, 11th and 12th centuries to that later height that came about the time between the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries and which we may hope will continue. There is no continuous line from the first to the second of these periods, and this can only be explained once we know that souls do return particularly in this culture. It is possible that another deeply moving fact I have already mentioned to you is also connected with this, the fact that it was noted how the Central European fighters of the present continue the struggle once they have gone through the gate of death, that soon after they have passed through

the gate of death it is possible to see how they continue to join the struggle. This fact can raise wonderful hopes for the future, because one can see how not only the living, in the physical sense living, but also the dead, those who have died, are making their contribution to events.

Let us now pose the question: What is the situation with souls that were incarnated in Western Europe at the time when Christianity was assumed like an outer garment, that is in the 6th, 7th 8th and 9th centuries, and accepted Christianity there, or also under the Romans, though they were not yet able to unite it with their astral body and their ego? What is the situation with those souls?

Grotesque as it may seem to modern man with his materialistic thinking, the things spiritual science can teach achieve real meaning for life if the concrete facts are considered. People still think reference to repeated earth lives is a matter of mere fantasies produced by a handful of foolish dreamers. The idea is one that is not accepted, though it is once again considered excusable to make reference to it in view of the fact that in an hour of weakness even the great Lessing accepted the idea of repeated earth lives. [Note 21 Gotthold Ephraim Lessing: *Die Erziehung des Menschengeschlechtes* (1780) paragraph 98: 'Why should I not return as often as I am sent to gain new knowledge, new skills? Do I carry off so much at one go that it is not worth the effort to return?'] Yet if we take the findings made in occult research seriously we cease to be fools begging the forgiveness of greatly enlightened folk. It will be necessary for us to consider some of the things arising from occult research in detail, for that will be the only way of throwing light on something which otherwise has to remain a great illusion.

It is a strange thing that a great many souls that lived to the west of us towards the end of the Roman epoch, when Christianity was slowly gaining influence, finally becoming the established church, now come from the East, as souls growing up in the East, souls now among Russia's fighters. I said we must remember the fact I referred to earlier. For among the people killed in the East, those who are fighting there and being taken prisoners, are souls who towards the end of the Roman epoch lived in the western part of Europe. They now come towards us from the East, people who in those past times allowed the Christian faith to flow into their ether bodies and now, in a civilization that is relatively speaking at a lower level, take Christianity into their souls in a waking state and do so in such a way, due to the peculiarities of life in the East, that they have an emotional, instinctive bond with it. They are thus linking themselves to the Christ impulse in their astral bodies, doing now what they had been unable to

achieve in their previous incarnations. This is a very strange fact brought to light by occult research in the present day. Many facts that deeply move the soul may come within the occult horizon triggered by the events of our time and this is one among them. What, then, can we learn from these facts?

We have to be clear about the following. We have to remember that it is part of the direct progress of the life of the spirit in Central Europe that the soul life of the German peoples is very consciously linked with the Christian faith, that it is taken upwards to the heights of a straight Christian culture. The streams, the paths, leading to this have been most marvelously laid out in advance over centuries. We see it all taking shape. It is specifically when we look at our own age with all its errors and mistakes that we see how the seed is there in Central European culture, how preparations have been made and no effort spared in the German folk spirit, the folk soul of the German-speaking peoples, so that now the Christ impulse may be taken hold of in conscious awareness.

That is a fact of infinitely greater importance than the 15th century event when Joan of Arc had to save France because that country had an important mission at that time. We therefore have before us the significant fact that the German spirit is called upon to take in the Christ impulse more and more consciously in future, take it in with the elements that have come into the life of the spirit in German countries and do so in a state of full waking consciousness. This Christ impulse had to announce itself in what went on at subconscious level over the centuries, as we have consistently shown. In the future it will have to unite with souls in such a way that there will be people — and in Central Europe there will have to be such souls — who in full awareness unite also their ego and astral body with the Christ impulse, exerting the powers of their conscious mind and not only the powers inherent in their physical and ether bodies. We can see efforts being made among the best. Let us take the best of them all: Goethe. We may quote Goethe as an outstanding example, but all souls have the potential within them, so long as they strive for it, however darkly.

Goethe showed Faust, the representative of mankind, to be striving for the highest. [Note 22 See Rudolf Steiner, *Geisteswissenschaftliche Erläuterungen zu Goethes 'Faust'* (Vol. I 'Faust, der strebende Mensch'; Vol. 2 'Das Faust-Problem' (GA 272 and 273). Engl. GA 272 in part translated and published in different books and journals: GA 273. *The Problem of Faust* in R Series of typescript lecture courses at Rudolf Steiner Library, London.] In Part 2 of the play he transports him to Greek civilization to share the experience of nations, guiding him into this

in such a way that Faust has a significant experience of the future when he desires to wrest land from the sea and establish something that to him lies in the far distant future. And where does Goethe take Faust in the end? Goethe himself once expressed it like this in conversation with Eckermann: he had to make use of the vivid images of Christianity [Note 23 See J. P. Eckermann, *Gespräche mit Goethe in den letzten Jahren seines Lebens*, 6 June 1831: 'And of course you'll admit that the conclusion, where the soul which has been saved is taken upwards, was very difficult to do. With something so noumenal, scarcely to be intuited, I could so easily have ended up in vagueness, but I used the sharply defined figures and concepts of the Christian church to give my poetic intentions the much needed form and consistency.'] to show Faust ascending into the spiritual world. And if you consider the profoundly beautiful picture of Faust's soul being received by the *Mater gloriosa*. you see it as the opposite image to that which led Raphael [1483–1520] to paint his famous Sistine Madonna, where the virgin mother is bringing the soul down. In the last scene of *Faust* we see the virgin mother upwards. That is the birth of the soul in death. And so we see a deeply inward striving arising from the human spirit in full conscious awareness. It is striving always to gain all that can be gained from Christianity in such a way that it may be borne through the gate of death and into the life man is going to live through in the new earth life that will follow preparation between death and rebirth. What we see there in Goethe himself is a character trait of the German people. It can give an indication as to the mission given to human beings. The mission is, and we can present this very clearly to our souls, that true benefit for the progress of mankind will arise only if within a certain group of people a harmonious relationship is established between Central Europe and Eastern Europe.

It is possible to visualize Eastern Europe expanding westwards, across Central Europe, by brute force. It is possible to visualize this happening. That, however, would be equivalent to a situation where Joan of Arc had not done her deed in the 15th century and England had annexed France in those days. If it had come to that, and I state this emphatically, something would have come about that would not only have brought calamity to France but would have meant calamity also for England. And if German culture were now to suffer through what may come from the East, this would be to the detriment not only of German culture but also of the East. The worst that can happen to the East is that it might expand for a time and have an adverse effect on German culture. For as I said, the souls formerly incarnated in Western Europe or on the Italian peninsula and now growing up in the East unite with the Christ impulse as though instinctively, in the unconscious depths of the astral body. Yet the Christ impulse that is

to grow within them can never arise through linear progression of the instinctive element that lives in their souls under the name of orthodox catholicism which, on the whole, is Byzantine of course, for this is a name not an impulse. It is just as impossible for this to evolve into what it is predestined to become as it is impossible for a woman without a man to have a child. What is preparing in the East can only come to something if Central Europe strongly and consciously — that is in a state of full awareness — unites the force of the human ego and human powers of insight with the Christ impulse' out of what souls are striving for out of egoic nature.

What has to come about for the civilization and culture of the future will only come about if the German folk spirit finds souls that transplant the Christ impulse into their astral body and ego the way it can indeed be implanted there in a state of full conscious awareness' It has to come about through harmony being established, by uniting with that which is consciously achieved in Central Europe — more and more consciously.

This will need not just one or two centuries, but a very long time. The time needed will be so long that we may reckon on about two thousand years, I would say, counting from the year 1400. Adding two thousand years to 1400 we get the approximate time when something will emerge in the evolution of the earth that has had its seeds in the German life of the spirit, ever since there has been such a life of the spirit. We therefore realize that we have to consider a future lying not just centuries ahead but more than a thousand years. And the mission of the Central European, the German folk spirit, a mission already before us, is that there will have to be more and more of that nurturing of the life in the spirit through which men take up in conscious awareness — right into the astral body and ego — a comprehension of the Christ impulse that in earlier times moved through the peoples of Europe as a living but unconscious impulse. Once evolution takes this course then the East, too, will gradually, by twining upwards, reach the level reached in Central Europe because of what is already inherent there. That is the intention of the cosmic intelligence. We only interpret the intention of the cosmic intelligence rightly when we say to ourselves: It would be the greatest misfortune also for the East of Europe to harm the very spiritual power it needs to use as a support in twining upwards, a power the East should indeed revere, revere in friendship, foster and cherish. It will have to come to this. For the moment the East is very far indeed from achieving this. The very best of them still fall far short. Short-sightedly. they still refuse to accept what Central European culture in particular is able to give.

I went into this already in my first public lecture here in Berlin. [Note 5 Lecture given on 29 October 1914 entitled 'Goethes Geistesart in unsern schicksalsschweren Tagen und die deutsche Kultur' in *Aus schicksalstragender Zeit* (GA 64). In *The Dramatic Art of the Goethenaum I* (tr. L. Dreher) London: Rudolf Steiner Publishing Co. 1936.] Tonight you can see the deeper occult reasons behind what in the public lecture I was able only to put exoterically, in an extraneous way. This is of course something one always has to be careful about, to speak in terms close to the understanding of one's listeners in public lectures. The real impulses to say one thing and omit another, looking for the one context or the other, always have their occult reasons. At all events it is possible to see from what has been discussed today that when we look at things in an external way they present to us the great illusion, Maya. It is not that the outside world in itself is Maya. It is not. But we only gain understanding for it if we illumine it with the truths derived from the spiritual world. In the present case, the truths streaming from the spiritual world show that it is essential for Central Europe not to be overcome by Eastern Europe today, just as in 1429–1430 it was essential for France not to be overcome by England. It will of course be obvious, from what has been said, that for those in the East of Europe it is quite impossible to understand the crux of the matter and that, fundamentally speaking, this can be understood only in Central Europe. Surely this is understandable. In all humility, therefore, without any feeling of superiority, we must take on this mission, and we shall have to accept that it will be possible to misunderstand us. We must find that perfectly understandable. For what is preparing in the East will only be rightly understood in the East itself in time to come.

That is the one thing arising from what I have to say. The other is that we consider the great transition occurring in human evolution in our time exactly on a basis such as this. On previous occasions we have considered it from many different aspects. Now we consider it in such a way that we are able to see how the element which entered into man's evolution on earth through the Mystery of Golgotha needs to be understood in increasingly greater conscious awareness in our day, by those who are able to do so after this incarnation. In the days of Constantine or of Joan of Arc, for instance, it would have been impossible for the Christ impulse to bring about at a conscious level what it had to bring about at an unconscious level. But the time will have to come when it will be able to act at a fully conscious level. That is why we receive out of spiritual science what we are able to take into our soul in increasingly greater conscious awareness. Again it is possible to point to a particular fact — honestly, without getting worried about any sympathies or antipathies that may arise and with no

intention of flattering anyone. After all, it is always better to base one's views on facts rather than on what they are so often based on today. For if we look out into the world a little bit we shall see that opinions really and truly are not always based on facts but on passion, on strong national feelings. Yet it is also possible to base the views that determine the attitude of the human mind on facts.

Anatole France [[Note 24 Anatole France, *Vie de la Jeanne d 'Arc* \(49th edn, 2 Vols.\) Paris 1927.](#)] was a man who considered Joan of Arc from the rationalistic and materialistic point of view now current. In the cultural sphere of Germany it has been quite natural to understand Joan of Arc out of a supernatural context since Schiller's great deed. [[Note 25 Friedrich Schiller, 3rd verse of the poem *Das Mädchen von Orleans* \(The Maid of Orleans\).](#)] There are people even in Germany today who think Schiller made a big mistake; but those are the literary historians and in their case that is understandable. After all, it is their function to 'understand' art and literature — which is why they are unable to understand it. No, the essential thing is for us to let arise before our eyes, from the depths of spiritual life as though glorified, the figure of which Schiller said: 'The world indeed loves to blacken all that is radiant and drag down into the dust all that is sublime.'

And so it is indeed that acknowledgement of the fact that the Christ impulse intervened in a human individual in a situation not affecting our own nation can bring us the confidence to accept what I have put forward in my public lecture: that it is possible to perceive in the life of the spirit in Germany how it tends towards spirituality the way it has evolved, tends towards spiritual science. We can see that it is its special — though not exclusive — mission to take all that has been achieved and aimed for the life of the spirit in Germany and carry it upwards to perception and understanding of the spirit in the spirit. That is the mission of the German people. The other missions, being the same soul mission expressed in bodily form, as it were, have to serve it. What has to come to pass, out of cosmic wisdom, will come to pass. But, as I have said before, it will be necessary for the twilight we live in today to evolve into a true Sun-age for the future. To make this possible, there will have to be people in the future who have a connection with the spiritual worlds in order that the soil now being prepared with the blood and suffering of so many will not have been prepared in vain. The existence of souls capable of bearing within them their connection with the spiritual worlds justifies everything that happens, even the most horrific, terrible and fearsome, events, so that the Central European mission in spiritual life may be achieved. This, however, will

depend on individual souls being able to get in touch with this spiritual life through their karma, and taking it wholly into themselves. Then, when the sun of peace is once again shining over the fields of Central Europe, they shall bear perception of things spiritual, a feeling for things spiritual, within them. Then the inclination developed in a few souls that are capable of this in their present incarnation will make it possible for that to happen which I want to condense in the following words. These words sum up all I wanted to put to you, so that we write the device into our souls under which souls will be able to grow in the right way towards the potential for the future that may arise out of these difficult times:

*Out of courage shown in battle,
Out of the blood shed in war,
Out of the grief of those who are left,
Out of the people's deeds of sacrifice
Spirit fruits will come to grow
If souls with knowledge of the spirit
Turn their mind to spirit realms.*



5

The Nature of the Christ Impulse and the Michaelic Sprit Serving It — II

19 January 1915, Berlin

Once again, let us first of all direct our thoughts to those who are out there at the front, in the arena of present-day events, where they have to stand for what the time demands of them:

*Spirits of your souls, guardian guides,
On your wings let there be borne
The prayer of love from our souls
To those whom you guard here on earth.
Thus, united with your might,
A ray of help our prayer shall be
For the souls it seeks out there in love.*

And for those who have already gone through the gate of death:

*Spirits of your souls, guardian guides,
On your wings let there be borne
The prayer of love from our souls
To those whom you guard here on earth.
Thus, united with your might,
A ray of help our prayer shall be
For the souls it seeks out there in love.*

May the spirit we have been seeking for so many years in our movement, the spirit who has gone through the Mystery of Golgotha, be present above you, may it stream through you and strengthen you for your difficult task.

It seems that not everyone is quite clear about the verse I have just spoken, so I am told. Let me stress that the proper version reads: Spirit of *your* souls. The verse has been phrased in such a way that it can be used when many people want to speak for one person or one for many or, indeed, many for many — as in the present case. If it refers to just one person, the only change which has to be made is to say 'Spirit of your soul' and so forth. It appears that I made a slip of the tongue when I said the verse for the first time here some weeks ago, so that the view has arisen that the words 'Spirits of your souls' may not be quite correct. But they are correct as they stand. The first line is addressed to the spirits of the souls requiring protection, as it were and the 'your' refers to those to whom our thoughts are directed. In the second line on the other hand, the 'your' relates to the 'guardians'. Let me remark that such verses are always such by nature that there can be problems with the purely grammatical construction. But they are given from the spiritual world for the specific Purpose, and it is true that there are occasional problems with putting the words together for such verses.

Dear friends, it was for good reason and, spiritually, also very much in accord with the work that has to be done in the present time, that two days ago we turned our attention to events in the evolution of man that show how spiritual impulses — and particularly the spiritual Impulses linked with the Mystery of Golgotha, with the Christ impulse — are living impulses within the evolution of man. We have seen how they were active in the evolution of man even though men were unable to grasp the nature of the Christ impulse with their reason, with their intellect.

It was with this intention that reference was made among other historical events to Joan of Arc through whom this Christ impulse resolved a major issue in the 15th century through its servant, the Michaelic spirit, and for the good and advancement of mankind. The reason why it was particularly important to refer to this event was that in our day, too, it does hold true that everything destined to regulate events on the historical scale is ordered and regulated from the spiritual worlds. We need to be aware that the forces, the impulses, for what is to happen come to us from the spiritual worlds. In this respect the same holds true today as in the days of Joan of Arc. But the times are different. What would happen in a particular way in the days of Joan or Arc has to happen in a different way in our time and in times to come; it has to take a different course. For our time is one that is entirely different. Since the 15th and 16th century — and the Joan

of Arc event did, of course, come in that period — mankind had been guided in quite a different way. It is this difference, and consequently the basic nature of our time, that we shall consider to some extent today.

Between going to sleep and waking up we are in a soul state where that which we really are is outside our physical and our ether bodies. Asleep, we live in our astral body and our ego. We need to have a very clear picture of this. That which we really are is then outside our physical and our ether bodies. Asleep, we live in our astral body and our ego. We need to have a very clear picture of this. That which we really are is then outside the body. We are, of course, bound to our body to an extraordinary degree between birth and death so that in terms of space we are not far away from our body when asleep. Our soul element is spread out in our surroundings, as it were; that is in everything that specifically makes up our environment.

Let us get a clear picture of how the environment has changed specifically over the last centuries — since the 15th and 16 centuries — at least for the great majority of the people whom we have to consider in relation to what fate has decreed for the present age. Just consider whether any of the machinery or the mechanical contrivances we use today also existed at the time when Joan of Arc did her work. We can certainly say that the world has changed completely since that time as far as mechanical things are concerned. Everything we experience in relation to machines has only come since then. There may be some observant people among you who have taken a 'sleeper' (train) to travel overnight. They may have had the strange experience of waking up — and this is the kind of occasion when one may wake up quite frequently — and finding that something was still rumbling on that was inherent in the machinery of the train all about them. Something can be perceived, as it were, when one is waking up but still in a dream state, of the croaking and squealing of the train or boat one happens to be on. This happens because the soul is not really in the body but in the area around the body and is placed among those mechanical contrivances.

Yet it is not only on such less usual occasions that we live among the hustle and bustle of the present age, and we can certainly say that the mechanized life has also spread to the countryside today. Fundamentally speaking, we are always within the mechanized life of the present age. When asleep, the soul merges into everything that is mechanism. Those are mechanisms, however, which we have constructed ourselves. A mechanism we have built is something quite different from nature outside us, for this has been constructed by the elemental spirits. When we are out

in the woods, for instance, where everything has been built up by the spirits of nature, we are in an environment that is totally different from the environment of mechanical contrivances created by ourselves. What are we doing when we take things from nature and put them together to make the machines and appliances we use in our lives? We are in that case not merely putting together physical components, for in putting together physical components we always provide opportunity for a demonic Ahrimanic servant to unite with the machine. We do this with every machine, every mechanism, in everything of this kind that is part of modern civilization, providing a point of attachment for demonic elemental spirits of Ahrimanic nature. And living surrounded by machines we live together with these demonic Ahrimanic elementals. We allow them to enter into us; we allow not only the squealing and groaning of machines to enter into us but also an element that is eminently destructive for our spirit and our soul.

Please note — and I have often made a similar comment on similar occasions — what I am saying is not intended to be a criticism of our Ahrimanic age. It has to be like this, that we allow demons to stream into everything and allow ourselves to be surrounded by them. It is part of the evolution of mankind. We have to acknowledge the simple necessity for this and understand the real impulse of spiritual science. And so we shall not sing the praises of people who say it is necessary, as far as possible, to protect oneself from the demons and to shun civilization and that we should set up a colony as far away as possible in the wilderness to save us from having anything to do with these demonic Ahrimanic elementals. That has never been the tenor of my words. I have always said that we must entirely accept what comes to us out of the necessity of evolution, that we must not let ourselves be induced to flee from the world. We need to take heed, however, we need to understand, that conditions are such in our age that we are filling our environment more and more with beings of a demonic nature, that we are more and more involved with the principle that is mechanizing our civilization. An age such as this calls for something quite different than the age out of which Joan of Arc was called to do her work. In the time of Joan of Arc it was necessary for the impulse out of which she was to act to be born out of the gentlest, the most subtle powers of the human soul. Just consider: she was a shepherd girl living a very simple, natural life, with nature at her most idyllic. She was very young when her visions came to her, and through the Imaginations given to her she had a direct link with the spiritual world. Out of her inner being she was to bring forth everything that was to be the foundation from which she acted, she was to let it grow forth from her inner being. And not only

this, but it was necessary for very special circumstances to be brought about so that through the most subtle powers inherent in the human soul her mission could be imprinted in her soul, in her very heart of hearts.

We know that everything in the world goes in cycles, that things happen in such a way that important events come up in definite cycles. If we take the year of Joan's birth, 1412, we can ask a specific question relating to this. We are able to say that the year this Maid of Orleans was born the sun would of course have been in a particular position, astronomical position, coinciding with one of the constellations in the zodiac. The progress of the sun from one sign of the zodiac to the next marks a major time interval. Passing right through the zodiac the sun will go through all twelve constellations; the time interval needed for the sun to progress from one constellation in the zodiac to the next is approximately 2,160 years, and this is important. Going back approximately 2,160 years from the birth of Joan of Arc we come to the founding of Rome.

In the days when Rome was founded anyone needing information on major issues concerning the city which was then coming into being would go to see the nymph Egeria. There it was possible to get information, from a seeress. But, as I said, that was one solar cycle earlier. And so the times are renewed and everything goes in cycles. Let us visualize it like this: at the time when Rome was founded the sun was at a certain point in the constellation of the Ram, Aries. It then progressed to the Fishes, Pisces, so that it had moved through one-twelfth of the zodiac. And thus the cycle which inevitably has to be there in the evolution of mankind takes us from the nymph Egeria to the inspired deed of Joan of Arc. In ancient Rome, however, it was a matter of pagan Inspiration, of pagan deeds. If we try to think of the same visionary element that operated at the time when Rome was founded also having to operate in a Christian age, acting from within, through the most tender powers inherent in man, what did have to come about? You can imagine that something had to come about which again, in some way or other, had to do with the subtlest powers of the Christian faith.

Most of you will remember my telling you of the variation we get in the course of the year in the forces that link us with the spiritual world. In summer, at St John's tide when the sun's rays are most Powerful externally, one might perhaps achieve an external ecstasy and, as in the old Celtic mysteries, lift oneself up into the spiritual world in some way, but certainly in ecstasy. Yet when the days are shortest, when the sun's rays are least powerful and the winter night the darkest, around Christmas therefore, the

opportunity exists also to win through to the spiritual worlds in our innermost soul life. All who have known of the cycle of the year have always maintained, quite rightly, that those who have the gift for it are able to enter into the most intimate aspect of our connection with the spiritual worlds during the time from the 21st, the 23rd of December to about the 6th of January — during those days and particularly the nights. There are legends — the *Legend of Olaf Asteson* has been read to you here — which tell of people having their most profound Inspirations during those days. [Note 26 See also Rudolf Steiner, 'Welten-Neujahr — Das Traumlid von Olaf Asteson', Dornach 31 December 1914, in *Der Zusammenhang des Menschen mit der elementarischen Welt* (GA 158). In English as extract 'World New Year' in *Anthroposophical News Sheet 14: 1, 2.*] This, again, is connected with the celebration of Christmas at that time, of the birth of the spirit who went through the Mystery of Golgotha and is connected with the innermost powers in human soul development. So, if the Inspiration of pagan Rome of old was to be resurrected one sun cycle later, 2,160 years later, it had to come in through the aspect of man that is most utterly childlike. This means that the soul of Joan of Arc had to be taken hold of at the point where souls are taken hold of most profoundly, where they are weakest in relation to earthly things, and where the Christ impulse is not yet hampered by worldly impressions — the souls not yet having taken up the earthly element, so that the Christ impulse can be the only one to enter into the soul sphere. The most favourable timing for this would have been for the Maid of Orleans to have gone through the time of the Thirteen Nights in her mother's womb immediately before her birth, before she took her first breath. And, indeed, she did — for she was born on the 6th of January.

Here we perceive the more profound forces at work which enter into the physical world from the spiritual worlds. We see how they find the channels they need, deeply mysterious channels. There can be nothing more marvellous for someone with insight into such things, nothing more open to explanation through spiritual science, than this fact that the Maid of Orleans took her first breath on earth in the time around Christmas, on the 6th of January, with the days of Christmas immediately preceding her entry on to the physical plane. We see how the girl who was to go through death at the age of 19 was taken hold of at the point where the most subtle of human powers lie, and we are therefore looking into a time when it was necessary for the divine spiritual powers to find a channel through the inmost inwardness of the human soul. That, however, was the last time when such a thing was to be. It was the time when a particular order was brought into Europe through the Christ impulse, as I indicated to you the

last time, and this happened in the wonderful way in which it did happen through Joan of Arc. Since then, however, times have changed. Today is not the time when divine spiritual powers approach the human soul in such intimate fashion.

What was the mission of Joan of Arc, really, if we consider something that was present throughout her whole life? She was taken hold of from within by the forces of the divine spiritual world. In her soul these forces encountered the Luciferic forces. These Luciferic forces were mighty and powerful at that time. Joan of Arc bore something within her that made her vanquish the Luciferic forces. She vanquished the Luciferic forces, that is entirely obvious to anyone who wants to see. We have briefly considered the miracle of her birth and seen that she went through an unconscious initiation, in a way, up to Epiphany, the day known as that of the manifestation of Christ. But we can also point to her death which occurred because all the Luciferic forces of her enemies joined together to bring about her death. Her misadventure in a battle was brought about through the jealousy of the men who were the official leaders, appointed to guide the battle. All the jealousy then came to the fore over the manifestations of spiritual forces and spiritual powers that were made through her. She was put on trial. The records of the trial still exist and anyone studying them can see—unless of course his mind is as closed as that of Anatole France—that this Maid of Orleans, having come into the physical world in a very special way, through the thirteen nights, also left it in such a way. For it says in the records, so that there is historical proof, that she said that she would indeed die but that after her death the English would meet with a much greater reverse than any they had known before, and that this would happen within the next seven years.

If we take this rightly, in its spiritual sense, it means nothing less than that the soul of Joan of Arc on going through the gate of death was prepared to continue contributing to the work of shaping events after her death, to share in the work whatever her form of existence. And she did so. What the spiritual powers have to bring about will be brought about whatever the external conditions may be. Joan's adversaries were able to bring about her death, to mount the strongest possible attack against her, as it were. They were not able to prevent her mission.

However, the forces of Joan of Arc were only able to work in the subtle way they did during her time. In everything she did the Luciferic forces were ranged against her. We are also having to deal with hostile forces in our time, but these are predominantly Ahrimanic forces, the Ahrimanic

forces that have come up with the materialistic age. These are in evidence even in the outer form and fashion of the whole of our age if we turn our attention to the mechanisms, the mechanical element of the age; if we are aware that, fundamentally speaking, we are offering an abode to demons when we produce our mechanical contrivances, surrounding ourselves with a whole world of Ahrimanic demons. It is evident also from other things that Ahrimanic powers are at work everywhere in our age. We need only look back a few years and pay a little attention to the occult substrate to our life on earth and we can see Ahrimanic forces influencing all aspects of our physical life on earth. Not only the kind of demons we create in our machines influence our earth life but also other kinds of Ahrimanic forces. The occultist has to put into words something I have often put into words for one group of friends or another: that, fundamentally speaking, the sad and painful events now happening all over Europe and a large part of the globe have long been in preparation. War has been present for a long time, as it were, in the astral world but was held back by something that was also astral: by the fear everybody was feeling. Fear is an astral element; it was able to hold the war back, to prevent it; fear was able to stop war from breaking out for all that time.

For fear was abroad everywhere. Fear is altogether something that is most dreadfully widespread in the depths of our souls in the present age. A time came, however, when there was an external indication in time of something often referred to when the starting points of this war are discussed. This outer aspect is not the one that matters, however, it is merely a symbol. As I said on a previous occasion, the assassination of the Austrian Archduke occurred and there emerged the event, so terrible to the soul, that I have already referred to. I had never before known anything like this, not from personal experience nor through other occultists. We know what the soul goes through when it has undergone death. In the case of the soul that went through death at that time something very specific showed itself. All the elements of fear began to gather around it, as though around a focal point, and something of a cosmic power could now be perceived in it. We know already that anything that has a specific character on the physical plane will have the opposite character in the spiritual world. This also held true in the present case. An element that first had had a dispersive effect where war was concerned was now acting in the opposite way, as a spur, an incitement, to war. So we see that a metamorphosis, as it were, of the elements of fear, of the Ahrimanic elements, became mixed up with all the things that finally led to the sad and painful events of the present time. Ahrimanic elements are indeed at work everywhere in our time. We must not rebel against this, nor should

we aim to protect ourselves against it. We have to see it as something that is necessary in our time, something that has to be present in our time. The question is: How do we find the right attitude to this? How do we find the one thing that will show us what should be our attitude now, in the present age, if we want to make it possible for divine spiritual forces and powers to enter into our actions?

Here I must refer to an event in the spiritual world that happened a few decades ago. I have mentioned this on a number of occasions, in all kinds of different contexts. It is an event that occurred behind the scenes of our existence, in the spiritual world, in or about November 1879. [Note 27 See, above all, Rudolf Steiner's lectures on 18 and 20 May 1913 in *Vorstufen zum Mysterium von Golgotha* (GA 152). In English, *Michaelmas — The Festivals and Their Meaning* (London) Anthroposophical Publishing Co. 1957. Lecture of 18 May also as typescript translation Z 136, 'The Michael Impulse and the Mystery of Golgotha' in Rudolf Steiner Library, London.] We know that there is a different regent of earth life for every epoch, as it were; one regent follows another. Until 1879 the spirit acting out of the spiritual world was the one we call the spirit Gabriel, if a name is to be used. From 1879 onwards it was the spirit we call Michael. It is Michael who directs events in our time. Anyone able to see into the spiritual worlds in conscious awareness will feel the spirit Michael to be the spirit who truly is the one to lead and govern in our time. Michael is in a way the most Powerful of the leading spirits of the age that follow one another. In a way, I said, he is the most powerful of these spirits. The others have been predominantly active in the spirit sphere. Michael had the strength to push the spirit right through into the physical world. He was the spirit who descended to earth ahead of the Christ, as it were, before the Mystery of Golgotha approached, and governed world affairs for four or five centuries at that time. Now in our time he is again the leading spirit on earth. We may make a comparison by saying that Michael is among the spirits belonging to the hierarchy of the Archangeloi as gold is among the metals. Whilst all other metals act predominantly on the ether body, gold also acts as a medicine for the physical body. In the same way all the other leading spirits act on the soul whilst it is Michael who at the same time is able to act on the physical intellect, on physical reason. Now that his age has come it is possible to act out of the spirit on the physical intellect, on physical reason. In the 15th century he was not the actual leader and therefore had to find a way in the case of Joan without making use of the human intellect, human understanding, human ability to form ideas; a way that was wholly an inner one, as it were, through the innermost powers of the human soul. The Christ influenced

Joan of Arc through his Michaelic spirit, but he achieved what had to be done by any other means rather than the forces of the intellect and of reason.

Luciferic spirits are also present today. and these prefer to attack man from within. They want to generate all kinds of passions, but not the error of the intellect, the error of common reason that we have to struggle with in our present age. We therefore have to say that anything we wish to achieve in the spiritual sphere must be achieved in such a way that it is in accord with the forces that Michael, the leading spirit of the age, commands. We are in close alliance with Michael when we try to grasp what we have been attempting to grasp these last few days, when we try and grasp things as phenomena, to grasp what we call the German folk spirit. Two powers: Michael and the German folk spirit. These two are entirely in harmony, and it is their mission to bring the Christ impulse to expression specifically in our time, in accord with the character of our time. For it would be wrong for the people of our time to think that the same inward way of working that was appropriate to the 15th century could still be appropriate now that we are in the fifth post-Atlantean era. In the present age it is a matter above all of understanding that it is necessary to be chained to Ahriman, to Ahrimanic elements we ourselves create in our machines, and that it is necessary to recognize clearly how these things are connected. Otherwise we live in fear of many of the things that exist in the present age.

The question therefore arises: How do we offer resistance to this Ahrimanic element in our age, the way resistance was offered to the Luciferic element at the time of Joan of Arc? We offer resistance to the Ahrimanic element by taking exactly the path that has been so emphatically pointed out over and over again within our stream of spiritual science—the path towards a spiritualization of human culture, of man's ability to form ideas and concepts. This is why it has been stressed again and again that there is a way in which everything spiritual science can give us, even if to begin with it is largely presented to us from the spiritual world, can truly and wholly and utterly be grasped with the intellect, the reason man has been gifted with from the 16th century to this day. And if we say we do not understand, then that is only because we listen to the prejudices current in the materialism of our age. We must stop listening ever and again to the voice of present-day materialism, a voice that speaks loudly at times and then again in the faintest of whispers. Instead we must try and firmly focus our mind on such powers of understanding as we have. Then the things spiritual science produces for us will one day appear to be

perfectly understandable, as something that can be understood just as well as some event or other in the outside world can be understood. We generate the great strength we need to offer resistance to the Ahrimanic forces by approaching the spirit not merely through the inmost powers of revelation and of faith, as in the case of Joan of Arc, but by trying to concentrate our powers of understanding most intensely on what spiritual science has to give. If we do this, the hour, the moment, will come when we have to say to ourselves: What comes to us out of spiritual science is the only thing that is rational and at the same time makes the world around us understandable, filling it with light. And when we are taken hold of in this way we are taken hold of by what the spirit has to give in our time so that we shall indeed be strong enough to face the Ahrimanic forces.

Someone with a disposition like that of Joan of Arc would not be able to achieve anything in our day and age. She would be an interesting personality and would be able to reveal many marvellous things through prophecy and in other ways. Such a person capable of making intimate revelations is capable of effectively countering Luciferic forces. Today, however, man has to resist Ahrimanic forces, has to make himself strong to cope with these forces, developing the strength required in the Michaelic age. Sun-like qualities are called for in the age of Michael, qualities we take into ourselves by spiritualizing the powers we have at our command between waking up and going to sleep: the powers of the intellect, of understanding, of insight. For these powers of understanding we possess will undergo a transformation in the soul if only we have sufficient patience. They are transformed to such effect that out of what emerges for us in spiritual science there arises the certainty that what we are grasping there is the direct expression of the thoughts of the spiritual world. So there can be no question today of withdrawing from the outside world which has Ahrimanic forces in it everywhere. No, it is necessary for us to stand in this world but at the same time also make ourselves strong to meet those Ahrimanic forces.

It is a matter therefore of finding the way towards understanding the spiritual world with the very same powers we also use to understand the outside world. That, of course, is the way — as we have said on these few occasions—that is inwardly bound up with the whole mission of the German people, and specifically with this mission as it has been from the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th centuries. This mission was in preparation during the preceding centuries. This is what is so remarkable — what has been going on in the intellectual life of Germany, through its

poets, its artists and philosophers, is intimately bound up with the spiritual life. Here it really is a matter of boldly looking the facts in the face, without sympathy or antipathy, and seeing how they were first in preparation and gradually took shape. We have ourselves had the experience of simply having to stress one day that there is this necessity to be active in the life of the intellect and spirit as it continues to progress. Why should that be so?

Let us try and take a look at the theosophical movement we had external links with for a time, the theosophical movement in England. Try and build a bridge for yourselves between the general intellectual life in England, including the field of philosophy, and English theosophy. Externally they stand side by side, are two streams running side by side, and a bridge between the two is something we can only make in a very external way. Try on the other hand and consider the life of the mind and spirit that had its preparatory stages in the German mystics Meister Eckhart and Johannes Tauler, and then evolved further through Jakob Boehme and Angelus Silesius. [Note 28 Meister Eckhart (c. 1260–c.1327).

Johannes Tauler (c.1300 –c.1361).

Jakob Boehme (1575 –1624).

Angelus Silesius (Johannes Scheffler) (1624–1677). Concerning the above mystics, see Rudolf Steiner: *Die Mystik im Aufgange des neuzeitlichen Geisteslebens und ihr Verhältnis zur modernen Weltanschauung* (GA 7). In English as *Eleven European Mystics* (tr. K. Zimmer) (New York) Rudolf Steiner Publications 1971.] In Lessing [Note 21 Gotthold Ephraim Lessing: *Die Erziehung des Menschengeschlechtes* (1780) paragraph 98: 'Why should I not return as often as I am sent to gain new knowledge, new skills? Do I carry off so much at one go that it is not worth the effort to return?'] it brought acceptance of the idea of repeated earth lives, and in Goethe's *Faust* an out-and-out glorification of the ascent to the spiritual worlds.

There you have the straight route from the outer worlds to the spiritual world. If you then also include the stream that led from *Goethe's Fairy Tale of the Green Snake and the Fair Lily* [Note 29 Rudolf Steiner: *Goethes Geistesart in ihrer Offenbarung durch semen Faust und durch das Märchen von der Schlange und der Lilie* (GA 22). In English as *The Theory of Knowledge Implicit in Goethes World Conception* (tr.O.D. Wannamaker) (New York & London) Anthroposophic Press and Rudolf Steiner Publishing Co. 1940.] to the dramatization of the basic forces of initiation [Note 30 Rudolf Steiner, 'Die Pforte der Einweihung' in *Vier Mysteriendramen* (GA 14). In English as 'The Portal of Initiation', in the *Mystery Plays/Dramas* tr. A. Bittleston/R. and H. Pusch.] and take the two streams together, you will have the inner connection. There is

an inner connection between that which finally makes its appearance as spiritual science and that which is striven for quite exoterically in the intellectual life of the physical world. The life of the mind and spirit which unfolds outside of spiritual science is of course striven for with the powers of the intellect, but it is compelled to move in the direction of what is found outside the body. I should like to put it like this: It is the mission of the German people that they cannot do anything else but let the river of all their endeavours finally enter into spiritual life. In spiritual terms that really means that the German people are called to unite inwardly with the element that comes into the world because Michael is the leader. Such a union is not achieved by passively, fatalistically, allowing oneself to be governed by the powers of destiny. It is achieved by recognizing the challenge of the time.

What I am trying to show has been revealed not only inwardly, in the evolution of German mysticism, but also outwardly in the whole way German life has developed within the context of European life. In the first of the last two public lectures I have given, 'The Germanic Soul and the German Intellect', I discussed the way the soul quality of the Germanic tribes flowed into the peoples of the West and the South, as it were, through those who became the outposts of those tribes, the Goths, Lombards, Vandals. The Germanic soul element was sacrificed on the altar of mankind. Later this was to repeat itself, though less obviously so. Consider first of all the most eastern part of Austria [[Note 31](#) [Rudolf Steiner was referring to the eastern part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Transylvania \(Siebenbuergen\) is now part of one of the successor states — Rumania \(translator\).](#)] and the people known as the Transylvanian Saxons. They had emigrated from the Rhine, from the Siebengebirge (Seven Mountains), and there is external evidence to prove this. As time went on they lost their special characteristics. The soul substance gave itself up, to merge into that of the other nation, and little will be left of them one day except for some elements from their language; it was as folk substance that they flowed into the other nation. Now let us move on south to the Banat. [[Note 32](#) [The Banat lies just south-west of Transylvania and north of the Danube, in Yugoslavia and Rumania \(translator\).](#)] Swabian immigrants settled there and the Magyar element overgrew the Swabian element. The same thing has happened in the Carpathian mountains in Hungary. To all appearances these immigrant elements have disappeared today. Yet they are still alive everywhere among the present-day population, sometimes emerging in tiny rivulets, like in the fascinating linguistic enclave of the people of Gottschee in Krain [Carniola]. And elsewhere as well. We see — and it would be possible to pursue this a great deal further — how the Germanic soul-element has been

sent out into the world, how it has an effect there. This happens out of an inner necessity. It happened like this in earlier ages and particularly also during the age of Gabriel. It happened throughout the age of Gabriel in that the blood — I would say the blood and the mixing of blood — was active, everything which, whilst connected with external circumstances in life, yet cannot be grasped externally, but again takes place at a more inward level.

Now the Michael age has come, the age when we must grasp how, through the whole past development of the life of the mind and intellect, the German spirit is able to take its place within the Sun force of Michael. That we simply have to realize. And it can be realized by giving recognition to spiritual science, by gradually — on the basis of what spiritual science is considering — getting an idea and an awareness of the spiritual powers that are at work, of the reality of spiritual powers. Then we shall gradually come to understand how senseless it is for people to say: 'There are no spiritual forces, I cannot acknowledge them. And if I have a bar of iron in horseshoe form here, then it is just that, a bar of iron, and I see nothing but iron.' But there may be magnetic forces within it. And in the same way something else, something quite different from magnetic forces, lies within the whole of the outside world. We come to recognize it if we really consider all that is presented to us as the characteristic form of things. That is the way to achieve the powers of mind needed in the age of Michael to resist the Ahrimanic powers, at a time when it is indeed our duty to withstand the Ahrimanic powers. Fundamentally speaking, everything the study of spiritual science has to offer is merely preparatory. One day an awakening of the soul will spring forth from the study of spiritual science, and the soul will know: Within you lives the spiritual world, from the Christ impulse down through Michael to the folk spirit which puts into effect what has to be put into effect.

I have said that the time of Joan of Arc was one when it was possible to act on the weakest, physically the weakest, powers of man. Our age is one where it is necessary to act on the strongest powers of man, to take hold of the will at a point where it is least inclined truly to unfold its powers. We can see it again and again: the thing people find most difficult to do is to unfold the will at the point where our earthly powers, the powers by which we form concepts, are made inwardly active. To bring 'will-power' to bear externally is something people still find relatively easy. But a different kind of 'will-power' is needed to guide our thoughts in such a way that they encompass the spiritual world. Spiritual science as such has to appeal to that strong will-power, for this must be there if spiritual science is truly to

lead where it ought to lead in our Michaelic age. For we are not called to discuss the mechanical element in our age; we are not called to point out that this mechanical element in our age has laid hold of mankind; we are called to do something else.

Of course, if we squeeze the facts a little it will be possible for us to become a philosopher, to some degree even a great philosopher — this we admit without reserve. It is possible to look at the machines in our age and start to consider this very mechanistic aspect as the most pernicious of all things, ascribing it specifically to our enemies. And one then has the inclination, even if one may be considered a great philosopher, to hurl abuse like a market woman. One can then do the same as the philosopher Bergson [[Note 33 Henri Bergson \(1859–1941\). See 'La Signification de la Guerre' in Pages Actuelles 1914/15 Paris 1915.](#)] who only recently again managed to point out rather one sidedly — and many things tend to be perfectly correct if a one sided view is presented — how the mechanistic effect of the forces relates to the essential nature of the German people. But that is not the only thing we can point to — that German brainpower has achieved things in certain areas by applying mechanical principles — for something else may be pointed out as well. Nor is it necessary to hurl abuse like a market woman when discussing such matters, and instead we may say: Perhaps the very place where the intellect has the greatest powers to give form to the mechanistic and demonic element is also the place where these mechanistic and demonic powers can be overcome on the basis of our particular spiritual mission. Then however, a German may easily get himself misunderstood as he comes to see, in conjunction with the way the intellectual life has developed, that it is not his function to stop at the purely mechanical element that is of such great service to him also in the present day, with the challenges presented by the war. He must not stop at what is merely mechanism, for then he would merely create demons. No, he must develop powerful forces within him that can boldly face these demons. This means that we have to stand in the spiritual world, not blindly but in a way that arises from, and is guided by, conviction. If we set out to acknowledge that we are surrounding ourselves with a world of demons, a veritable hell, as we design and build machine after machine, we can of course understand why people speaking out of the materialistic spirit of the present age are saying over and over again that this scientific and materialistic age has taken us to the greatest height ever achieved by man. Of course we can understand this for it is in line with the materialistic thought of the present time, but we must know that with those machines we are introducing nothing but demons for mankind and we must know how to develop the right powers to resist these demons. We only gain the

right attitude to the spiritual world by recognizing these demonic Ahrimanic forces, by knowing full well that they are present. For the harmful powers are harmful only when we remain unconscious of them, when we know nothing about them. Let me illustrate this by means of a comparison.

As you know, we hope after some time to have a building at Dornach near Basle where we can nurture our spiritual stream in suitable surroundings. It is not a question of erecting this building to escape the pressures of our time in some way or other, but rather of building it entirely out of the pressures of our time. It was necessary for instance to design a lighting system out of the most Ahrimanic forces of the present age, electric lighting, electric heating and so on. It is a matter of using the architectural form as such to render such potentially harmful things harmless. It could have been the case that anyone entering the building in the future would have been surrounded with everything the Ahrimanic culture of the present age leads to. The point, however, is not that it is present, but that people do not notice it. We are not suppose to notice it. To achieve this, a number of friends got together and they are erecting a separate building for this, giving it a special form, so that the demonic Ahrimanic forces are banished to this place. Anyone approaching the building, and also anyone entering it, will have it brought to their notice that the Ahrimanic forces are at work there. For as soon as we know this they are no longer harmful. The point is that the powers that have a bad effect on man cease to do so when we take a good look at the places where they are active, when we do not look at a machine thoughtlessly and say 'a machine is simply a machine' , but rather acknowledge that a machine is a place where a demonic Ahrimanic entity may be found.

If we take our stand in the world with knowledge in our souls we take the right stand in the Michaelic age. It means that we relate to the spiritual world in such a way that Michael, too, can be active within us; Michael with his present mission, as we have described it. The Point is that in every case we can either enter without thought into what exists in the mechanical contrivances men are producing at an unconscious level or we can see through life. If we see through it, if we become aware of the demonic elemental powers at work in the machines we produce, we shall find the way to the rightful givers of Inspiration who are true to the spirit. They are connected with the spirit who is to the other spirits concerned with guidance of man as gold is to the other metals — with Michael.

My aim today has been to show that the mission of our age is to seek the divine spiritual powers that will work for the good of mankind. It is different from the mission given to the human souls who lived at the time of Joan of Arc. At that time it was much more a question of holding back anything intellectual, holding back the Power of reasoning. Today, however, it is a question of cultivating everything to do with reason and intellect to attain to clairvoyance, for it is possible to cultivate it and attain to clairvoyance. Once there are people who cultivate the human soul in this way, the twilight period we are now living through will evolve into what it destined to evolve. Everything that evolves on the physical plane can only be the outer garment for the spiritual life that is to arise for mankind out of the Present time.

And it is true that those who are now sacrificing their powers in the years of their youth are prepared to send these powers down into our earthly existence. For these powers are never lost, they are indestructible- Now, however, they are destined to continue to act spiritually as they would have continued to act physically if the people concerned had not gone through the gate of death on the field of battle. They will continue to send their powers down to earth and into our time, so that we shall know what to do with these powers. These powers need to stream down into a human race that shall use them in such a way, during the time of peace that will follow the war, that spiritual life spreads more and more on earth. As the light of day always arises from the night, so a future filled with light will have to arise out of our present which so often seems like a dark night to us. This future will have to be filled not only with light but with everything the Michaelic age, which started in 1871, has to bring for mankind. Once there are souls capable of establishing as intimate a bond with the spiritual world as has been indicated today, we shall be able to hope that where the events of the present time are concerned, the thought expressed in the seven lines of the mantram will come to fruition. We may hope that it will all be fulfilled — if the first five lines are really and truly connected with the last two:

*Out of courage shown in battle,
Out of the blood shed in war,
Out of the grief of those who are left,
Out of the people's deeds of sacrifice*

*Spirit fruits will come to grow
If souls with knowledge of the spirit
Turn their mind to spirit realms.*



6 Spiritual Perception Essential at the Present Time

26 January 1915, Berlin

Due to circumstances, my departure has been postponed till tomorrow and so we can still have this evening together.

As usual, let us first of all direct our thoughts to the souls of those who are out at the front, having to stand up for the momentous events of our time.

*Spirits of your souls, guardian guides,
On your wings let there be borne
The prayer of love from our souls
To those whom you guard here of earth.
Thus, united with your might,
A ray of help our prayer shall be
For the souls it seeks out there in love.*

And for those who have already gone through the gate of death:

*Spirits of your souls, guardian guides,
On your wings let there be borne
The prayer of love from our souls
To those whom you guard in the spheres.
Thus, united with your might,
A ray of help our prayer shall be
For the souls it seeks out there in love.*

May the spirit who has gone through the Mystery of Golgotha — the spirit we have been seeking in our spiritual movement over the Years so that he was able to influence our mind deeply — may he be with you and with the

hard duties you have to perform.

Dear friends, I want to use this extra evening we have been given, as it were, to comment on a number of unrelated points that may of value to us in one respect or another.

First of all let me point out that in spite of the materialism of the present age, or perhaps exactly because of the materialism of our age, the souls of people doing scientific work in certain fields are guided towards the existence of a spiritual world even though they do not really intend this. Let me give you a specific example. It would of course be possible to pick up a great many threads with regard to what I have just indicated, but I should like to refer to a pamphlet which has appeared quite recently. It is number twelve in a series now being published with reference to the war written by Professor O. Binswanger, the well-known psychiatrist, under the title *Die seelischen Wirkungen des Krieges* (The Psychological Effects of War). [[Note 34 O. Binswanger: Die Seelischen Wirkungen des Krieges in the series of political pamphlets entitled Der Deutsche Krieg. Stuttgart and Berlin 1914.](#)] It is not my intention to take up the more detailed points made by Binswanger concerning the psychological effects of war but merely certain comments he made in this pamphlet. A scientist like Binswanger now feels compelled, as it were, to do more than just hint at the existence of a spiritual life. Yet he also feels obliged to apologize for this, pointing out that the present age is not inclined, where the enlightened are concerned, to believe in any such thing as a life of the spirit or of the soul. In his pamphlet Binswanger refers to the more than well-known fact that there has been a major increase in nervous diseases in our day. He discusses a number of contributory causes and on page 10 makes the significant statement: 'It may seem strange to some of you that I put such great emphasis on the psychological element in these nervous conditions.' He is a psychiatrist entirely in the materialistic way, yet finds it necessary to speak of the psychological element, the soul element, as one of the causes of the diseases he is particularly interested in.

'What does the psychological element have to do with a nervous stomach, with a nervous heart, nervous pain in the back, arms and legs? All I can say is that it is the general medical opinion that in the final instance, pathological nervous reactions in many different organs and parts of the body are largely due to disorders in the psychological sphere.'

We see how someone whose researches lead him to consider the facts of soul life is forced by those facts to confess that nervous stomach complaints, nervous heart complaints, nervous pain in the back and, indeed, also in the extremities — conditions as a rule only considered from the materialistic point of view today — have their causes in disturbances in the soul life.

The modern scientist will however tend to go no further than making this admission. He will go no further, not one step further. In the first place it has to be admitted that we are not getting anywhere if the causes of pathological processes of the kind described are sought only in the physical sphere. Yet people still lack the courage and energy to do some serious investigation of spiritual scientific aspects. The moment people hear anything positive relating to the field of spiritual science they feel they no longer have solid ground under their feet, as it were; as though everything we are able to gain from the spiritual world by applying the methods of spiritual science lacked the security of certainty. For a psychiatrist this is doubly fatal, one might say. If the causes of certain physical conditions lie in the processes occurring in soul-life, it will have to be admitted that the best way to deal with such conditions is through treatment directed at the soul life.

But how is one to treat a soul if one has not developed any concept as to how the soul relates to the body? The prescriptions for getting rid of spiritual disorders, as it were, can only be taken from the spiritual world. Yet it is only possible to perceive the relationship between the spiritual world and the outer material world if we know something of that spiritual world. And so one gets a peculiar lack of precision, lack of logic, very peculiar reasoning, when such people attempt to speak about the relationship between body and soul in a really positive way. This is something we can demonstrate in the case of this particular scientist. A few pages further on — on page 23 — he says something very peculiar indeed. Wanting to speak of the Confidence he feels as to the successful conclusion of the German campaign in the light of his understanding of how the human soul is constituted, he says:

'It is my conviction that the army whose soldiers have the better nerves will win, or, to put it in other words those with greater moral resilience.'

Let us consider this in all seriousness. A scientist who admits that the causes even of physical disorders, so-called nervous disorders, are psychological, says that victory is sure to go to the soldiers who have the better nerves, or — as he says— '...in other words, those with greater moral resilience'. It is hard to imagine anyone producing greater nonsense than this. Both statements are of course absolutely true, but it is nonsense to maintain that the one says the same as the other. Just imagine someone forming a very clear picture of the nervous system, able to trace this nervous system down to its smallest ramifications, and then saying that 'put in other words' stronger nerves are equivalent to greater moral resilience in a person. It means that purely physical nerve strands are, in other words, supposed to be moral resilience. The modern reader will, of course, fail to notice such things. You will find he fails to notice the oddest things when reading anything he considers tremendously erudite. Such things are, nonetheless, genuine nonsense unless they are seen in relation to what spiritual science has to say about it. What view does spiritual science take of these things?

If we consider the moral power of a person, the moral element that ensouls him and fills the whole of his soul, it is in the first instance something entirely spiritual, nonphysical, something that has nothing to do with anything material. What we call the moral power of a soul is a spiritual power within it, in so far as this soul belongs to the spiritual world. When the soul returns to its body on waking up, as it always does, it uses the body as a tool for the physical world from the moment of waking until going to sleep. Between going to sleep and waking up the soul is living in the purely spiritual world, separate from its physical tool, the body, and it also gathers its moral power there. In the physical world, however, moral powers can be active only by using the physical body as their tool. They are in that case also active as spiritual powers. In the ego and astral body of man the element we call his moral power is active. It is something purely spiritual in them. But what does this purely spiritual element of moral power in the astral body and ego of man have to do with his nervous system?

Let me make a comparison. The moral power of a person has exactly as much to do with his nervous system as I have to do with the floor on which my feet are now standing. If the floor were not there, nor the ground on which it rests beneath it, I would be unable to stand here, being a physical human being. The floor has to be there, but it has nothing to do physically with anything within me. The floor or the ground has to be there for me to stand on. In the same way the nerves have to be there in the physical

body merely to provide the Physical resistance which the moral powers of the astral body and the ego must encounter in the physical world in order to make their Presence felt.

There is another comparison I can make — one that really goes to the heart of the matter though it will be necessary to think it through in some detail before one can really see what lies behind it. I am going to use a comparison that again comes up in physical life.

Consider the process of digestion. It consists in some of the food stock becoming part of the organism whilst the rest is eliminated. If it were not possible for a certain part of our food to be eliminated, digestion would be impossible. The process of elimination has to be a very regular one. Yet no one would get it into their heads to say we obtain nourishment from the part of the food we eliminate. The processes going on in our nervous system when we develop moral Power within us are like processes of elimination, genuine processes of elimination in relation to what is fruitful for us, what really lies within us as our true human nature. The assertion of a specific moral impulse in the soul is connected with a process of elimination. The process of elimination — the part which drops out as it were, the waste material we produce—that is the process in the nervous system. This relates to what we are actually doing in the same way as the process of elimination relates to the process by which foods are assimilated in our digestion. People who refer to the spiritual process in which moral impulses are formed as a process in nervous system are really saying—with reference to another sphere — that human nutrition consists in elimination, and they then examine the products of elimination in order to establish what is particularly beneficial to man. That, then, is the back-to-front method used by materialistic science. The principle which the spirit has to eliminate in order to unfold is considered the real thing. In their efforts to get at the truth about the spirit modern scientists investigate exactly the things the spirit has no use for. The method is more or less like that used by someone examining the intestinal contents in order to find out what kind of substances man takes up into his muscles. One has to put this bluntly at times to show up the utter absurdity of modern materialism. The false picture produced by modern materialism carries such enormous conviction in the perverted mental climate of today that strong words have to be used in pointing out the nature of the terrible misconception which prevails.

I am now going to start from something quite different, though later we shall relate this to what I have already put before you. Let us consider the question of the different religious systems that have evolved in the course of human evolution. In the course of human evolution a number of different religious teachers have appeared, telling People one thing or another about conditions in the spiritual world. It really does not take much to arrive at a really clever view of those religious systems. (It is not really difficult to be clever in the present age, as we have seen with regard to a number of opinions held today. You know how this should be taken and that it does not imply criticism of the present age.)

Someone who may be considered clever can so easily point to the fact that different religious teachers have taught different things and draw the conclusion that none of it could therefore be true. For if it were to be true then surely they must all have taught the same. This in turn would lead to the conclusion that all the talk of higher worlds has been shown to be so full of contradictions that it cannot be considered to be based on anything that comes to mankind out of truth.

The only way of finding the right answer to the above question is to form an idea of how much of what man has lived through here on earth goes with him through the gate of death. You can easily form an idea of what we take with us if you consider the following. As soon as you close your eyes and put your hands over your ears you will see or hear nothing of the physical world around you. And now ask yourselves: How much of the impressions the soul takes into itself from morning to night, and how much of the ideas and concepts it holds within it, is in actual fact owed to the eyes and ears? If we had no eyes and ears, by far the greatest part of human soul content would simply not be there. Now, after death the human being quite definitely has neither eyes nor ears. Anything taken in through the eyes and ears can therefore only be carried through the gates of death through memory. There really is no need to reflect further on this. Anything taken in through the eyes and ears can only be carried through the gate of death as memory. The same applies to all the ideas we have formed on the basis of sensory impressions. And now you merely need consider how much has to be left behind when we enter into the spiritual world — everything which has come to man through external impressions is left behind.

What quality should an idea have if we are to take it with us through the gate of death? It most certainly cannot derive from any form of external impression; and one quality it must possess is that anyone thinking in

materialistic terms will be able to say: 'What you have before your mind's eye simply does not exist, for you are not able to see it with your eyes nor hear it with your ears.' The nature of such an idea or concept must be such, therefore, that its subject is not perceptible to the outer senses, for anything we are able to perceive with the outer senses cannot go through the gate of death as an idea. My comment is that materialism is seduced into raising such objections because it is all the time talking of 'being' and 'non-being' without really understanding the ins and outs of 'being' and 'non-being'. It is sufficient for our present purpose to consider just the German language. The verb *sein* (to be) derives from *sehen* (to see). Anything said to be in 'being' therefore is said to be no more than 'something I have actually seen'. All the rest of the talk about 'being', is really nothing more than communication about that what has been seen. The conclusion to be drawn from this is that we should not speak of the things we take with us through the gate of death in terms of 'being', for that would imply that we must have seen them with our physical eyes.

What did the founders of religions want to give to people in the ideas they presented?

They wanted to present ideas to people that would strengthen the spirit within them, endow it with the power of inner light. On passing through the gate of death and entering into the supersensible world man would then carry his own light, being able to illumine what he finds there out of his own power. People find it very easy to say: 'When I get you to tell me of the supersensible worlds how can I know that all these ideas are really correct?' Let us imagine someone was spreading ideas about the supersensible worlds, ideas accepted by a number of people, and these were in fact wrong, or one-sided, or did not turn out to be correct in the sense we speak of things being correct in the outer physical world. In such a case it would still have been better for people to have taken up the wrong ideas than to have taken up no ideas at all concerning the supersensible world. Why? It would have been better because the soul has to make an effort in accepting any kind of idea about the supersensible world. You may take up correct ideas or incorrect ideas but you have to make an effort, and it is this effort which counts in the spiritual world when we go through the gate of death. It is this effort that will benefit us after death or, indeed, benefits us altogether when we enter into the spiritual world.

Let us assume we had made our own what is a completely wrong view of the spiritual world. By taking it up we have developed our soul forces just as a gymnast develops his limbs. And whatever we have developed will be ours and we carry it with us into the spiritual world. By taking it with us into the spiritual world we then have something there that is similar to our having eyes here on earth. We shall no longer be blind in the spiritual world. Even if it were to be the case that everything we have taken up was wrong and the only thing we have done is to make an effort, this means we shall have developed the eye of the soul so that we are now able to see what it there in the spiritual world.

Now the situation is that the teachings of the different religious teachers are in no way completely wrong. It is rather that the truth concerning the supersensible world has been presented from different points of view and only appears to be contradictory. The one must be taken to complement the other. What is essential is that all these religious systems have something in common, and this is that they all provide the human soul with concepts the soul uses to make itself strong to enter the spiritual world, so that the soul is raised from death in its spiritual depths. Individual religious teachers give to the souls what those souls are capable of receiving, depending on the conditions given in individual races — I would say depending on climatic conditions of the country and on the time when such teachers come forth. They all have in common that they give power and strength to the souls of men. We may also say they make them radiant within so that the souls may be real not only in the physical world but also in the spiritual world. Food to strengthen the soul is the universal truth that has been given to men in all religious systems, depending on the given situation.

Our own age is now faced with the necessity gradually to accept a different view of the spiritual world compared to what people of Past ages were able to take in.

Certain ideas which have evolved with the flowering of modern science need to be strengthened inwardly in our age, to grow in inward Power so that these very ideas enable the soul to be alive in the spiritual world and not dead. It is through this that something more profound — more demanding but also more profound — than anything achieved in the various religions arises for the soul of its own accord. I have given a number of reasons over the years as to why our age is the one called to spiritual science. What I'd like to say is the following: For anyone close to

spiritual life it is evident wherever we go — and that is what is so deeply moving for us today — that one of the elements that has to come into the life of the present age, one form of leaven, is spiritual science.

Many, many souls have gone through the gate of death these last months, gone through the gate of death in the full vigour of youth. I have already told you that in the normal course of events the human beings whose souls have now gone through the gate of death could have expected to live longer on earth. When a human being goes through the gate of death we know that first of all he lays aside his Physical body and then, after a relatively short time, his ether body. This ether body then belongs to the outer ether world and the astral body and the ego continue to belong to the person concerned. It is usually said that the ether body dissolves in the spiritual world. But the time it takes to dissolve differs greatly. When a person has grown very old, i.e. has reached what we may call a normal life-span, he will have used up the forces of his ether body so that it dissolves quickly. But when a person goes through the gate of death in the vigour of youth, his ether body could still have served him for many years. This ether body is a cohesive, structured whole. It will not dissolve immediately in the second case. It will separate from the astral body and the ego and these will go their own ways in the spiritual world. The ether body will separate from them, but it will not dissolve immediately. It will seem quite natural to you that the human being maintains a certain connection with the ether body which has separated immediately but still continues to be present in the spiritual ether. We are therefore able to say that the sphere of this spiritual ether—taking it in absolute terms, close to the earth's aura — contains a very considerable number of unused ether bodies, ether bodies with vigorous forces. It is particularly impressive to see, when observing the spiritual world as it is at the moment, that we find there such a large number of unspent ether bodies. Something else may be noted at every point where we are able to be in touch with the feelings of the dead with regard to these, their ether bodies. (You are, of course, free to believe this or not. My only claim to credibility lies in the power of truth contained in what I have been telling you over many years.) As to the feelings one may perceive in the dead in relation to their ether bodies, one finds that a spiritual whisper reaches one, as it were, from all those who have now made the sacrifice of death: 'The time has come! Mankind will only make rightful use of the unspent energies within our ether bodies if it becomes conscious of its relationship to the spiritual world.'

Many, many energies stream from those unspent ether bodies. They enter our world and men will only use them rightly if they direct their thoughts to the spiritual world. Then the energies from ether bodies given in sacrifice will be energies to benefit mankind. That, as it were, is what the dead are calling out to us today: 'Do not allow our ether bodies to be wasted. Do not let the time go by when the energies of our unspent ether bodies are able to serve the spiritual progress of mankind.'

There is a special point I wish to make. On one or more previous occasions I have described the way in which it is possible to help the dead. Under specific conditions the dead are able to benefit if we make accessible to them, by reading to them, what we attain to in spiritual science. I have pointed out that it means much to a person who has gone through the gate of death when we read spiritual scientific material to them in the spirit, when we form a vivid picture of that person in our mind and read a chapter of spiritual science to them, not aloud of course, but in our thoughts. It could also be several or, indeed, many persons. This may seem absurd to people who believe that the whole spiritual world is present around the human being as he enters through the gate of death so that there is no need for us to read to him. But it is not all that absurd. Of course, someone who has died does have the spiritual world around him, he finds himself within it. But just as someone here on earth understands only little of the world of the senses although he is within it, so someone who has died does not have full knowledge of the spiritual world merely by virtue of going through the gate of death, even though he will then be within that world. Such knowledge has to be acquired. When we read to someone who has died it is as though we were giving him food — it flows into him. In the time that lies ahead mankind will be able to achieve much strength-giving power where spiritual things are concerned by using the mantram I have always used at the beginning of our meetings: 'Spirits of your souls, guardian guides...' and so forth (in the version making reference to 'those whom you guard in the spheres...' for those who have fallen in battle). Usually this Method can be used only with the dead whom we have known personally, but this particular mantram can also be addressed to those among the dead who were not personally known to us. Having used this mantram with true reverence we are then able to read out into the unknown, as it were. Dead people who have gone to their death in consequence of the events of the present time will be able to receive this. They will be able to gain benefit from this connection with us and use it to influence cultural developments on earth through their ether bodies. They will be working together with the people living on earth to advance spiritual life.

There is something else we can achieve in this way. It is perfectly true that we have been living in an age of the most miserable materialism and that the events of the war have triggered something which clearly bears the marks of spiritual life. Anyone travelling through Germany and observing people spiritually could note an enormous difference in spiritual life between July 1914, or even earlier, and then in August, September and especially now. The difference which emerges is that before everybody had his own egoistic aura that was well closed in upon itself and clung to a person, as it were. Now a common aura may be seen, with people's thoughts flowing into it as something uniform. All thoughts going in one direction — that is something highly significant in spiritual terms. It means that for this time of war something has been created in the spirit that was not there before. This is quite undeniable.

But now imagine — for that is how it will have to be — that peace returns. Then souls will grow all the more empty and barren unless they are able to find some kind of spiritual asset out of their inner life. It is something men have need of at all times, that they direct their thoughts to something that has nothing to do with any external reality. In some form or other this strengthens them for the spiritual world. Ideas concerning the supersensible world will strengthen them with regard to the good powers in the supersensible world. Ideas not relating to the supersensible or ideas not justifiable with regard to the supersensible will also strengthen men for the supersensible world, though in that case for the Luciferic or Ahrimanic world. But it simply is part of the makeup of human beings that the spiritual wants to come to expression within them. We might put it like this: Man has to have something that does not hold true for the external world. If he has refused for a long time to take anything into his soul that does not hold true for the external world then there will be a reaction, a reaction to the effect that he will have to believe in something that does not hold true for the external world. Such beliefs may then take hold of human souls in the strangest way. Certain souls completely subject to materialism may nevertheless be religious in an external sense. And such souls may experience that reaction in a particular way. They may, for instance — how shall I put it — all be in accord in believing that some people, some race with its own culture, were a race of barbarians, and they may make this an article of faith. Leaving aside certain other aspects, this is nothing more than the soul's yearning for faith, for something that has no reality in the physical world. It is because they are no longer in the habit of applying their minds to what is genuinely supersensible that such men then fill their souls with the belief that some people or other are barbarians. This becomes an article of faith, a dogma, that is now as

fanatically adhered to as they previously adhered to various religious dogmas. It is a substitute for a faith that has long been absent. We need to realize, however, that in the long run this will not do. Once peace has been restored People will no longer be able to have this real-world substitute that finds expression in the belief that some people or other are barbarians. And then emptiness comes, dreadful desolation. That is the prospect for those regions where people are today creating a faith, creating dogmas for themselves in a way that at times is downright disgusting, being nothing but lies. A terrible emptiness of soul will be experienced in those regions. And this emptiness of soul can only be combated if the unspent ether forces of those dedicated to sacrificial death are used in the right way, as I have described. That is why all of them are saying to us — reminding us, as it were, to use their ether forces rightly — and expressing it in form of a spontaneous discovery made as they went through death: 'Now is the time!' Mankind has to develop spiritually and these events must now be seen as a twilight state out of which a new Sun-state shall arise.

That is the thought which should fill the hearts and minds of those who suffer great losses: Our age desperately needs to become spiritual, and this will be possible only with help from the spiritual world. The means of providing such help have to come out of painful events like those we are now living through.

To the spiritual scientist it is immediately obvious that these events should not be considered from a materialistic point of view only. Yet a purely materialistic way of looking at these events is about all one can find. It may happen — and we have seen this happen — that a number of people in one part of the world feel that there is hostility towards them and therefore issue some form of proclamation. This proclamation reaches enemy territory and from this enemy territory the question is put: 'Who was it who wanted this war?' Or the other party is accused of having wanted the war. Again and again they forget the one thing which must be understood if a deeper insight is to be gained into the situation. Some good for the future will also come out of looking into things more deeply. It has to be understood that all these events are indeed willed out of the spiritual world, because the spiritual world needs the powers that may be the fruits arising from the seed of those unspent ether bodies. If accusations were to be levelled one would also have to level them at the spiritual world. But there all thought of blame goes from one's mind. There we become aware of the iron necessity which exists, the iron necessity which, from the point of view of the spiritual worlds, has to regard our earth world in about the same way as we have to regard a situation where it is necessary to

consume so and so much, kill it, take it out of its natural context by force, in order to build up something else. We can not build a house unless we destroy so-and-so many rock formations' There is no point here in speaking of blame. We have to speak of necessity in this case. And in the same way it is necessary in the spiritual world to demand the sacrifices that are now being demanded because seed is needed. This seed consists in the unspent ether bodies which will then be present in all that develops for humanity, and these have to be available if evolution is to proceed. Otherwise mankind would lack the energies it needs to progress. Today's events have their outward significance but, in addition, we must also take these facts fully into account if we want to understand their true inward meaning.

Taking this point of view, we say to ourselves: I may not be able to know from the beginning if everything I am receiving from the spiritual world is 'correct', as they say. One thing is true, however, and that is that by uniting these revelations from the spiritual world with my own soul I am exerting my soul, and in this way I am giving it powers so that my soul grows luminous for the spiritual world, is given eyes for the spiritual world.

Conditions are, however, different in the spiritual world than they are in the physical world. In the physical world we can be satisfied once we have formed a thought and recognized its truth. It is sufficient for the practical life of the physical world to have perceived the truth of a thought just once. What I mean is this: If a body of judges wants to establish whether a person is guilty in a particular case, the matter is settled once the conclusion has been reached that the person is guilty. Everything that is necessary has then been done. In the spiritual world, however, everything has not been done once a conclusion has been reached or a thought has been formed. It is necessary for the thought to recur over and over again. What matters in spiritual terms is the repetition. It is not just a matter of knowing something about things but of ever and again making that thought present in the soul. This is also what meditative life is based on, that we have the content of the meditation present in the soul by constant repetition. Anything made constantly present in this way will truly have the power to act like the drops falling on a stone that will finally make a hollow. A single drop falling on to a stone will leave no impression. Nor will it do so if it falls ten times or a hundred times. But in the end it will make a hollow. When we take such things into our soul just once it might appear that they make no impression at all. Nor will they if taken in ten times. But if we are patient we can get to the point where we perceive the essential core that is

eternal in man. It is the power we develop in the process that matters. People tend to run away from this power. They do not want it. Why is it that they do not want this power?

The question as to why people do not want this power, why they fight shy of spiritual science even today, can be answered if we briefly look again at the significance of the images for life after death presented in spiritual science. The images which are most important after death are those which do not depict anything belonging to the outer world, do not relate to external existence and are such that a crude materialist will say they are of no significance in life. Yet it is these images which are the most important after death. To form such images calls for such a great power of reflection, of deliberation and attunement, that it will make the soul strong, letting it experience itself, perceive itself, in the spiritual world. Those are the images the souls needs on going through the gate of death.

How can we gain such images? We know the answer. We do so by exerting the soul to a greater degree than it normally exerts itself. If we want to take in the images the modern scientist takes in we merely need to look, if necessary through a microscope or telescope. We can stay nice and passive as we receive impressions of the world and record them. That is only too common. No one likes to make an inner effort, for with things that are invisible it takes greater effort than with things that are visible. And greater effort in thought is what People shy away from, run away from. We are really inwardly lazy, if you will forgive such harsh words; we like to take things easy. The most profound characteristic of modern scientific endeavour is this inner laziness — going for the easy way, not wanting to call forth power from the soul. But if we do this, if we call forth such powers from the soul, what effect does this have after death? Well, we do gain something for life after death out of these powers we have called forth, but it is something we usually do not like at all, because we tend to live with a certain illusion. Let me tell you why we usually do not like it. When we enter the spiritual world through death or through initiation, something has to be experienced after death that is like a second death. It is a kind of second death- As you know, we later have to separate also from our astral body and this may be done consciously or we can sleep through it. There is a certain fear in people's hearts which they do not interpret correctly. It is the fear of waking up so much after death that they will then be conscious of everything around them. That fear is entirely the same as the one men have in the physical world, where they would find it preferable not to live their physical life too intensively, not to be fully awake all the time, but rather go through life in a bit of a haze. Life would be

more pleasant that way. And the most comfortable way of all would be to spend all one's life in bed, going through life half asleep. Yet this cannot always be done. The human being has to wake up. And if he has been in a haze concerning what happens after death up to the point in time I have mentioned, he cannot be allowed to go on being in a haze after death. Man must wake up. But he is still afraid of this! Even people who come as close to spiritual science as a scientist who says that nervous disorders affecting the back, the arms and the legs arise from the soul sphere will struggle to resist. He will struggle because he is desperately afraid. He will be like someone who says: 'Something is missing. It's been stolen. The wind cannot have carried it away, so it cannot have been removed by natural forces — some person must have taken it.' And he will stop at that point. He won't go further because he is afraid he may get beaten up. That is how some scientists behave, Binswanger for example. They say that certain nervous disorders affecting the arms, legs and so on are psychological in origin. But they will stick at that. They do not go further because they are afraid of getting beaten up — ahem! — I mean because they like to sleep through what goes on in the spiritual world.

Something we have to become aware of is that modern scientists actually are brought face to face with the effects produced by the spiritual world but refuse to tackle that world. Once these scientists are prepared to tackle the spiritual world they will have to understand that it is not permissible to talk about conditions relating to the spiritual world in just any kind of general terms, but that spiritual science has to be approached in a positive way so that the very act of turning one's mind to spiritual science becomes a kind of healing Process. That is how one thing goes with another. It is not that mental illness as such has increased — it would be wrong to think so — but it is a fact that the type of condition we may call a nervous disorder has spread a great deal in more recent times. If things continue the way they have been going until now the result will be that nervous disorders have to get worse and worse and this will show itself in the course human evolution is taking.

It would be possible to quote some very interesting facts. Let us take one very simple case. There is the Austrian poet Robert Hamerling [1830-89], an excellent poet, some of whose work has also been presented to this group. This man spent much of the second half of his life in bed. He was very ill suffering from a serious illness that was gradually getting worse and worse. He did not develop a nervous condition, however. There is nothing of a nervous quality about his writing. Even when he was only able to lie on one side and was in the most terrible pain when writing, his style was

not what we would call 'nervous'. The reason is that he belonged to that Central European culture which has not yet fallen into nervousness the way the spiritual life of other European peoples has done. The nervous state does not take anything away from the life of the spirit, but the facts still must be seen clearly. I have seen how in the 1870s and 1880s People still had a feeling for the things Robert Hamerling had to offer, for instance, and then suddenly in the 1880s tremendous enthusiasm came up for Dostoevsky. [1821-81] Of course I do not want to take anything away from Dostoevsky, but what he mainly has to offer is a very nervy, twitchy art, however great. Such nervy art would develop if the stream of materialism were to go on and on, for Dostoevsky's art is materialistic even if it is psychology'.

If this is not to happen it will be necessary to develop the great powers which the human soul has to come up with to enter into lines of thought like the one that says Saturn, Sun and Moon are earlier stages of earth evolution. Just try and present ideas like Saturn evolution, Sun evolution and so on to a proper modern man, expecting him to exert his mind to the point where such things seem absolutely natural. It is possible to find such things absolutely natural, but the soul has to make considerable efforts to reach that point, and the result will be that the nervousness is driven out. It does require patience, but the nervousness will be driven out. The general nervousness which would otherwise affect the whole of human civilization will be cured if men take up what arises from spiritual science through the widening of the spiritual stream. In a situation where mankind is in danger of going all twitchy, spiritual science comes from the other side to offer a cure.

A psychiatrist who has not yet entered into spiritual science will have to admit to himself that nervous symptoms are on the increase. On the basis of spiritual science, however, he may then perhaps be forced to admit that the best cure for nervous conditions is to tell his patients: 'Take a book on spiritual science for three-quarters of an hour every day and try to think it through; this will make your nerves much stronger.' They will definitely get stronger. But we shall only be able to believe this if we clearly understand that our soul life relates to nerve function only in so far as it initiates processes of elimination, as we have shown in the comparison made at the beginning of this lecture. The soul life cannot be cured by putting particular emphasis on eliminatory processes but only by strengthening from within the aspect which has nothing to do with the eliminatory processes. The soul must impregnate this by letting spiritual energies stream into itself. A time will come when prescriptions are written on the basis of spiritual

science, prescriptions making use of one thing or another that can only be found through spiritual science, and this will apply particularly to the diseases of more recent times. Of course we are not anywhere near it yet. For a long time to come it will be thought that there is sufficient evidence to show that any kind of therapy that could be labeled 'mystical' is claptrap. The label 'mysticism' will be all the more freely applied the less people know what mysticism really is. We are the ones who use the term 'mysticism' least often. We use it only as a technical term. On the other hand, it is used most of all by people who have no idea as to the nature of mysticism.

In getting a clear idea of these things we cannot hide from the fact that we are living in a significant time of crisis. I have said on a number of occasions that I am not in the habit of saying we live in a time of transition. Every period has something that went before and something that is to follow. The point is to recognize the concrete nature of the transition, the specific sense in which a time is one of transition. In our own time, the concrete part of it is that everything that is now happening points to one thing: Men must find the way to Comprehend the spiritual worlds. They will find calm, inner firmness and inner certainty in those spiritual worlds. That is what mankind is in absolute need of.

If you want to let this idea really come to life in your soul of how a new kind of calm has to be won for the soul out of spiritual science, it is a good idea to meditate on the following. It is truly significant that for the last three or four centuries people gradually had to accept the idea that they are rushing through space, genuinely rushing through space. Of course anybody can say they know this. But people do not usually reflect on this — a fact they already learned at school — that they are rushing through space at tremendous speed.

This more or less brings to mind the story of the man lying in a ditch who was very comfortable as he lay there and yet felt highly dissatisfied. Asked as to the reason for his dissatisfaction, seeing that he did not have to do anything, he replied that after all he had to revolve around the sun with the earth but would find it more convenient to stay behind. That was a man who had taken the notion of that revolution seriously. As a rule people do not think about this, for there is an element in man which he does not normally keep in mind.

To continue in our line of thought: Over the last three or four hundred years people have got used to the thought of being part of the earth as it rushes through space. Resistance has to be put up against this, resistance coming from cosmic space. It really is true that there was a feeling of security in the old thought that the earth stood still and the sun was moving. Now it will be a long time yet before people come to realize that the Copernican view Copernicus, Nicolas (1473–1543). is not correct. Things are not the way they are taught today. It will however be possible to reach a point where life is brought into the concepts of non-physical science to the effect that a person may be sitting in a railway carriage or travelling by boat and make such inner efforts to counteract the rumbling noises that he will cease to hear them, being wholly contained within himself. That can only be done today with the help of spiritual science-It must be remembered, however, that constant repetition will be required, for it is the strength developed in the process that matters. Then we remain contained within ourselves, calm and sure. This is a good subject for meditation: The powers of the spiritual world will be able to come in and join us if we go out to meet them in the right way in such calm. They can only enter into our awareness if we go out to meet them with the kind of living idea I have described to you

That characterizes the period of transition we live in. That is the transition in which we really find ourselves. A longing for the spiritual world is definitely present in human souls, though most people do not yet know it. A conscious longing for the spiritual world will however develop out of the particular events that now involve such a large part of the earth. Something the spiritual scientist is already aware of today is that all the unused ether bodies given in sacrifice will release a truly profound longing for the spiritual world. This most profound longing will come, the longing for a truth that has to be won not through external observation but inwardly, through efforts made by the soul. The German spirit is indeed prepared for this. It is prepared for a truth that reveals itself to be true out of itself, not requiring external verification. The German spirit is prepared for this and evidence of this may be found everywhere. The thoughts of those who were truly working within the essence of the German spirit have always taken the form of considering truth to be an inner gift of the human soul. What would such a person say to many of the things happening in the present time? During the first days of August statements appeared in the foreign press that Hamburg lay in ruins, that the Russians had entered Stettin and even Cologne. And all kinds of other things were spread about as well. As you know, the Emperor Franz Joseph died on 8 September! [

Note 36 Rudolf Steiner was using irony here, referring to a rumour. Franz Joseph died on 21 November 1916.] What would a person of the type I characterized above have to say to this?

'Brass may be sold for gold by some, forged bills of exchange rather than genuine ones, more than one side may claim a lost battle as a victory, and other lies concerning physical things and isolated events may be made credible for a time. But when it comes to knowledge of the essential reality where the conscious mind has direct certainty of its own existence, the thought of deception or illusion falls away.'

That could have been written out of the depths of what had to be experienced today. It was written by Hegel [Note 37 Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich (1770–1831). See *Phänomenologie des Geistes* (VIb); *Die Aufklärung* (Phil. Bibl. Bd. 114, Leipzig 1907 p.358).] who died in 1831. This is What is so strange: if someone is profoundly moved by the inner reality of truth he will say things that hold true for all times. What has been said out of an awareness of truth can be put forward again at all times. This is something that has to be said concerning the particular nature of the Central European spirit, concerning its very Special relationship to the truth. No one who takes the trouble to find out about these things can deny it. Today one has the feeling, of course, that one needs to ask again and again: 'For what purpose have People been studying history?' Perhaps they never actually have. It really is as though their souls had only been born after 1 August 1914, making no use at all of anything that happened earlier to help them form an opinion. But in the final instance all this exists only to make the reaction all the more powerful and intense, to arouse an even more powerful and intense desire for a truth that is true in itself. That is the nature of the transition we are going through now, at a time when this inner bond with the truth is often lacking and shows itself to be lacking. The reaction will be a most profound longing for the truth. Then the souls incarnated in bodies here will hear what those other souls are saying to them, the souls which have prepared themselves through their sacrificial death at this time to learn more of the truth than is generally known today.

That is what I have wanted to say to you in this lecture, to reaffirm once again what I have said on several occasions now in our time Concerning the way the events of the present time speak to us in a living way. For it is

true: these events do speak of it. They offer courage and comfort to those who surrender to them ready to make sacrifices, to those who feel grief in considering the events of the present time — courage and comfort to lend new strength:

*Out of courage shown in battle,
Out of the blood shed in war,
Out of the grief of those who are left,
Out of the people's deeds of sacrifice
Spirit fruits will come to grow
If souls with knowledge of the spirit
Turn their mind to spirit realms.*



7

Personal and Supersensible Aspects (Relating to Certain Individuals)

22 February 1915, Berlin

Dear friends, let us first of all remember those who are at the front, in the great arena of present-day events:

*Spirits of your souls, guardian guides,
On your wings let there be borne
The prayer of love from our souls
To those whom you guard here on earth.
Thus, united with your might,
A ray of help our prayer shall be
For the souls it seeks out there in love.*

And for those who because of those events have already gone through the gate of death:

*Spirits of your souls, guardian guides,
On your wings let there be borne
The prayer of love from our souls
To those whom you guard in the spheres.
Thus, united with your might,
A ray of help our prayer shall be
For the souls it seeks out there in love.*

May the spirit we are seeking as we work towards spiritual knowledge, the spirit who has gone through the Mystery of Golgotha for the good of the earth, for the freedom and progress of man, be With you and the hard duties you have to perform!

This evening I intend to consider some of the things that are known about the way our physical world relates to the spiritual world, starting from certain events that concern us more closely within our own movement. This is such a closed and intimate circle that such a thing is possible. Above all, I know that I can justify what I am going to say also to those who were fellow-members during their physical life and will remain such during their further life. Some of the facts I intend to speak of today will relate to them.

Just in recent weeks, dear friends, karma brought it about that I was able to speak at the cremations of dear friends because I happened to be in the places where the cremations took place. No doubt something else also played a role, for at the time I was particularly concerned to obtain certain remarkable impressions arising from the presence of these individualities in the spiritual world by making contact with them when they had gone through the gate of death just a few days before.

As I have said a number of times, it depends on various circumstances whether one is able to gain impressions of one fact or another in the spiritual world. It depends above all on the degree to which it is possible to develop a strong inner bond with the souls concerned. One may sometimes believe one has a very special relationship with a particular soul only to find that it is not entirely so. On the other hand, there are souls where one does not realize that it is fairly easy to establish such a bond until actual contact is established after their death.

In the three cases I wish to speak of first of all, dear friends, an intense desire arose to receive impressions immediately after their death, impressions connected with the whole nature of those souls. I would say this came of itself in these particular cases. You know it is of course possible to pick up all kinds of threads when making a funeral oration, but in these cases something of an inner necessity arose to make really intense contact with the essence of those souls and put it into words at the cremation. I did not specifically intend to characterize the nature of the souls concerned at those ceremonies, but it arose like an illuminating necessity that this had to be. I am not saying that it would have to be the same in other cases. This illuminating necessity arose in the case of one of those souls because — and I am presenting this not as a law but as something I have gone through, an experience — after death the impulses arose for me from the spiritual world to define the essence of that soul. I

did not have to find the words; the words arose of their own accord. They came. We shall see later on, dear friends, why that was so, for certain indications can already be given as to that soul's life after death.

First of all let me say a few things about the particular nature of such experiences so that the whole thing can be understood. If we want to gain an impression in the physical world we confront the object. We form ideas depending on the way we see or hear something or feel it by touch. We know that it is we ourselves who form the ideas. If one is dealing with a soul that has gone through the gate of death one will immediately notice that everything we produce ourselves by way of thoughts, of words, really takes us away from the soul in question and that it is necessary to give ourselves up entirely to what is taking shape within us. If the impressions are then to be put into words it will indeed be necessary for us to have the potential within us for these words to form, being unable to do anything ourselves to make the words form in that particular way. We need to be able to listen inwardly for those words. If we do listen for them inwardly we also know with certainty: These words are not spoken by myself but by the soul which has gone through the gate of death.

That is what happened in recent weeks when an older member departed from us and from the physical plane. [[Note 38 Lina Grosheintz-Rohrer. See Rudolf Steiner: *Unsere Toten* \(GA 261\), address given in Basle on 10 January 1915.](#)] This was an older member who had really entered into our movement with all her heart over a considerable number of years, bringing to life in her feelings, in her heart and mind, the idea and concepts spiritual science is able to give. With tremendous devotion she had identified in her soul with all that is alive and stirring in spiritual science. It was now a matter of giving oneself over, as it were, to the impression that arose from this soul. And, strangely enough, it was the case — it has been possible to show this — that just a few hours after physical death had occurred impressions arose that took the form not merely of verbal impressions but of audible, real words; like a characterization of that soul. Nothing could be done in relation to these words but as far as possible attempt to receive in its pure form what that soul was speaking through my own soul. One certainly must call it speaking in such a case. And those then were the words I spoke at the cremation. They were not my words, as I said, but words — and please consider the words I shall now use carefully — that came from the soul which had gone through death:

*Far into cosmic space I'll carry
My feeling heart; warm it shall grow
In fires wrought by sacred powers;*

*In cosmic thoughts I'll weave
My own thinking; clear it shall grow
In light of life that ever is renewed;*

*To depths of soul I'll guide
Devoted contemplation; strong it shall grow
For mankind's true and real goals;*

*In God's tranquility I thus will strive
Through life's hard struggles and all cares
Prepare my self to be a higher self.*

*Seeking the peace of joyful labours,
And sensing cosmic truth within my own,
I work towards fulfillment of man's task;*

*Then may I live in hope,
Going towards my soul's own star
Who in the spirit realm appoints my place.*

When I spoke these words again at the end of the funeral oration I had to change the last verse as follows, though I had not known of this beforehand:

*Then may I live in hope,
Going towards my star of destiny
Who in the spirit realm appoints my place.*

It was clear what this was about. The individual concerned was endeavouring to impress into her very being that now had gone through death — the thoughts, ideas, feelings and experiences she had received through spiritual science over the years — impress them in such a way that these ideas and experiences became forces that would mould this individual after death, leaving their imprint. This individual had therefore used the ideas and concepts of spiritual science to put their mark, their imprint, on her own essential nature, shaping the way this essential nature would then continue on the soul's path in the spiritual world.

Soon after this we lost another friend, another member of our movement. [Note 39 Sybil Colazza. See *Unsere Toten* (GA 261), address given in Basle on 10 January 1915.] Again an intense need arose to define the essential nature of this member. This could not happen the way it had happened in the Previous case, however. In the previous case it really was true to say of the way the words were chosen that a soul that had gone through the gate of death was expressing itself, saying what it felt itself to be and what it wished to become; it expressed itself. In this second case the situation was that one had to put one's own soul in confrontation, as it were, and consider this soul in the spirit. Then this soul, too, expressed itself, but in words that this time took the material needed for self-characterization out of the soul of the observer. What the soul which had gone through the gate of death was doing therefore merely provided the stimulus to express what one had to feel about its essential nature now that it had gone through the gate of death. And so the following words arose and had to be sent out after the soul at the cremation:

.....
.....

*You came among us,
And a living, innate sweetness
Spoke from the quiet power of your eyes—
Calmness full of life and soul Flowed in the waves
That from your eyes
Would let your inward weaving
Go out to things and human beings.
This inner nature was the soul
within your voice, with eloquence —
More by the nature of the word
Than in the word itself—
Revealing what lay hidden
within the beauty of your soul.*

*To the devoted love
Of hearts in sympathy
It would without words be revealed.
Sublimest beauty, silent, calm.
Of world-soul creation
This being could reveal to the perceptive heart.*

These words were spoken at the beginning and the end of the funeral oration, after which the cremation began. And it was possible to observe, dear friends, that this moment — please note, not the moment when the words were spoken but the moment when the heat of the furnace took hold of the body — was the time when something of a first conscious moment after death occurred. I shall go into this in more detail later on. What I mean by 'conscious moment' is this immediately after death a review of life presents itself in the form of a tableau in the ether body. This goes away after a few days. Now' at the time it proved necessary to have a fairly long interval between death and cremation. Death had occurred at 6 p.m. on the Wednesday; the cremation took place the following Monday at 11 am. At that point the time had already been reached when the life tableau was disappearing. The first moment when there was some degree of consciousness after the life tableau therefore came when the heat of the furnace took hold of the body. It then became clearly apparent that such a nature become spirit has a different way of seeing things' a different way of regarding the world, from a human soul that still remains in its physical body.

When we are in our physical bodies our perception of things in space is that they remain where they are when we move away from them. So if there is a chair standing here and I see it, and I then go a bit further away and look back, the chair is still there. I look back at it. As I continue on my way the chair is still there, it stays where it is. It is not the same for events taking place in time whilst we are within our physical bodies. The events we have let go past us in time do not remain stationary. An event that has passed has passed and we are only able to look back on it in memory. The only thing that links us to the event is our past. It is not like this for a spiritual entity, for this sees events as stationary, the way we see objects remain stationary in space here on earth. And the first impression received by the soul I spoke of was of the funeral and everything that was done and

said at the ceremony. This had happened five or ten minutes earlier but for the dead person it was still there, still stood there the way objects stand in space for physical man. The first impression was one of looking back on the words that had been spoken, that is, above all, the words now sounding for her, the words I have just read to You. It really is the way Richard Wagner once put it out of a profound Intuition: 'Time turns into space' [[Note 40 'Time here turns into space.'](#) — Gurnemanz in *Parcifal*, Act 1.] What has passed has not in fact passed where spiritual experience is concerned. It stands there the way objects stand in space for physical man.

So that was the first impression gained after death—the funeral and the words spoken at it. In this case the situation was such that this look back in time and the vision, as it were, of what had happened at the funeral cannot be said to mean that consciousness lit up and then remained. The twilight state I shall discuss later returned and it was some time before consciousness lit up again. Once more, slowly and gradually, consciousness comes to shine forth again. It takes months until it is so complete that we can say the dead individual has the whole of the spiritual world all around him. But at a later time, exactly through consciousness lighting up at a later time, this particular individual showed a tremendous need to look to this moment again and again, to this particular moment, and to get a clear picture of this moment. This fully agrees with what we are able to know about the whole behaviour of the human being after death, as I intend to show presently.

There is a third case, one that will also deeply concern our Berlin members. It is the case of our dear friend and member Fritz Mitscher [[Note 41 See Rudolf Steiner: *Unsere Toten* \(GA 261\), address given in Basle on 5 February 1915.](#)] who died recently. Fritz Mitscher went through the gate of death just before he had completed his thirtieth year. He would have been thirty on 26 February which lies just ahead.

In the case of Fritz Mitscher, when my thoughts were directed towards him after his death, it was above all the impulses arising from his intense devotion to our spiritual movement that entered into my own soul, the soul of the observer. He had been a truly exemplary Personality in this respect. An exemplary personality in that he — being by nature inclined towards erudition — more and more felt the inner necessity, a deep inner need, to move in a direction where he placed the whole of his erudition, all the knowledge he might acquire! at the service of the spiritual scientific movement. This made ill one of the people who are so essential to the progress of our philosophy based on spiritual science. What is needed in

the present time is that external science, external scientific endeavour, is used in such a way by the soul that this external scientific endeavour joins into the stream of knowledge obtained out of the spiritual world towards which we wish to direct our efforts. And that was the inspiration in the young soul of Fritz Mitscher. One could not help feeling, even in looking upon him in physical life, that he was very much on the right path as far as our movement was concerned.

Our friends will recall something I said when another death had occurred many years ago: Individuals who have taken in, as it were, what physical science has to offer to the present time are the very individuals who make important contributions to our movement after an early death. Our movement depends not only on souls that are incarnated on earth. If we did not have the energies of souls that have gone through the gate of death with earthly knowledge and there remain connected with the will that must flow through our movement, we certainly would not be able in our materialistic age to maintain the hope which we must maintain so strongly to enable us to progress.

Something therefore came to me from Fritz Mitscher's soul that may be epitomized in words I found I could only bring to expression in the way I shall now read to you. These are also the words spoken at his cremation.

*Happy prospect come before us,
You appeared upon the plane
Where the earth-grown flowers of spirit
May revealed be to the seeker
Through the power of soul reality.*

*At the root of all your striving
Lay the purest love of truth;
And to work in light of spirit
Was your life's profound intent,
Never would your efforts cease.*

*Splendid gifts you had and nurtured,
Faithful, to the truth adhering,
Undeterred by worldly opposition,
Firm of step the bright path you pursued
That to knowledge of the spirit leads.*

*And you used the organs of the spirit
With persistence and great courage;
They would push away all error
To the edges of your path,
For the truth a space creating.*

*Your own self you were transforming
To reveal the purest light;
Letting sun force of the soul
Shine with might within your heart—
Here your cares lay and your joy in life.*

*Other cares and other joys
Scarcely ever touched your soul;
Recognition of the truth
Seemed to you to give life meaning
And a value that was real.*

*Happy prospect come before us,
You appeared upon the plane
Where the earth-grown flowers of spirit
May revealed be to the seeker
Through the power of soul reality.*

*Painful loss, most deeply felt,
You now vanish from the plane
Where the earth seeds of the spirit
Ripened in the womb of soul reality
To become awareness for the spheres.*

*Feel our loving gaze directed
To the heights where you are facing
Now a new and different task;
From those lofty spirit regions
Lend your strength to those you left behind.*

*Hear the prayer of our souls;
In it speaks our truth and faith:
To fulfil our task on earth we need
Powers great from lands where spirits dwell,
Strength that comes from friends who have died.*

*Happy prospect come before us,
Painful loss, most deeply felt—
Let us hope that in far nearness
Never lost to us, our lives you'll guide
As a soul star in the spirit realm.*

Words like these, dear friends, have been shaped in such a way that they must be considered to have arisen through identification with the soul that has passed through death. They arise from necessity though not spoken by that soul itself, for that soul only provided the stimulus. They arise from necessity, through the energies coming from that soul, to be spoken exactly the way they have been spoken down to every detail. There really was nothing else in my mind where these words are concerned but those words in the form I have just read them to you. It therefore was extremely moving for me when during the night following the funeral the soul of our Fritz Mitscher replied, in a way, to what had been spoken at his funeral — not out of conscious awareness as yet, but out of his essential nature. His soul replied the effect that the following words came from it, that is, now from the soul which had gone through death:

*My own self I was transforming
To reveal the purest light;
Letting Sun-force of the soul
Shine with might within my heart
Here my cares lay and my joy in life.*

*Others cares and other joys
Scarcely ever touched my soul;
Recognition of the truth
Seemed to me to give life meaning
And a value that was real.*

It had never occurred to me when I had to write down those verses that they could also be said in such a way that every 'you' would become a 'me', every 'your' a 'my'. What had come to life for me had merely been:

*Your own self you were transforming
To reveal the purest light;
Letting sun force of the soul
Shine with might within your heart—
Here your cares lay and your joy in life.*

*Other cares and other joys
Scarcely ever touched your soul;
Recognition of the truth
Seemed to you to give life meaning
And a value that was real.*

Now those words had been transposed in that way, and they could be transposed without changing the grammatical structure, merely changing 'your own self' to 'my own self', 'Shine with might within your heart' to 'Shine with might within my heart', and so on.

So there you have a strange connection between the words spoken here and the soul that had gone through the gate of death, a connection showing that the words spoken here truly did not merely return as an echo out of that soul but had undergone a meaningful change on their return. Let me merely mention that a certain feeling really and truly went through my soul when those words were shaped, as of necessity, providing the following nuance: It appeared to me to be necessary to give a specific mission to this particular soul as it went through the gate of death. We know how much resistance there is to our spiritual movement in the present materialistic age; how far from ready the world is for our spiritual movement. And if we a clear picture of what man is capable of achieving when in his earthly body we can indeed say that he needs assistance. This feeling found expression in the words:

*Hear the prayer of our souls:
In it speaks our truth and faith:
To fulfil our task here on this earth
We need powers great from lands where spirits dwell,
Strength that comes from friends who have died.*

Asking this soul, as it were, to make further use of the seeds acquired here, using them specifically to further our spiritual movement. That seemed to me to be a feeling that had to arise of necessity especially in the case of this soul.

You will have noted that these three cases of people so close to us have something in common, however much they may differ. What they have in common is that thoughts as to its essential nature were prompted to come up before the soul contemplating these things, a soul specifically stimulated to such contemplation by karma, because a funeral oration had to be given. There was necessity to give expression to its essential nature.

In the case of the first individual I spoke of — you know the spirit in which I am saying these things; only to provide insight, not to show off in any way — the situation was that I had also got to know that individual on the physical plane when she had joined the Society. You get to know a few things that happen when people are within our Society; but our friends will know that it is not my way to make special inquiries into the circumstances and so on of anyone, nor ask about one thing or another these persons have lived through here in their physical life, and so on. So it was not personal satisfaction I gained but rather the satisfaction arising from insight when also characterized this individual according to the nature of her soul the way it had lived through this life on earth. The only thing I had before me was the soul after death. It was not that it spoke the words I read to you first, but I had the soul before me the way it was now after death, in its peculiar nature after death. I really knew practically nothing of what had happened to her before she had joined our Society, nor of her life in so far as it did not have to do with meetings and so on, or the kind of occasions where one meets our members now and then. Yet it was specifically in this case that I found myself Induced, as though of necessity, to speak of certain aspects of her life, aspects relating to her whole life. of the relationship of the individual who had died — and she had reached a great age — to her children and the work she did in her life. And as I said, it was not a matter of personal satisfaction but rather of satisfaction in having gained insight when the family then told me they really were able to recognize the person in question on the basis of what was said there. with every word intensely characteristic of her. The right picture had therefore also been presented of her personal life during her time on earth and the only possibility of this had been in perceiving the fruits of this life now that it had concentrated in the soul. The specific insight we gain from this is that in the case of this particular soul we perceive an intense need after death to direct the eye of the spirit to her own life. It definitely was

through no merit of my own that I was able to characterize the personal life of this individual. What happened was that this individuality, though not conscious at the time, directed her soul essence to her own life, preparing for the conscious life after death that was to come. She directed powers that later were to become conscious to her own life, to what she herself had experienced. The Wings I was made to say could then be seen in thought pictures that arose as her soul was directed towards her own experiences. What I had to describe, therefore, was what this individual was unconsciously thinking of herself after death. And the important thing, the thing to be emphasized, is the fact that after death this individual felt an intense need unconsciously to direct her gaze to her own essential nature.

In the case of the second person, who woke, as it were, when the flames took hold of her body, it later showed itself — in a further spontaneous awakening of this kind — from her attitude to the very characteristic of her essential nature, that she had need to reach back as it were, to go back to this essential nature, to the words that characterized her essential nature. And, indeed, in the language — if you can call language what finds expression in the relationship between souls, whether they are incarnated or else not incarnated and already spiritual entities, already dead — in the way one is able to speak of such intercourse it really had to be said: when at a later point I was able to perceive a further awakening in the case of this individual, I was conscious of a deep joy because I had been able to find those particular words. For it became apparent that there had really been good collaboration with the dead person. It could be concluded that the soul of this person — you know I am speaking in analogies — expressed itself more or less as follows: it is good that it is there 'It is good that it is there in that place.' Such a feeling was revealed on the second awakening, as though the dead woman were showing that something had been enhanced, as it were, in the spiritual world because it has also been put in human words here on the physical earth and that this was something she needed, and it was good that it had become more fixed through the physical words on earth than she herself had been able to fix it. There was a need there for her to fix this. And it was a help to her that it had been reinforced in this way.

In the case of our dear friend Fritz Mitscher you can of course see quite clearly that the night following the cremation he picked up the thread immediately and made use of the words spoken here, to get a clear picture of his own essential nature, to be clear about himself.

In all three cases, therefore, there has been a looking towards one's own essential nature. These, of course, are the things that first of all touch our souls, our hearts, because of their purely human quality, their purely human aspect. But spiritual insights can only be gained from the world that is at hand if they are ready to come to us as a boon. You cannot force it; such insights must be waited for. And it is particularly in this context that we can perceive the strange ways of karma.

The day after the second of the people I have mentioned had died in Zurich I was in Zurich myself. We were walking past a bookshop and in that bookshop I saw a book I had read years before. The way it is with the life I lead, I would not have found it easy to lay hands on that book in what is supposed to be my library, for that is in a peculiar state due to my living in many places. Years ago, as I said, I had read a book by the Viennese philosopher Dr Ernst Mach, [*Note 42 Mach, Ernst (1838 –1916): Analyse der Empfindtuigen und das Verhaltnis des Physischen vim Psychischen Jena 1900, p 3.*] and this bookshop was offering it secondhand. I felt I wanted to read it again, or at least look at it again. When I reached the third page something presented itself to my eyes that I had long since lost sight of, an interesting comment Ernst Mach had made about man acquiring self-knowledge, about the difficulty man had in getting to know himself. I am quoting almost word for word what it says on page 3 in the book written by Ernst Mach, a university professor, on Analyzing One's Feelings:

As a young man I was walking along a street one day and there encountered a person who aroused the feeling in me that he had a most unpleasant, disagreeable face. And it gave me quite a fright to discover that it was my own face I had encountered, my own face meeting me in a mirror.

So he was walking in the streets, and mirrors inclined towards each other reflected his own mirror image to him. And when he saw himself he said: That is someone with an unpleasant, disagreeable face I am coming up against there. Immediately afterwards the author adds another such comment concerning lack of self-knowledge. He says:

One day I returned home tired from a journey and got on a bus. I saw another man getting on from the opposite side and thought to myself: What kind of down-at-heel schoolmaster is that getting on there! And lo and behold, it was I myself. The mirror on the bus had shown me my own reflection.

Professor Mach adds: 'I therefore knew the style and bearing of my profession better than I did my own.'

Here we have something of a pointer to show how difficult it is for man to recognise himself even when it comes to his purely external appearance. We do not even know what we look like in three dimensional space, not even if we are university professors. You can see that from this very candid confession.

It is interesting that such an example can be quoted in the context of the case I have referred to, for I think you'll agree that it shows how here, in the physical body, self-knowledge need not be all that much of an obstacle to whatever we need to achieve on earth. You can be a renowned professor and know as little about yourself as this man has told in his book. I have mentioned this example because it is strange that it presented itself to the mind's eye when the soul was, directed to take fresh note of how someone who has died feels a need to grasp his own essential nature, to perceive it. Here in the physical world it is perfectly possible to manage without self-knowledge, I'd say, with regard to anything concerning the purely material aspects of our lives. It is not, however, possible to gain knowledge of the spiritual worlds without self-knowledge. We shall discuss this in a week's time. For external, material concerns, however, we can manage without self-knowledge. Yet as soon as the soul has gone through the gate of death, self-knowledge will be the first thing it needs. This is particularly evident from the experience I have described. Self-knowledge has to be the starting point.

You see, a materialist tends to stick at the question as to whether consciousness persists after death. Spiritual science has shown that when the soul had gone through the gate of death it does not in fact suffer from lack of consciousness but rather has too much of it. A kind of awakening will come at a later stage, not because it is necessary to acquire a new consciousness after death but because there is dazzling consciousness, too

much consciousness, and this needs to be gradually subdued in the early stages. You will find more about this in the Viennese cycle [[Note 43 Rudolf Steiner: Inneres Wesen des Menschen und Leben zwischen Tod und neuer Geburt \(GA 153\), 1914. English translation of some of the lectures in *The Inner Nature of Man and Life Between Death and a New Birth* \(tr. D.S. Osmond and C. Davy\) \(London\) Anthroposophical Publishing Co., 1959. \] which has also appeared in print. After death, man has too much conscious awareness, an overpowering awareness, and he needs to get his bearings first in this world of over- powering awareness. Gradually he will achieve this and as he does so his awareness will be less in degree than before. Conscious awareness must first be subdued, just as over-powerful sunlight has to be subdued. A gradual subduing of consciousness has to be achieved. So we cannot speak of an 'awakening' in the terms that apply in the physical world, but of recovering from a superabundance of conscious awareness to the point where it becomes bearable, depending on what we have experienced in the physical world. This requires the following: to get our bearings in this flood of light that is our awareness after death, we need knowledge of our own essential nature as a starting point. We have to be able to look back upon our own essential nature to find the guidelines, as it were, for an orientation in the spiritual world. Lack of self-knowledge is what hinders conscious awareness after death. We have to find ourselves in the flood of light. And so you see why a need arises to characterize the person who has died, to assist them to find themselves.](#)

This is something we gain as a kind of general insight from such Personal experiences that concern us closely. After death, when the etheric life-tableau has disappeared. there is a gradual development. It is based on our getting to know our life, our own life here on earth, as it gradually dawns out of the spiritual worlds. Once the tableau has passed this is our only aim after death. Everything that is part of the spiritual world will be around us. What we have to get to know above all else, however, is our own essential nature. The concepts and ideas familiar to us from spiritual science will then help us, providing the means of orientation. As you can see in the first case, the self-criticism which showed itself had been possible only through the spiritual science she had taken in, so that it was possible to look at her own essential nature and the words could come: 'To depths of soul I'll guide devoted contemplation; strong it shall grow for mankind's true and real goals'.

The real intention with all this is to lift our spiritual scientific movement out of mere theory and gradually make it into something that the soul is able to take hold of in a living way, into a stream within which we are truly

alive, active and present. We shall then know what goes on in the spiritual world around us, just as in the physical world We know that around us is the air we breathe, however much the ignorant may, and indeed will, deny this. That is the future destiny of man: to know something of the fact that just as the air is there for and around the physical body, so the spiritual world is present all around and can be experienced by the soul. This spiritual world relates more to the soul, as it were, the way the air does to the body: it shapes and fashions the soul, filling it with its essence.

We are also able to give certain details of the fate of the soul after death in individual cases. The reason why such things are discussed in more intimate detail at the present time is that in the momentous, but also painful, events of our time, death is letting its breath pass through the world and our age is demanding countless deaths in sacrifice. We are specially challenged therefore to concern ourselves with the occurrence of death in the present age.

We know, dear friends, that when the human being goes through the gate of death he has handed over his physical body to the earth, to the elements of the earth; the ego and astral body have then departed from the physical body. Now, in the second case today we saw that the ether body had already been cast off when cremation took place; the ether body goes away within a few days. There is one particular question that really comes to the fore in the present time. So many people are going through the gate of death in the very flower of their youth these days. Transferring a purely physical concept to the spiritual sphere — where it has even greater validity than in physical life — we may ask the question: 'What happens with the ether bodies of these people who have gone through the gate of death; the ether bodies that separate off after a number of days? What happens with such a youthful ether body?' Such a person who goes through the gate of death in his twentieth, twenty-fifth, thirtieth, thirty-fifth Year' or even earlier, puts his ether body aside. This, however, is an ether body that could still have done work here in physical life, would have had energies still for many years. It was karma that this ether body could not use its energies, yet those energies are still within it. They could have continued to be effective here in physical life for many years to come. Physicists are right in saying that energies are never lost; here on earth they are transformed. This applies even more so in the spiritual world. These energies relating to someone fallen in battle when still young, energies that could still have supported physical life for many years, do not convert to anything else. They are just there. And we are already able to say, particularly in view of the events of our time, that these energies

become part of the essential being of the folk soul of the people concerned. This receives those energies so that they are then active everywhere within the folk soul. Those are true spiritual energies, energies from the human being which are present in addition to his ego and his astral body, his individual personality which he carries through the period between death and rebirth. For the future it will be important to understand as far as possible that these energies are also present in the folk soul, that they are present within it in the general activity this folk soul is going to unfold; present as energies, not entities. There they will be the most fruitful, I should say the most sun-like. radiant energies.

There is another instance I would like to refer to. one that is very close to our hearts. It has no direct bearing on present events, but the way it happened and what has become of it can all the same cast some light for us on all the cases where an unspent ether body is put aside when death has occurred at an early age. In the autumn we experienced the death of a member's child, a child seven years of age. [Note 44 The child in question was Theo Faiss. See Rudolf Steiner: *Unsere Toten* (GA 261), address given in Dornach on 10 October 1914.] The death of this child occurred in a strange way. He was a good boy, mentally very much alive already within the limits set for a seven-year-old; a good, well-behaved and mentally very active child. He came to die because he happened to be on the very spot where a furniture van overturned, crushing the boy so that he died of suffocation. This was a spot where probably no van went past before nor will go past again, but one did pass just that moment. It is also Possible to show in an outer way that all kinds of circumstances caused the child to be in that place at the time the van overturned, circumstances considered chance if the materialistic view is taken. He was getting some food supplies for his mother and left a bit later that particular evening, having been held up. If he had gone five minutes earlier he would have been well past the place where the van overturned. He had also left by another door than usual; just on this one occasion by another door! Leaving by the other door he would have passed to the right of the van. The van overturned to the left. Studying the case in the light of spiritual science and of karma it will be seen to demonstrate very clearly that external logic, quite properly used in external life, proves flimsy in this case and does not apply.

One example I have quoted a number of times is that of a person who was walking by a river and fell into the water at a point where a stone was lying. Superficially it may indeed appear that the man stumbled over the stone, fell into the water and thus came to his death. The obvious conclusion will be that he drowned. A post mortem examination would

however have shown that he suffered a stroke and therefore died and fell into the water. Thus he fell into the water because he was dead and did not die because he fell into the water. Cause and effect have been confused. Things that seem perfectly logical in external life may be completely wrong.

Superficially, the death of young Theodor Faiss could also be described as a most unfortunate accident. In reality, however, the karma of this child was such that the ego, to put it bluntly, had ordered the van and the van overturned to fulfil the child's karma. So there we have a particularly young ether body. The child could have grown up and reached the age of seventy. The energies in the ether body would have been enough for seventy years but they went through the gate of death after seven years. The whole event took place in Dornach as you know. The father had been drafted into the German army and was not there at the time: he died quite soon after, having been wounded at the front. The whole thing happened in the immediate neighbourhood of the building and from that time the aura of the building at Dornach contains the energies from the ether body of this child. A person working for this building and able to perceive the spiritual energies involved in the project will find within them the energies of this child. Quite apart, therefore, from the ego and astral body which have entered the spiritual world, to be active there between death and rebirth, the unspent ether body has now united with the whole of the spiritual aura of the building at Dornach. Deep and significant feelings attach to such insights for they do not represent knowledge of the dry numerical kind we take into our minds, but insights received into the soul with deep gratitude. Mindful of this, I shall never even for a moment fail to remember, in anything I have to do for that building at Dornach, that these energies are contributing to the project, helping me in the project. Here theoretical insight merges into life itself.

Being aware of this, dear friends, you will understand that it is possible to get some idea now, at a time when countless ether bodies pass through the gate of death without having achieved fulfillment on earth, as to what will happen when the sun of peace returns again, after the twilight of war. Then the energies, the ether forces of those who have passed through the gate of death, the gate of suffering, will want to unite with the souls that are active here on earth, unite with them for the good of the earth and for progress on earth. This means, however, that there will have to be people on earth who appreciate these things, who will be aware of the fact that the people who have made their sacrifice to the age are up there in the spiritual world in their residual ether bodies. They want to join in the work

of this world. Their work will only be wholly fruitful if there are receptive souls here that are Prepare{ to unite their thoughts with what comes to them from the spiritual world. These are momentous times, but also difficult and painful times. For their fruits it is immensely important that thoughts are created out of a science that acknowledges the spirit, thoughts that are then able to unite with the thoughts coming down from the ether bodies of those who have died in sacrifice. Thus we have an indication that even in the midst of these difficult times, under the sign of suffering also and of death, we are under the sign of greatness, that the difficult things which are happening also remind us that they are intended to give rise to an age that is more open to the spirit than the past age has been. What must not happen is that those who have made the sacrifice will have to look down on an earth world for which they have given themselves, to contribute to its progress and salvation, and find themselves unable to take action because there are no souls sending receptive thoughts out towards them. We therefore must see spiritual science as something that is alive, a living element that will be needed in the time that is to come. particularly with regard to the events of the present day. It is this which I have been summing up again and again in the words I shall now speak, in the spirit of and in accord with what we have been considering:

*Out of courage shown in battle,
Out of the blood shed in war,
Out of the grief of those who are left,
Out of the people's deeds of sacrifice
Spirit fruits will come to grow
If souls with knowledge of the spirit
Turn their mind to spirit realms.*



8

Three Decisions on the Path Imaginative Perception

2 March 1915, Berlin

Dear friends, once again let us first of all remember those are out there at the front, in the great arena of present-day events:

*Spirits of your souls, guardian guides,
On your wings let there be borne
The prayer of love from our souls
To those whom you guard here on earth.
Thus, united with your might,
A ray of help our prayer shall be
For the souls it seeks out there in love.*

And for those who because of those events have already gone through the gate of death:

*Spirits of your souls, guardian guides,
On your wings let there be borne
The prayer of love from our souls
To those whom you guard here on earth.
Thus, united with your might,
A ray of help our prayer shall be
For the souls it seeks out there in love.*

May the spirit we are seeking as we work towards spiritual knowledge, the spirit who has gone through the Mystery of Golgotha for the good of the earth, for the freedom and progress of man, be with you and the hard duties you have to perform!

Last week we gave some detailed consideration to souls who, if we want to look for them now, have to be looked for in the spiritual worlds. And we considered souls who are close to us, letting them tell us one thing or another that can illumine for us the time a soul entity spends in the spiritual world. Today I want to consider more the path the human soul may take to enter into the spiritual worlds While dwelling in a body here on earth, there to find the spiritual realms we spoke of last week, where what are called 'dead' souls may be found. It has to be stressed over and over again that the path into the spiritual worlds appropriate to the soul of modern man in the light of the whole evolution of mankind is a path with many preparatory stages, some of them difficult indeed, stages that have to be won through. Today I intend to speak of some aspects of the path to insight and I shall do so from a point of view that may be called imaginative perception.

Dear friends, you know very well already that in the spiritual world the human soul is really and truly able to learn and observe only in a Way that does not make use of the body as an instrument. Everything We are able to gain by using the body as our instrument can only provide knowledge and experience relating to the physical world. To experience the spiritual worlds we must find a way of doing so outside the physical body. That way is indeed open to modern man, though it is not easy to achieve observation of the spiritual world by going outside the body. Another point is that anyone not able to make such observations himself will be able to evaluate observations achieved in the spiritual world, once they have been achieved, on the basis of a genuinely sound common sense, that is not just the common sense generally called sound, but a genuinely sound common sense. Today, however, our subject will be the path as such, the way the human soul on the one hand comes out of the physical body, as we might put it, and on the other enters into the spiritual world. As I said, I want to use the approach of imaginative perception today. Last week we took another approach. Many things will have to be presented in the form of images and it will be up to you to pursue these further In meditation. In doing so you will find that this path is one of very special significance.

It is possible to enter into the spiritual world through three doors, as it were. The first may be called the Door of Death, the second the Door of the Elements and the third the Door of the Sun. Anyone Wishing to follow the path to knowledge in its entirety will have to take the road to knowledge through all three doors.

The Door of Death has always been very fully considered wherever the mysteries were taught. This Door of Death cannot be reached unless we seek to reach it through meditation, a term by now thoroughly familiar, which means by giving ourselves up to certain thoughts or feelings that are exactly the right ones at the time for our individual personality. We make them the absolute centre of our conscious minds, identifying with them completely. It is very easy for human effort to flag when this path is taken, for lack of ease and the overcoming of obstacles are part of this and are essential. So it will be necessary again and again to make those quiet, deeply personal efforts, endeavouring to give ourselves up to those thought contents, those feelings, in such a way that we forget the whole world and live only in those thoughts, those feelings. When we learn to achieve this over and over again we shall finally be in a position where we perceive something that is like a kind of independent life within the thought on which our conscious mind is focused. We shall get the feeling that until then we had merely been thinking that thought, making it the focus of our conscious mind; now, however, this thought will be felt to be developing a life of its own, an inner activity of its own. It is as though we found ourselves in a position where we are truly able to produce a distinct entity within us. The thought begins to take shape as an inner structure. That is an important moment, for we realize that this thought, this feeling, has a life of its own and we feel ourselves to be the enveloping form holding this thought, this feeling. We are then able to say to ourselves that our efforts have made us the arena where something has been able to develop that is now achieving a life of its own through us.

It is an important moment in the life of a person practising meditation when he awakens to himself and the thought held in meditation comes to life. He will then realize that spiritual objectivity has come to him, that the spiritual world is paying attention to him, that it has drawn close. Of course, it is not easy to reach this level of experience, for before it is reached we have to live through feelings and sensations for which the human being has a natural aversion. A certain feeling of isolation has to be experienced for example; a feeling of loneliness, an experience of being abandoned by the physical world as it were, the feeling that this physical world does many things that wear us down, threatening to crush us. It is through this feeling of isolation that we finally reach the point where we are able to bear the strong inner life to which our thought awakens, into which it is born, as I should like to put it. There is much indeed that goes against the grain. There is much in man that goes against him and this can lead to a real experience of thought coming to life within him. There is One particular feeling that comes up, an inner experience that comes up, which

is one we really do not want to have. At the same time we will not admit to ourselves that we do not want to have it, saying instead: 'Oh, I'll never do it! I'll go to sleep in the process. My ability to think will go, for this goes beyond my inner strength.' In short, We will automatically come up with all kinds of excuses, for the experience to be gone through is that thought, in thus becoming enlivened, really becomes a distinct entity. It assumes reality, taking on a form of identity. Then the vision arises, and not merely the feeling, that the thought is like a small seed to begin with, a round seed one might say, and that it then grows and develops into something that has definite form, extending into the head from outside. Then a challenge is presented: 'You have identified with the thought and now you are inside the thought and growing into your own head with the thought. Essentially, however, you are still outside.' The thought assumes the form of a winged human head that continues into indefiniteness and then extends into one's own body through the head. The thought thus develops into something like a winged angel's head. That is what we must actually achieve. It is difficult to have this experience, and you will really believe you are losing all ability to think at the moment when the thought grows to assume that form. One feels one will be taken from oneself at that moment. And what so far has been the body we have known, into which the thought is now reaching, will feel like an automaton that has been left behind.

There are also a great many obstacles in the objective spiritual world to prevent this becoming visible to us. The winged angel's head truly becomes an inner vision but there are all kinds of obstacles against it becoming visible. Above all, the point reached is the actual threshold of the spiritual world. If we succeed in standing firm within ourselves the way I have described, we are then on the threshold of the spiritual world, truly on the threshold of the spiritual world. There, however,

stands the potentate we have always been calling Ahriman, though at first he will be quite invisible to man. We do not see him. And it is Ahriman who makes sure we do not see the thought entity taking the form I have described to you. He does not want us to see it. He wants to prevent that. The best way of reaching that point is by the path of meditation, of course, and this always makes it easy for Ahriman to bring to nought, as it were, what we want to achieve, so long as we cling to the prejudices of the physical world. And I really has to be said that people have no idea how much they cling to prejudice with regard to the physical world. They cannot imagine that there is another world with different laws from those of the

physical world. It is not possible for me today to discuss all the prejudices we carry with us when we come to the threshold of the spiritual world, but let me present one very major prejudice, one of a fairly subtle nature.

You see, speaking of the physical world people speak of monist philosophy, of there being only one ultimate substance or principle, frequently saying to themselves: 'I can only understand the world if I see the whole of it as a unity.' We have had some strange experiences particularly in this respect. When we started our spiritual movement here in Berlin with just a few members — that is quite a few years ago now — people found their way to us who then discovered that after all they could not feel they belonged to us in every fibre of their being. There was a lady, for instance, who after a few months came and told us that what spiritual science had to offer was not really the right thing for her, for it meant one had to do a great deal of thinking and thinking wiped out exactly the things that were important to her. She said she always sort of went to sleep when thinking. She also felt that really there was only thing that counted, and that was unity! It became evident that in her case the unity of the world which monists look for in all kinds of spheres — and not only the materialists among monists — had become a fixed idea: Unity, unity, unity! She wanted to look only for unity. In the intellectual life of Germany, one particular philosopher, Leibniz, was very much a monadologist. He sought not unity, but the many monads [*Note 45 According to Leibniz, monads are the ultimate substantial constituents of the world and these must be unextended and therefore mental or spiritual by nature. God and human souls are considered monads in this philosophy. (Translator).*] which for him were ensouled entities. He therefore knew quite clearly that as soon as one enters into the spiritual world it can be a matter only of plurality, not of unity. And so there are monists and pluralists. These views are considered philosophies. The monists fight the pluralists who are speaking in terms of plurality; they themselves only speak of unity.

For you see, it is like this: Unity and plurality are concepts that only apply to the physical world. And now people are thinking these things must also apply to the spiritual world. But there they do not apply. There we have to be prepared to see a unity at one moment and then having to overcome this unity the next moment, and that it will show itself to to be a plurality. It is unity and plurality at one and the same time. Nor is it possible to transfer ordinary arithmetic, physical mathematics, to the spiritual world. It is one of the most powerful, and at the same time also most profound, Ahrimanic Prejudices — wanting to apply concepts we have acquired in the physical world just as they are to the spiritual world. We really must arrive

on its threshold without bag and baggage, unencumbered with all we have learned in the physical world. We have to be prepared to leave things behind on the threshold. All concepts and ideas, and, indeed, especially the concepts we have made great effort to achieve, have to be left behind. We have to be prepared to accept that in the spiritual world something quite new is given. Man has an enormous tendency to cling to what is given in the physical world. He wants to take his achievements from the physical world into the spiritual world. Yet it must be possible for him to face a clean slate, face utter emptiness, where his only guide will be the thought that is beginning to assume life. This entry into the spiritual world has been called the Door of Death because it is really much more of a death even than Physical death. In physical death people are convinced they put aside their physical body. On entry into the spiritual world we must resolve really to put aside our concepts and ideas and to allow our essential nature to be rebuilt.

Now we come to stand before the winged thought entity that I have spoken of. We shall come to stand before it if we really make every effort to live within a thought. All we need to know then is that when the moment that lies ahead makes-different demands on us from those we have envisaged we must truly stand fast, we must not turn back as it were. The turning back tends to be an unconscious reaction. We flag, but our flagging merely indicates that we are not willing to leave behind bag and baggage. We are not prepared to do this because it means that the soul has to die in a way, with all it has acquired on the physical plane, before it can enter into the spiritual world. This door therefore has to be called the Door of Death, such being its nature. Then we shall be able to use the winged thought as a spiritual eye we have acquired, or also a spiritual ear, for it is exactly through this thought entity that we hear, sense, perceive what is there in the spiritual world.

Dear friends, it is possible to speak of specific experiences we may gain that allow us to enter into the spiritual world. Nothing else is required if we wish to gain these experiences but to persist in meditation using the prescribed method. Above all, it must be clearly understood that certain feelings with which we approach the threshold of the spiritual world will have to be put aside beforehand. These feelings arise because we usually want the spiritual world to be different from the way it presents itself to us.

This, then, is the first door, the Door of Death.

The second door is the Door of the Elements. It is the second door to be gone through by all who practise meditation with true devotion. It is, of course, also possible for people to have the benefit of a constitution that lets them reach the second door without having gone through the first. This is not a good thing from the point of view of true insight, but it is possible to get to that point without having gone through the first door. Full and proper insight will be gained only by going through the first door and then approaching the second in conscious awareness. This second door comes about in the following way. You see, having gone through the Door of Death one first of all finds oneself in specific conditions which one can see are really similar to sleep if looked at externally, considering their effect on man and the way they are apparent in the life of man. Inwardly, however, they are quite different. Externally, man is as though in a sleep state when in these conditions. It is exactly at the point when his thought has begun to live, when it begins to stir, to grow, that external man is in a sleep-like state. He need not be lying down — he may be sitting on a chair — but he is in a kind of sleep state. Outwardly this state cannot really be distinguished from the ordinary sleep state; inwardly, however, it is very different. Returning to the normal state we have in life we then realize that we were not asleep but within the life of thought, just as we are now in a condition where we have woken to the physical world, as usual, and are looking through our own eyes at things which are luminous. Yet we also know that now when we are awake we are thinking, producing thoughts, putting them together. Just before, however, when we were in that other state, the thoughts were producing themselves out of themselves. One thought approached another; they illumined one another; one thought moved away from another—and what we usually do ourselves when thinking has there been doing itself. We know that whilst we are normally an ego that attaches one thought to another, we float first to the one thought and then to another, when in this other state we are united with them; then we are off and within a third thought and afterwards come floating back again. We get the feeling that space has ceased to exist.

I think you will agree that in physical space the position is that if we feel drawn to a point and look back on it, then move away from it and finally want to approach it again, we would first have to make our way back again; we would have to make our way there and back. This does not apply in the other state. Space is not like the space we know then, and we jump through space, as it were. One moment we are at one point, the next we have gone. We do not pass through space. The laws of space have ceased to exist. Here we are alive and active within thought itself. We know that the ego has not died. It is active within the life of thought, but we are

not immediately masters of the thoughts within which we now live. The thoughts produce themselves — we are drawn along. We are not actively swimming in the currents of thoughts; instead the thoughts are taking us on their shoulders as it were, carrying us along. This state has to come to an end. It does so when we go through the Door of the Elements. Then We gain control of it all and are able to create a particular line of thought quite deliberately. Then our will is alive within the whole of thought life. This again is a tremendously important moment. I have even spoken of it exoterically in my public lectures. [Note 46 Rudolf Steiner, *Geist-Erkenntnis in gliicklichen und ernstestunden des Lebens*. Berlin, 15 January 1915. In *Aus schicksaltragender Zeit* (GA 64). In English, extract in *Anthroposophical News Sheet* 14:37-8.] The second goal is reached by identifying with our own destiny. This will enable us to bring the will into the world of living thought.

When we have first gone through the Door of Death we come to a point where various things are done with us in the spiritual world. We come to do things ourselves in the spiritual world by identifying with our destiny. This is only achieved gradually. Then our thoughts assume a character identical with our own essential character- The deeds of our essential nature enter into the spiritual world. To do this properly it will be necessary to go through the second door. when we begin to use the power we derive from identifying with our destiny to take active control in our thoughts — not merely going along With a thought as though it were a dream picture but able to erase one thought or another as occasion arises and call up another — when we come to a point where we begin to be able to use our will in handling things, then we shall indeed have to go through an experience that may be referred to as going through the second door. It will be found that the will-power we shall now require presents itself to us as a fearsome beast. In the mystical tradition this has for many thousands of years been known as 'meeting the lion' . This encounter with the lion has to be gone through. It consists in a feeling of abject terror concerning what has to be done in the thought world, great fear of entering into a living union with the thought world. This terror must be overcome, just as the sense of isolation has to be overcome at the gate of death. We feel terror. This terror may present itself in all kinds of ways, as a sensation that is not at all like fear or terror, yet it is essentially fear of what one is getting into there. It is important that we genuinely find a way of controlling the lion. The Imagination paints a very vivid picture of the beast opening its huge jaws ready to devour us. The will-power we want to use in the spiritual world is threatening to devour us. All the time the overriding sensation is that we must use our will, we must do something, we need to take hold of one thing or another, and at the same time another feeling

arises in connection with all these elements of will activity into which we are entering. It is the feeling that they will devour us if we take hold of them, extinguish us in the world. That is the lion devouring us. What we literally must do—if we are to stay with the metaphor — is not to give in to fears that the will elements may take hold of us there in the spiritual world, devour us and strangle us; no, we must mount the lion and take hold of those will elements, using them to effect our deeds. That is the crux of the matter.

Your can see, of course, what this is all about. Having first of all gone through the gate of death we are then outside the body, and out there we can only use the forces of the will. We must fit into the cosmic harmonies. The forces to be used out there are also within us, it is only that they function at an unconscious level — the forces that make the blood move, make our hearts beat, derive from spiritual entities. And we become immersed in these when we immerse ourselves in the element of will. These forces are within us. If someone is taken hold of by the element of will without having followed the regular esoteric path, without having gone through the gate of death, he is taken hold of by the forces that normally circulate in his blood, beat to his heart. He is then not using the forces that exist outside his body but the forces present within his body. This would be 'grey magic'. It would induce a person to intervene in the spiritual world of his Own accord with forces we should not use to intervene in the spiritual world. So it is important that we see the lion at this point, that we truly have this beast before us and know: That is what it looks like, that is how the forces of will want to take hold of us, and we must lay hold of it out there outside the body. If we do not go up to the second door we shall not see the lion and shall then be in permanent danger of wanting to rule the world out of human egotism. The right Path to knowledge is the one that leads first of all out of the physical body and existence as a human being, after which we approach the relationship we will need to form with the entities of the spiritual world.

Now, of course, most people are inclined to look for an easier way to the spiritual world than through genuine meditation. It is possible, for instance, to avoid the Door of Death and approach the second door if one's inner constitution permits this. This is achieved by giving oneself up to specific mental pictures, particularly of the fervent type, that are supposed to suggest general surrender to the whole universe. Mental pictures suggested by some mystic or other with only partial knowledge, suggested in good faith. But they mean we pass over thought effort as though in a dream, with feelings being stimulated directly. Feeling are whipped up, the

emotions are enthusiastified. It will indeed be possible to reach the second door by this method, and one will also be given over to the will forces, but instead of controlling the lion the person is devoured by it and the lion will do as it likes with him. This means that things will occur that fundamentally speaking are occult, but in the main are egotistical. Despite a certain inherent risk it is therefore necessary from the point of view of the true esoteric teaching of today again and again not to draw attention to any kind of mysticism that merely whips up feelings and emotions. Such an appeal to elements that whip up the inner life of man, cracking the whip to drive him out of his physical body whilst keeping him in the context of his blood and heart forces, the physical forces active in the blood and the heart, will lead him to perceive the spiritual world in a way; this cannot be denied and may indeed have much to be said for it that is good. But it makes man feel his way about in uncertainty in the spiritual world, so that he is not the least able to differentiate between egotism and altruism.

One finds oneself in a difficult situation having to stress this, for present-day minds are still very apt to go to sleep during proper meditation and anything relating to it. They prefer not to tighten up their thinking to the point where it is possible to identify oneself with the thinking process. They much prefer to be told: Give yourself up to all-loving devotion, to the universal spirit, or something like that. The result is that thinking is avoided and the emotions are whipped up. People are indeed guided to spiritual perception in that way; but they are not in full conscious awareness and are unable to tell if the things they experience there, things they experience for themselves, arise from egotism or do not arise from egotism. Yes, parallel to selfless meditation there has to be enthusiasm brought into all our feelings, but the point is that this must run parallel to thought. Thought must not be excluded. Certain mystics are, however, seeking to achieve something exactly by the method of suppressing thought and giving themselves up entirely to the glow of whipped-up emotions.

This is a difficult point, for it does work and people who whip up their feelings like that do progress much faster. They do enter the spiritual world and they have all kinds of experiences there, and that is what most people want. For most people it is not a question of entering the spiritual world in the right way but rather of getting there altogether. The uncertainty arises because if we do not first go through the Door of Death and instead approach the Door of the Elements directly, Lucifer will prevent us from actually perceiving the lion. We are then devoured by it before we see it, as it were. The problem is that we are no longer able to tell what relates to us

and what is Part of the world out there. We come to know spiritual entities, elemental spirits. It is possible to get to know quite an extensive spiritual world without going through the Door of Death, but on the whole these are spiritual entities whose function it is to maintain the human circulation and human heart action. Such entities are of course always present in the spiritual, the elemental, world around us. These are spirits whose sphere of life is the air, the warmth flowing around us, and also light.

Their sphere of life also lies in the music of the spheres our physical organs are unable to hear. They are spiritual entities active and present in all that lives. That is the world we would then enter. It all gets very seductive because it really is possible to make the most marvellous spiritual discoveries in this world. You know, when someone who has not gone through the Door of Death but has marched straight up to the lion gate, failing to see the lion, perceives an elemental spirit whose function it is to maintain heart activity, such an elemental spirit—which also has to maintain the hearts of other people—may on occasion give news of other people, even of people from the past; or it may offer prophetic tidings relating to the future. So the business may bring great successes but it still is not the right path, for it does not give us free mobility in the spiritual world.

The third door to be passed is the Door of Sun. Again there will be a specific experience as we approach this door. At the Door of Death we must perceive a winged angel's head, at the Door of the Elements a lion. At the Door of the Sun we must perceive a dragon, a wild dragon. And we must take a proper look at this wild dragon. But now Lucifer and Ahriman will together make every effort to make the dragon invisible, to hide it from our spiritual vision. If we do perceive it we shall find that, fundamentally speaking, this wild dragon has above all to do with ourselves. It is the tissue of the instincts and feelings fundamentally relating to what in ordinary life we call our lowest nature. The dragon has within it all the forces we need for the process of digestion and many other things — if you'll forgive my reference to such base functions. The principle within us that enables us to digest food and perform a number of other functions linked to what strictly speaking is our lowest nature appears to us in the form of a dragon. We must look at it as it emerges from us coil upon coil. It is far from beautiful, that dragon, and this makes it easy for Lucifer and Ahriman to influence our unconscious soul life and get us to a point where unconsciously we do not want to know about seeing the dragon. It is a tissue also of all our idiocies, all our vanities, our pride and self-seeking and also of our basest instincts.

The Door of the Sun is given that name because it is the forces dwelling in the sun that also weave the very tissue of which the dragon is composed. Sun forces make it possible for us to digest our food and perform those other organic functions. This truly comes about through living with the sun. If we do not perceive the dragon at the Door of the Sun the dragon will devour us and we shall become one with it in the spiritual world. We shall then no longer be different from the dragon; we shall actually be the dragon going through experiences in the spiritual world. And the dragon can experience things of great significance, it can learn magnificent things as it were. Those are experiences more enticing, I'd say, than those made at the Door of Death or after passing the Door of Death. The experiences made at the Door of Death are colourless to begin with, shadowy and subtle, so slight and subtle that they easily escape us and we are not much inclined to develop the degree of attention needed to take hold of them. And again a certain pitch must be reached in order that something so delicately coming to life in our thought may be able to expand. In the end it will expand into a world. But it calls for long term active effort and endeavour to reach the point where it shows itself as a reality full of colour, sound and life. We must let those forms that are without sound or colour take on life from all corners of infinity, as it were.

If for example we want to use what may be called 'head clairvoyance' — meaning the type of clairvoyance that arises when thought is enlivened — to detect the simplest spirit of the air or of water, this spirit of the air or the water will initially be something so slight and shadowy as it flits across the horizon that it will not catch our interest. If it is to assume colour or to sound forth, colour has to come to it from the whole periphery of the cosmos. That however will only happen after a long period of inner effort. It will only happen if we wait for this to be given to us. Just think, if you have such a small spirit of the air, metaphorically speaking, and it is to come out in colour, to appear in colour, then the colour has to radiate in from a mighty part of the cosmos. It will be necessary to have the strength to make it radiate in. Such strength however can only be achieved through devotion. The radiant forces have to come in from out there through devotion. If we are all of a kind with the dragon, if we are One with it, and we see a spirit of the air or the water, the inclination will be to let the powers radiate out that are within us, specifically in the organs which in ordinary life are called lower organs. That is much more easily done. The head is in itself a perfect organ, but the astral body and the ether body of the head do not have much colour to them. The colours have been used to form the brain, for instance, and particularly the cranium, the bony skull cap. If therefore you used head clairvoyance on the threshold of the

spiritual world to lift your astral body and ether body out of the physical body, there would not be much colour to it. Colours are used to form the perfect organ, the brain. If on the other hand you use, shall we say belly clairvoyance, to lift the astral body and ether body out of the stomach. the liver, the gallbladder and other organs, the colours have not been used in the same way to form perfect organs. These organs are only on the way to perfection. What comes from the astral body and ether body of the belly is beautifully coloured; it glitters and glistens in all kinds of sun colours. Lifting your astral body and ether body out of that region you will bestow the most marvellous colours and hues upon the forms you are seeing. It is therefore possible for someone to see marvellous colours and paint pictures in gorgeous colours.

It is of course interesting to study the spleen, the liver and the gut. Anatomists find this interesting and for science it is indeed necessary. Yet if someone with knowledge goes into this, the beautiful and colourful pictures which appear represent what lies at the back of the digestive process two hours after a meal. There can be no objection to this being investigated. Today anatomists find it necessary to study these organs; one day science will gain a great deal from investigating them and knowing what the ether body is doing when the stomach is digesting food. One thing has to be clearly understood however — if we do not have conscious awareness as we go through the Door of the Sun, we will not know that we are offloading everything mere is in the ether and astral bodies of our bellies onto the dragon, separating it out. Letting this radiate out into the forms seen clairvoyantly we do indeed perceive a marvellous world. The beautiful result is also the one most easily achieved, but it does not in the first place arise through higher powers, out of head clairvoyance' but through belly clairvoyance. It is very important that we know this. For the cosmos nothing is low in the absolute sense, only relatively speaking. The cosmos needs to work with tremendously significant forces to bring about what is needed for the digestive system. The point, however, is that we must not fall into error, not deceive ourselves, but know things as they are. To know that something presenting itself from a truly marvellous aspect is nothing but the digestive process, that is something really important. If on the other hand we believe, say, that a special angelic sphere is revealing itself to us in such a picture, then we are indeed in error. A reasonable man will therefore not be against a science being nurtured on the basis of such knowledge but merely against such things being put in a false light. That is the real point. It may happen, for instance, that some process in the course of digestion results in someone always lifting out a specific part of

his ether body at a specific stage in the digestive process; he may then be a natural clairvoyant. It is however important to know what is going on there.

Man will find it difficult therefore to use head clairvoyance — i.e. a sphere where all colour present in the ether and astral bodies has been used to bring about the marvellous structure of the brain — and make forms that are without colour or sound assume full colour and to resound. With 'belly clairvoyance' on the other hand he will find it relatively easy to see the most marvellous things in the world. This belly clairvoyance does of course also involve powers which man must learn to use. The powers used there for the digestive process are after all merely transformed power. We will experience them in their right form if we get better and better at identifying with our destiny. In this field, too, it will teach us to draw up not just the winged angel's head that came up first but the other part that follows, and it is important to draw up not just the powers that serve digestion but also those of a higher kind. Those are the powers that lie in our karma, in our destiny. Identifying ourselves with these we shall be able to send forth the spiritual entities we see around us, entities whose tendency is such that sounds and colours flow inward from the universe. Then, of course, the spiritual world will have its full content, it will be concrete, so real and concrete that we find ourselves within it the same way we find ourselves in the physical world.

A particular problem arises at the Door of Death. We really have the feeling — and this, too, has to be overcome — that we will lose ourselves there. Having made a real effort, however, to identify with the thought element we can also be aware that we may have lost ourselves but will find ourselves again. That is an experience one has there. We lose ourselves on entering into the spiritual world, but we also know that we shall find ourselves again. The step has to be taken of reaching the abyss, losing ourselves in the abyss, but trust that we shall find ourselves again over there. That is an experience to be gone through. Everything I have described refers to inner experiences that have to be gone through. It is important to know what really happens to the soul there. It is just the same when we are supposed to see something; it is easier if a friend points it out than if we try and work it out for ourselves. But everything I have described can be achieved if you practise true devotion in giving yourself up again and again to your inner work and to inner overcoming through meditation. This has been described in my book *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds* and in the second part of *Occult Science*.

This is especially important — that such different kinds of experience are met with beyond the threshold of the spiritual world. If we desire — and this is only natural — to see a continuation of the physical world in the spiritual world, a duplicate of it; if we think everything is bound to look the same in the spiritual world as it does here in the physical world, we cannot enter that world. It will indeed be necessary to go through something that feels like a reversal of everything we have known here in the physical world. Here in the Physical world we are used to open our eyes, for example, and see light, to gain the impression of light. If we expect to be able to open a spiritual eye in the spiritual world and gain an impression of light, we cannot enter that world for we will have the wrong expectations. Something like a mist will be woven which veils the spiritual senses, hiding the spiritual world from us the way a sea of mist hides the mountains from view. It is not possible, for instance, to see objects illumined by light in the spiritual world. It must be understood that in the spiritual world we ourselves shine forth with the light. When light falls on an object in the physical world the object becomes visible to us. In the spiritual world we ourselves are inside the ray of light, touching the object with the light. One therefore knows one is swimming with the ray of light in the spiritual world; one knows oneself to be within the radiant light. This serves to indicate how we can acquire ideas that can help us get on in the spiritual world. It is extremely useful, for instance, to visualize the following: What would it be like if you were inside the sun now? Not being inside the sun you are seeing objects when they are illumined by the sun's rays, because they reflect the light. Imagine now you are inside the sun's rays and touching the objects with them. This contact is an experience we have in the spiritual world; in fact, experience in the spiritual world consists of our knowing ourselves to be alive within it. We know ourselves to be alive within the weaving of thoughts. It is just when this state begins, where we consciously know ourselves to be within the weaving of the thoughts, that there is an immediate transition to the state of knowing oneself to be within the bright radiance of light. For thought arises from light. Thought weaves in the light. But it will only be at that point that we experience ourselves as becoming immersed in light when we are within the weaving of thoughts.

Mankind is now at a stage where such concepts have to be acquired. Otherwise men will find themselves in completely unfamiliar worlds when they go through the gate of death and enter the spiritual world. The capital resources men were given by the gods at the very beginning of earth evolution have gradually been used up. Men now no longer take with them through the gate of death the remnants of past inheritance. They now

need to acquire ideas bit by bit here in the physical world that will enable them to pass through the gate of death and see the entities that come to meet them there offering the dangers of temptation and seduction. It is because of these great cosmic schemes that spiritual science has to be made known to man now, that spiritual science must come among men. And today in particular, in these fateful days, we can observe transitions really being made. People are presently going through the gate of death at a young age, as the great destiny of the age demands. They may be said to have consciously allowed death to approach them whilst still young. I am not so much speaking of the moment just before death occurs, say on the battlefield. In that situation many elements of enthusiasm and so on may be present and these make the moment of death far less elevated or far less a moment of utter concentration than we are inclined to think. But when death has occurred it leaves an ether body that has not yet been used up, leaves an unspent ether body in our time. The dead individual can look at this and he will perceive this Phenomenon, this fact of death, with much greater clarity than he would see it when death has ensued due to illness or old age.

Death on the field of battle is an event of much greater intensity and has much powerful effects than death occurring in another way. It therefore has an effect on the soul that has gone through the gate of death, for it is instructive. Death is terrible — or at least can be terrible — to man whilst he is within his body! However, once he has gone through the gate of death and looks back to his death, death will be the most wonderful experience ever possible in the human cosmos. Looking back to his entry into the spiritual world through death is the most marvellous, the most glorious, magnificent and beautiful event on which the dead individual can ever look back during the time between death and rebirth. Birth has left little real trace in our physical awareness, for no one equipped with ordinary, undeveloped faculties will recall his physical birth. But death is certainly always there for a soul which has gone through the gate of death, from the moment consciousness develops. Death will always be present and present as the most beautiful, the one who brings resurrection into the spiritual world. [[Note 47 In the second of the available records \(very detailed notes\)](#), this passage reads:

] And death is the most marvellous kind of teacher, a teacher truly able to prove to a receptive soul that there is a spiritual world, because by its very own nature death destroys the physical and only lets the spiritual come forth. This resurrection of the spiritual element, with the physical completely cast aside, is an event that is always present between death and new birth. It lends strength, a marvellous, great event, and the soul

gradually grows into understanding of this. It grows into this in a completely unique way if the event is to some degree one we have chosen, one might say; not a death we have sought, of course, but nevertheless found of one's own free will by joining the ranks of one's own free will. This again brings greater clarity to that moment. Someone who otherwise has not thought much about death, who has concerned himself little or only to some extent with the spiritual world, can now find death a marvellous teacher once he has died, particularly in our time. This particular war can reveal something of tremendous significance for the relationship between the physical and the spiritual world. I have already drawn attention to this in a number of lectures given in these difficult times: what we are able to do by teaching merely by the word is not enough; but in future people will receive tremendous instructions because so many deaths have occurred. These deaths have an effect on the dead, and the dead in turn intervene in the process of the future civilization of mankind.

I am able to give you the words of one who has gone through the gate of death as a young man now in the present time. His words have come through to me and they really come as a surprise, one might say, because they show how this dead individual who is experiencing death with great clarity as something he went through on the field of battle is now finding his way into the different kind of experience one has after death. They show him working his way out of earthly ideas and into spiritual ideas. Let me communicate these words to you. They were picked up, if I may call it this, when one of those who died on the field of battle tried to let them reach those he left behind.

*Here all is light
And I feel
Power of life.
Death has woken
Me from sleep,
From spirit slumber.
I shall abide,
And power of light
Arising in me
Will become deed.*

That, as it were, is what the dead individual learned by looking on the death he went through, as if his essential nature was taking In all it must learn to live after death; and it also wants to make this known, wants to reveal it.

Here all is light and I feel power of life.

He feels that he is more alive now where his comprehension of the spiritual world is concerned than he was before his death. He experiences death as one who awakens us, as a teacher:

*Death has woken me from sleep,
From spirit slumber.*

And he feels that he will be one who does things in the spiritual world. But he feels the it is the radiant powers within him that do the doing, he feels light coming to life within him:

*I shall abide,
And power of light
Arising in me
Will become deed.*

It really is possible to see everywhere, and to see rightly, that anything perceived in the spiritual world will again and again provide absolute confirmation of the things that can also become generally known out of the spiritual world through what is called imaginative perception. And it is this one so much wants to see come to life through our spiritual movement: that we do not merely have knowledge of the spiritual world but that this knowledge really comes to life in us so strongly that we learn new ways of feeling with the world, share In the experience of the world as the ideas of spiritual science come to life within us. As I have said so often, fundamentally we are asked to bring inward life into the thoughts of spiritual science; this is the contribution we are asked to make to the

further development of the world, that the spiritual thoughts born out of spiritual science may stream together and soar up into the spiritual world as powers of Illumination that are given back to the radiant universe; that the universe may unite with the element which those who have gone through the gate of death in these fateful times are making part of the movement of spiritual culture for mankind. Then the words will come true which again shall conclude our talk today:

*Out of courage shown in battle,
Out of the blood shed in war,
Out of the grief of those who are left,
Out of the people's deeds of sacrifice
Spirit fruits will come to grow
If souls with knowledge of the spirit
Turn their mind to spirit realms.*



9

The Sleeping-and-Waking Rhythm in the Context of Cosmic Evolution

9 March 1915, Berlin

Dear friends, once again, let us first of all remember those who are out there at the front, in the great arena of present-day events:

*Spirits of your souls, guardian guides,
On your wings let there be borne
The prayer of love from our souls
To those whom you guard in the spheres.
Thus, united with your might,
A ray of help our prayer shall be
For the souls it seeks out there in love.*

And for those who because of those events have already gone through the gate of death:

*Spirits of your souls, guardian guides,
On your wings let there be borne
The prayer of love from our souls
To those whom you guard here on earth.
Thus, united with your might,
A ray of help our prayer shall be
For the souls it seeks out there in love.*

May the spirit we are seeking as we work towards spiritual knowledge, the spirit who has gone through the Mystery of Golgotha for the good of the earth, for the freedom and progress of man, be With you and the hard duties you have to perform.

A week ago we gave some consideration to imaginative meditation. We found as a result of our considerations that all insight or perception which is genuine perception of the supersensible worlds has to be won by considering the world in a way that is independent of the body. Our ordinary everyday perception has to make itself independent of the conditions imposed by the body, the senses, the nervous system, etc. Ordinary daytime consciousness is achieved when man's spirit and soul elements use the physical body as a tool. Spiritual perception consists in certain more subtle processes which involve man. Some discussion of these processes will form the first part of today's talk.

I said: 'More subtle processes'. They are finer, more subtle, than the ordinary processes used for everyday perception, observation, apprehension, because man is only able to base himself on what is familiar to him in everyday life, and can only gradually rise to finer, more subtle processes. We should all be able to achieve the most satisfying, the greatest, knowledge of the spiritual world if there was an easy way of being in full conscious awareness for at least a fraction — just a small fraction, a minute if you like — of the part of our life we spend between going to sleep and waking up again. (I am speaking of no mere dream-like consciousness but full conscious awareness.) Any form of initiation always consists in making conscious the part of us which during the night, when we are asleep, is unconscious and outside the body.

The process of attaining to genuine higher knowledge always consists in making conscious what otherwise remains in a state of sleep and unconsciousness between going to sleep and waking up again'

There is one part of the human being — and this may surprise you — one part of the physical human being that basically is always asleep. These are things one need not necessarily go into at the very beginning-of one's anthroposophical life — the finer points of spiritual science can only come to our attention gradually. When it is said that man is awake in the daytime and asleep at night we naturally assume his ego and astral body to be fully united with the physical and ether bodies during the day whilst having a separate existence outside the physical and ether bodies at night. It is only gradually that we progress from a rough outline of the facts established through spiritual science to more specific truths. Very generally speaking, it is correct that during sleep man's ego and astral body are outside his ether and physical bodies. There is however a part of the body that is asleep also between waking up and going to sleep, at least essentially so. Oddly enough this is the part of the human body we call the 'head'. This is asleep

when we are awake. You might well think the head to be the part that is most awake. In reality, however, it is the least awake part of us. In his thinking activity, and in head work altogether, man is awake. This is only possible, however, because even when we are awake the relationship of the ego and astral body to the head organs is such that they — that is the ego part of the head, the astral part of the head — cannot unite completely with the physical and ether part of the head. They always experience a life of their own outside the physical and ether part of the head. They always experience a life of their own outside the physical and ether parts of the head, as it were. A close union between the astral and the physical parts of the head occurs only when we have a headache. If we have a powerful headache, the astral, physical and ether parts of the head are very much united. We are least able to think when we have a headache. The reason is that the bond between the astral, physical and ether parts of the head is too strong. Our thinking, in which we are awake, and all other waking soul life bases on the fact that the ego and astral body of the head are in a way outside the head and therefore reflected, mirrored, in the physical and ether body of the head. Similarly we are only able to see ourselves in a mirror because we are outside it. It is this mirroring effect that provides the images for everyday consciousness. Those are mirror images we experience and take note of in everyday life. Living thus outside the head, with the head asleep and ego and astral activity reflected back by the hard skull, we are able to feel the inner ego and the inner astral body to be our own. In the other parts of the body ego and astral activity are still influencing the activity of the physical and ether bodies to a much greater extent. If the same held true for the head we would be conscious of the activity of digestive organs, and perhaps also rhythmical activity like that of the heart, In our heads—or perhaps not be conscious of them—and there could be no question of thinking activity. Thinking depends on activity being reflected, thrown back, and absorbed. The heart and other organs with the ability to absorb take in ego and astral body activity. The organs of the head do not absorb it but rather reflect it; the result is that it can be experienced in the inner soul.

During the night, between going to sleep and waking up, the whole ego and the whole astral body — again this is not entirely accurate but merely an approximation — but by far the greater part of the ego and astral body is outside the physical and ether bodies. Between going to sleep and waking up man is able to relate to a far greater part of his ego and astral body the way he relates to his head when awake. But the rest of the organism has not yet progressed as far as the head, it has not yet reached a point where it reflects the way the is able to reflect. Because of this,

there can be no conscious awareness during sleep. Considering the way we move our hands we have to say to ourselves: 'These hands, in so far as we are able to move them, have of course four elements to them — ego, astral body, ether body and physical body. All of these are present and active when we move our hands.' Now imagine someone found himself in a position where his hands were tied to his body, tied in such a way that he could never move them, for they would be firmly attached to his body. Let us also assume this person had the gift of moving the ether body, or at least the astral body, of his hands independently whilst his physical hands remained immovable. This would have a highly significant result. He would be extending his astral or ether hands beyond his physical hands which are tied and immovable. We'll never go to the effort of actually executing this manoeuvre; when we move any of the astral or etheric parts of our hands we simply move our physical hands as well.

This is something we would find difficult to do in a natural way whilst on earth, yet in the course of evolution it will be achieved, though in a less crude fashion than just described. It will be achieved as mankind develops further in the course of earth evolution and grows towards Jupiter. Then his hands, his physical hands, will in fact become immovable. On Jupiter human beings will no longer have physical hands that are mobile organs, for they will be fixed. On the other hand their astral and ether hands will in part be able to move outside those physical hands. Only a trace of the physical hands will be left on Jupiter and they will be immobile; the astral or ether hands on the other hand will be able to move freely, like wings. As a result, Jupiter man will not merely think with his brain, for his fixed hands will enable him to reflect into the elements now united with his physical hands. His thinking will be much more alive, much more all-embracing. When a physical organ comes to rest, the spirit or soul element belonging to it will be liberated and able to develop spiritual and soul activity.

You see, it is the same with the brain. When we were still living on the Old Moon we had organs up here [the cranium] that moved like hands. These organs have become fixed. On the Old Moon we did not yet have a solid cranium; the organs now folded up to form the brain were then able to move like hands. Because of this, men living on the Old Moon were not yet able to think the way men do on earth. A clairvoyant assessing thought activity clearly perceives that in a human being who is awake the sleeping organs in his brain do indeed move like wings, the way I have described that astral and ether hands would move if our physical hands could be immobilized. It really happened that with the transition from the OW Moon to the earth state 'hands' were brought under control up here. They are

still held fast by the solid skull and because of this the etheric and astral elements are free. Our organs need to be developed further. These hands cannot remain as they are when we develop to the Jupiter state — they will undergo a physical change, just as our brain underwent the change that made it an organ of reflection. This is a process we may consider one of natural evolution.

The initiation process is a different one. Here, we take some mantric meditation or other and make it the centre of our thoughts, entering into it completely. When we do this it is really important that we do not make use of our physical organs in forming and holding the thought. We must withdraw from the physical body, the sphere of our physical senses, with this thought. We must hold on to this thought and have no help from the physical world as we meditate. In our ordinary everyday thinking activity we have the help of the physical body, of the physical world. We think when impressions reach us through the senses. This makes thinking a comfortable process — the world makes both a physical and an etheric impression on us and this provides support for our thinking. When we meditate we must go apart from all that is physical, and that includes all ideas or concepts. Entirely of our own free will we have to make a thought the centre of our conscious mind. As a result something very specific occurs, a process more subtle than the process of perception. We have to reach a point where we forget the rest of the world — as though the rest of the world were not there and nothing really existed in space and time except for the one thought. When we have reached the point where we are indifferent to the whole world, living only in that meditative thought, something occurs which physical science will never be able to demonstrate. This subtle process of meditation causes heat consumption — a very small amount of heat is used, is taken away. It is a process we cannot demonstrate by physical methods but consumption does take place. We may return to the subject on some other occasion. [Note 48 It appears that the theme was not taken up again in this form and that none of the audience returned to it either. For a consideration of the subject from a different point of view. see the lectures given by Rudolf Steiner in Dornach on 17 December 1920 in *Die Brücke zwischen der Weltgeistigkeit and dem Physischen des Menschen*, GA 202 (Engl. *The Bridge Between Universal Spirituality and the Physical Constitution of Man*, trs. not mentioned: New York: Anthroposophic Press 1958) and on 13 January 1924 in *Mysterienstätten des Mittelalters*. GA 233a (Engl. *Rosicrucianism and Modern Initiation*, trs. Mary Adams. London: Rudolf Steiner Press 1965).] We shall see then that it is possible to prove too to ordinary scientists, on the basis of processes everyone will be able to observe, that the process of meditation involves a subtle heat process and also a subtle light process.

We use up some of the light we have taken in; we consume light. There is something else we consume, but let us for the moment just consider the fact that we use up heat and light. These things we take in make happen what I spoke of a week ago, that something evolves which is very delicate and alive. When we are thinking in the ordinary everyday way, something lives within us that leaves its imprint on the organism, triggering a process that also has to do with heat; it leaves its imprint and the process which takes place causes us to have memory. This, however, must not happen when we meditate. When we live in a pure thought or feeling content, separate from everything else, the heat, light, etc., we consume does not leave its imprint on the body, it leaves its imprint in the general ether. It triggers a process outside us. Dear friends, if you are seriously, genuinely meditating, you are impressing your thought form into the general ether; it will be there within it. And if you then look back on a meditation this will not be the usual way of remembering; You are looking back to something which has left its imprint in the cosmic ether.

It is important to take note of this. It is a subtle process and we perform it in such a way that it establishes a link between us and the etheric and astral world surrounding us. A person who develops only the ordinary everyday kind of perception and thinking is only involved with himself; it is a process that takes place entirely within us. On the other hand, someone taking up real, genuine meditation lives in a process that at the same time is also a cosmic process. Something goes on there, though it is exceedingly subtle. What happens is that a small amount of heat is used up during meditation. When heat is used up coolness develops; the general cosmic ether is cooled down when we meditate. Light is used up as well so that it is subdued; darkness arises, subdued light. The result is that when someone meditates in some place in the world and then goes away, he leaves behind in that place a very slight coolness and a very slight reduction in light. The general light state is subdued, has grown darker. A clairvoyant is always able to detect where someone has been meditating, genuinely going through the process of meditation. When the person leaves, a shadow image of him remains and this is also cooler than the surrounding area. A cool dark spectre is thus left in that place; we have engraved it there. In a very delicate and subtle way, something has been done in that place which we may very roughly compare with what happens on a photographic plate. A kind of spectre is produced. This is a process which takes place not only within man but as a cosmic reality; man makes himself part of the cosmos through this.

There is one thought human beings meditate on even if they are of not to meditation, if they know nothing whatsoever of any kind of nonphysical science. There is one thought human beings do meditate of on. It is seemingly small, but of infinite importance in life: the thought of the I or ego. When we think of the I or ego we always think independently of the body. In so far as we have a relationship to the cosmos through our ego, certain things connected with the ego — even if people are not aware of this in life — are thought in such a way that they are like the branches of a tree, if I may put it like this. Certain thoughts, feelings, will impulses become like branches, or else like feelers mobile feelers. These will be grouped around the ego. All is life, therefore, the human being has trailing behind him what he is thinking as an ego, and this stretches out mobile feelers or tentacles in all directions. Man is always leaving a spectre-like jellyfish behind him, all through his life. This is a very real thing, for at one and the the same it contains everything a person has lived through — in so far he has thought and felt it with his ego. This remains. And when the human being has gone through the gate of death he will gradually learn to look back on what he has left behind. This makes it possible for a link to exist between what a human being experiences after death and what he has left behind.

Being in the earth state we must first of all reach the point in meditation where our organs are held fast through the will; the ability to meditate properly depends on really freeing our thinking, feeling and emotions as we meditate, so that the body is not involved. The result is that we are capable of such powerful inner concentration that we are able to choose what does and does not become engraved, leaving a photographic impression as it were, in the cosmic ether. Something we need to stress again and again is that real, genuine meditation is a very real process, an absolutely genuine process.

If we consider that the human being leaves this behind — that, fundamentally speaking, all his experiences are contained in what he leaves behind and that it remains — we will, of course, realize that when the human being has gone through the time between death and new birth and comes down to earth again he will still find in the cosmic ether what he previously left there. Here we see in real terms how karma comes about. For the spectre of himself which man has produced will now influence him and in conjunction with his later life give rise to what will be his karma.

Such insights can only be gained slowly and gradually. A real process is taking place, one that goes beyond us, having an effect on the cosmos, and because of this the person meditating gets the feeling that meditating is something different from the usual kind of thinking activity. With the latter we have the feeling that it is we ourselves who put the thoughts together, taking one with the other; it is we ourselves who make the decisions. Meditating, we gradually get the feeling: It is not just you yourself who is meditating, for something is going on of which you are indeed part, but it also takes place outside you, as something that has happened and remains. That is the feeling which should arise. If I throw a fragile object across the room I have the feeling that what happens is not only what went on before it flew through the air but also something that followed, once the object has become separate from me. In the same way meditation gives rise to the feeling: It is not just you who is thinking. You fan thoughts into flame but they then whirl away, they whirl and exist in their own right. You are then no longer their master for they enter into a life and identity of their own.

When we thus feel ourselves to be within the atmosphere in which our thoughts are active and have a life of their own as if those thoughts actually moved through our brain in waves — when we begin to feel this we come to feel certain and sure that we are within a spiritual world, that we are merely one element weaving within all that is weaving there. It is important that we really achieve such stillness, such inner calm, in our meditation that we achieve the significant feeling: 'It is not you alone who is doing this; it is being done. You have started to set these waves in motion but now they spread around you. They have a life of their own in which you are merely the centre.'

So you see, my friends, that it is an experience which actually leads to recognition of the spiritual world. It is an experience we have to wait for, possessing our souls in patience. It is extraordinarily important, yet it needs patience, persistence and self-denial to wait for it. This one experience will be enough to make us fully convinced that the spiritual world does objectively exist.

You will be able to see from what has been said here that a state of alternation between waking and sleeping really is a general necessity. We are asleep and awake here in the way that is familiar to us. We sleep and awake so that our brain, which is active throughout the day, shall also be able to immerse itself in that part of us which by day takes care of the organs and at night is outside us, always remaining unconscious. This

rhythm between sleeping and waking has to take place; we have seen that it also takes place in the great process of cosmic evolution. Now our brain is really asleep, to enable us to think, and our hands are awake — that is our whole relationship to our hands is free, awake, whereas we do not move them in sleep. On the Old Moon we were quite awake as far as the brain is concerned but we have since learned to sleep; we have been able to evolve into thinkers on earth because we have learned to let the brain sleep. On the Old Moon the brain was still awake, but here it has achieved the ability to sleep. Because of this man is able to think. The mid-body will learn to sleep on Jupiter and thinking will then become a wider experience. That is how the state of alternation between sleep and waking undergoes its evolution. It is, however, quite a general state which may be found in all kinds of different areas. We may say that wherever we look it is apparent that a state of alternation between waking and sleeping is essential. Let me give you a rather peculiar example, one that is peculiar yet may have special meaning for us at the present time.

If you want to find out what went on in the cultural and literary life of the early 19th century you will of course look up a history of literature. This will tell you which poet was important and which was not; and the record will only go a certain way, for poets who were of no importance at all will not be mentioned. And so a person who knows anything at all will know which poets were important at the beginning or in the middle of the 19th century and which were not. They'll know that. Undoubtedly, there must also have been people who wrote poetry during the 19th century and yet are totally unknown to most if not all people today. I think you will agree that there must have been people of whom nothing at all is known today. But a time will come when the picture people have, say of literary life in the 19th century, will be different, completely different. Then a poet given many pages today will be given just half a page whilst another, who is not even mentioned today, will be given ten or twenty pages. Things are going to change. And, indeed, it will be necessary for things to change quite profoundly. It is particularly when we consider that spiritual science is an element that now has to enter into the process of civilization, taking hold of human knowledge and entering into it everywhere, that we become aware of how men and women will have to change their approach and learn to think. Let me give you an instance.

I think you will agree that something new has to develop in place of present-day cognition, the process in which knowledge is on the whole obtained by giving validity only to whatever man gains by making use of his physical organisation. The new thing which must develop will give

validity also to what may be gained by taking the path of spiritual initiation. Today the situation is such that a genuine scientist only considers valid, considers scientifically proven, what has been gained through a path of knowledge based on the instruments of the physical body. Everything else is considered a figment of the imagination. It may just be accepted as hypothesis, but even this is not allowed to go far or else the hypothesis will be called utter fantasy. So that is the situation today. But a time will have to come when validity attaches to insights gained on the path to spiritual knowledge, and, what is more, insights gained in the physical world are fully illumined and truly fathomed only through spiritual insights. That is how it will have to be.

Well, we are not merely speaking metaphorically but in completely real terms if we say we are now living in an age when men are asleep as far as the gaining of insight is concerned—or at least the majority of people are. Courtesy comes easy here, for we can exclude anyone with an interest in spiritual science — they are of course awake when it comes to the gaining of spiritual knowledge. The rest of mankind, then, is asleep when it comes to spiritual insight; they are sleepyheads. And our most highly esteemed science arises because they are really asleep. We are in an age when this genuine reality is being missed by a human race that is utterly and completely asleep. This has been in preparation for a long time and we might say that just as there is the going-to-sleep stage before we sleep so we are able to observe a kind of dream-state and a struggle against sleep when it comes to gaining spiritual insight. It slumbers sweetly. But it has not been easy to achieve this full sleep-state and a struggle against sleep is apparent in certain major events in the first half of the 19th century when some individuals still has a certain intuition, an inner experience dawning, of spiritual truths, of conditions in the spiritual world. As it progressed the 19th century really could do no other, in its desire to achieve those sweet slumbers, but forget poets who still had special knowledge of the spiritual world. They do not fit into this state of spiritual slumber.

I have once before spoken of the poet Julius Mosen whose *Ritter Wahn* (Sir Illusion) and also *Ahasver* clearly showed that Julius Mosen had a living relationship with the spiritual world. [*Note 49 Mosen. Julius (1803–1867): Ritter Wahn published in 1831 (due to the interest created by Rudolf Steiner. a new edition was published by Der Kommende Tag AG, Stuttgart in 1921). Ahasver published in 1838.] This knight called Ritter Wahn — taken from an earlier legend but given qualities by Julius Mosen which reveal his connection with the spiritual world — this Ritter Wahn is looking for the man on this earth who could tell him about conquering death. The main theme of Julius*

Mosen's poetic work Ritter Wahn is that Sir Illusion, that is a man in the ordinary state of knowledge, knowledge based on illusion, is looking for someone who is able to tell him how to get beyond the state of illusion connected with physical life. He holds the man able to give him that information in very high regard. Julius Mosen then described the way his knight intended to find the man who will tell him how to gain knowledge that does not depend on the physical body:

*Henceforth through all the lands on earth I'll wander,
Eastward, wherever my valiant steed may go,
From king to castle through every land meander.*

*Until I find the man who will with surety say:
I can preserve your body from the reaper,
I can beat death and can his power stay.*

*He is the one whom through eternity
I'll serve; these hands grown strong in war
Shall work for him, and wrestle mightily.*

Sir Illusion thus wants to learn how knowledge can be attained that is not overcome by the body but itself overcomes the body, continuing through eternities. The longing for this was already there. And the knight then first of all fought the old man *Ird*, as Julius Mosen called him. This is something people did not understand, this word *Ird*. But if they could have read it in the original they would not have interpreted *Ird* as 'death', they way Rudolf von Gottschall did who was a professor of literature at Leipzig [1823–1909]. It should have been interpreted as 'earth' or 'world'. So Sir Illusion first of all fought the old man *Ird*. He overcame him. We spoke of the spirit overcoming the earthly on the last occasion, of the spirit vanquishing earth, time and space. After this the knight overcame the old man *Space* and arrived at the gates of heaven, that is the spiritual world. He then developed a longing to return to earth because he had not lived life to the full. The whole of this beautiful poetic work tells us that there has been a man once before who wrestled with the problem of initiation, who knew something of the existence of such a problem of initiation. And in his *Ahasver* Julius Mosen presented a similar theme.

Another German poet who is quite frequently mentioned is Wilhelm Jordan [1819–1904]. Very little mention is made however of the work in which he presented himself at his most spiritual: *Demiurgos*. This appeared in the 1850s. It is quite a significant work, for in *Demiurgos* it is really shown how spiritual entities, spiritual powers that may be good or evil, approach man, enter into his soul and manifest here on earth with the help of human beings. So if we see a human being before us we have to remember: 'This person does of course consist of everything we know about, but something acts into him that comes from higher spiritual entities.' *Demiurgos* basically consists in a description of how man is connected with the spiritual world. In three handsome volumes Jordan shows how spiritual entities are influencing the soul of man.

That was the struggle against sleep, and after this, sleep took over completely. Those were people who still found in their dreams what mankind now has to strive for in spiritual science, emerging from the sweet slumber of purely external, positivist cognition. We must really see this as a process, the way human beings enter into spiritual dreams to end up in a state of idleness, in the sleep of idleness.

We may ask ourselves why there still was such a person as Julius Mosen, a man able to describe spiritual progress and depicting something of an initiation process in the travels of his knight. Where did such things come from? The answer is very strange. Julius Mosen fell ill and for much his life was almost totally paralyzed. What is the significance of such a paralysis? It means that the physical body dried up as it were, separating from the astral and ether bodies. Because of the paralysis the astral and the ether bodies were more free. In this case a disease process had brought about what we have to struggle for in the process of initiation. Such a disease process should not, of course, be seen as one of genuine cognition nor as something desirable to be brought on deliberately. Yet in an age that may be said to have been entering into a state of idleness, the cosmic order caused a man to be born on earth who had been given that particular relationship between his physical and his soul and spirit elements. So there he lay, paralyzed and unable to move his limbs but with a soul and spirit that were alive and active. It was his paralysis that made them free and able to enter into the spiritual world. Something initiation seeks to achieve in a healthy way was here brought about through illness. A man had to spend much of his life paralyzed and unable to leave his bed, but his soul and spirit triumphed over his physical paralysis and rose in freedom. This is why that man was actually able to write works that strike us as being

spiritual by nature. The same could also be achieved in a healthier way than in the case of Julius Mosen, though perhaps it would not have the same depth.

It was possible to achieve it in a healthier way. During the first half of the 19th century it was still possible for a poet to reveal the process of the culture and civilization of man in the course of history by letting shine through everywhere into the figures he describes the connection which exists between the spiritual worlds and man as he walks about on this earth. In the 1830s a beautiful poetic work appeared, Auffenberg's *Alhambra*. [Note 50 von Auffenberg. Joseph (1798–1857). *Alhambra*, an epic work in dramatic form, appeared in 1828–1830 in 3 volumes] Auffenberg is a spiritual poet and his *Alhambra* is a significant work. Thus we have three works — four if we count *Ahasver* — *Ritter Wahn*, *Ahasver*, *Demiurgos* and *Alhambra*. There is much more still to be said about such works which are not easy to get hold of nowadays. They show us that in this age everything to do with man's relationship to the spiritual world is fading away like a dream, as it were, in the face of the general materialistic slumber state. Before, mankind was open to things spiritual, though, of course, the people who are now describing the intellectual life of that time fail to mention the men who did have full awareness of the spiritual world. When someone writes a history of philosophy today he will also fail to mention anyone having awareness of the spiritual world, or no mention is made of the way the most outstanding figures were working in•; concord with the spiritual world.

It is interesting to compare *Ritter Wahn*, a work pulsing With genuine spiritual life, and Jordan's *Demiurgos* which also contains something of spiritual life. Jordan was probably a healthy man; the spirit and soul element did not separate from the physical and ether bodies the way it did in the case of Mosen whose body was paralyzed. The consequence was that Jordan was only capable of producing a work such as his *Demiurgos* in his young years, when he was still more flexible, with an inner energy, elasticity and logic capable of grasping things relating to soul and spirit. Later he fell into the crude Darwinism which had come into intellectual life, and this found reflection in his *Nibelungen* and other works. This man therefore had to join the rest in succumbing to the lullaby of materialism. It is important for us to realize that it is the mission of our age to bring an insight into the intellectual process, the process of human evolution, which arises out of genuinely spiritual perception — an insight the universal spirit may be said to be pointing to in the tragic fate of Julius Mosen:

Man is no longer able to reach the spiritual world simply without his own volition'. There have been times in the past when this was Possible, where the purely natural constitution of man was such that spirit and soul elements, astral body and ether body, were freer and more independent of the physical body. That time has passed, however. In our present materialistic age — and for the rest of earth existence, in the course of which it will grow more and more intensive—man in his normal state will need a compact union between spirit-soul element and physical body. This, however, does not permit man to achieve some form of awareness of the spiritual world simply through natural circumstances. The reason why this has to be so is that the will must be given opportunity to be active. Imbued with the Power of spiritual science, man must be able to use inner will impulses, acting out of freedom, to separate the spirit-soul element from the Physical body during meditation, through concentration. To achieve spiritual insight the way people did in the past we would have to be sick, paralyzed, have our limbs paralyzed in the second half of our life. Our present organization would make this necessary. In the past it was not necessary. Then, man did not have to be paralyzed, for the union between astral body, ether body and physical body was such that people had clairvoyant vision. Today it could only be achieved through illness. What happened in the case of Julius Mosen has been put there more or less as visible evidence.

We really must use spiritual science to bring before our mind's eye the profound spiritual background to what shows itself in the world. At the same time we must come to see how the necessity which now exists for mankind gradually to accept spiritual science is intimately bound up with profound impulses in the history of the spirit. The necessity arises not from arbitrary choice of some individual but from the great cosmic spiritual evolution which has to take its course throughout the period of earth evolution. Man's mission and task is to enter more and more into genuinely spiritual experience as he moves towards the future, so that mankind does not dry up the way the whole of earthly civilization is drying up, and the spirit will truly be able to continue to live on this earth.

One of of many things capable of bringing such insight home to man is something I have spoken of a number of times: the fact that numerous people are now, within a relatively short span of time, bearing their soul principle upwards when they still have unused ether bodies which contain powers that could have gone on to provide for physical life for many years. Because they are now going through the gate of death due to the terrible historical events of our time they are taking their unused ether bodies up

into the spiritual world. And these will be the people who in future will make a major contribution to spiritualizing human civilization. Apart from all else, these major events of our time are profoundly significant in human evolution because the creation of unused ether bodies can yield forces that stream out into earth evolution, forces that will be able to prove that the spiritual world is real.

We know, however, that it would not help, dear friends, to have any number of suns in this world if men were unable to receive the light of the sun through their eyes. It is true, as Goethe has said, that if the eye were not of like kind with the sun it could never see the sun. [[Note 51 Goethe: *Zahme Xenien III.*](#)] Just as the sun would be shining in vain if there were no eyes to take in its light, so organs will have to come to life out of the souls of men which will really be able to take in the spiritual life which is streaming down from the cosmos and the world where men live between death and new birth, a world which also contains those unused ether bodies. Thus the great sacrifice brought in war must join into the spiritual cosmic sphere; it has to be taken up by human souls receptive for things of the spirit. And it would be a dreadful thing if the only science to survive were to be the one that now considers itself to be the one and only one, a science which does nothing but record the facts perceptible to the outer senses, using them to make intellectual judgements. If science merely repeats what is also there without science, it cannot form a link with divine and spiritual reality. This is something only possible for elements awakening in the human soul that truly go beyond sensory perception. These will be able to unite with the spiritual reality so that the process of earth evolution itself will remain spiritual, alive in the spirit. Any progress for mankind depends on the spiritual entering into the process of human soul development, and the decision as to whether something is true or false can only be made out of the spirit. Today, people think they can decide one thing or another, prove one thing or another, without the spirit; yet the final authority when it comes to making decisions relating also to sense-perceptible truths is living spiritual experience.

When the old experience of the spirit vanished during the first half of the 19th century, evidence was again given, one might say, of what the spirit could bring about in certain people, to demonstrate the non-nature of scientific argumentation concerned only with external, sense-perceptible things. A man who wrote under the name of Dr Mises' did a great deal at that time to show that everything, but everything, can be proved, and that the opposite can also be proved, so that the final authority still lies in the relationship to spiritual life. This man had seen many things happen in

science, in medical science — he was a member of the medical profession — he saw new drugs coming up all the time for one disease or another. He lived at a time, for instance, when people started to prescribe iodine for the treatment of goitre. It was a time when this remedy was much celebrated, when people wanted to demonstrate — this was in the 1820s — what a valuable remedy iodine was. So one day Dr. Mises sat down and demonstrated that one could easily prove, using all the scientific principles, that Iodine was an excellent thing. the reason being that the moon consisted of iodine, as could be clearly proven. [Note 52 Fechner, Gustar Theodor (1801–1887): *Beweis, dass der Mond aus Jodin besteht* 2nd edn. Leipzig 1932. [*Jodin* appears to be a spoof word made up by Dr Fechner — it could perhaps be rendered into English as 'iodene'. (Translator)]] And he provided irrefutable evidence in support of this. His intention was to show that it is possible to prove anything we want to prove. And we certainly can. The intellect, which is bound to the brain, really is able to prove yes or no with regard to simply everything. It is almost always the case that some scientific view or other comes to the fore and the opposite comes up at another time; people are able to prove something just as well as the other side is able to disprove it. Anything where we do not have the yes-no wave surging up and down in such Ahrimanic fashion, anything which is real progress in a human evolution which is good and divine, bases on the spiritual.

We must be clear in our minds that the present age has produced its own characteristic cultural features on the basis of being the age when nonphysical science is asleep, and because slumber of the mind has spread to an extraordinary degree over all the things that tend to be regarded as science. This slumber of the mind is necessary. I am not being critical, but merely stating a fact. With all due regard it has to be said, to be emphasized, that it was necessary for the whole of science to go to sleep for a time as far as the spiritual world Was concerned. Now, however, the time has come when there must be an awakening, new vitality, in spiritual life, and we can sense the longing for this which exists everywhere. This, dear friends, will provide the foundation for the feeling that must bring us to life now, in these pain-racked times. We may only be able to have a faint notion that it is possible for man to find the way to the spiritual world, but because we have the feeling we must look for this way. We must seek a way in which our spiritual thoughts can meet with what is streaming down from those unused ether bodies. And a time will come when we shall really be able to look back on these days which are so full of pain and laden with

destiny and do so from a certain spiritual elevation. This spiritual elevation will come when more and more people find impulses for spiritual science out of the genuine content of life awareness within them.

I have always from the depths of my soul given you a final thought here in this place in recent times, and this is something which will then come true. Let us make it our hope, a hope anyone who is connected with spiritual science can and indeed should cherish in days like these which are laden with fate.

*Out of courage shown in battle,
Out of the blood shed in war,
Out of the grief of those who are left,
Out of the people's deeds of sacrifice
Spirit fruits will come to grow
If souls with knowledge of the spirit
Turn their mind to spirit realms.*



10

Problems on Spiritual Path — National Characteristics in Europe Moulded by Folk Spirits

16 March 1915, Berlin

Dear friends, once again let us first of all remember those who are out there at the front, in the great arena of present-day events:

*Spirits of your souls, guardian guides,
On your wings let there be borne
The prayer of love from our souls
To those whom you guard here on earth.
Thus, united with your might,
A ray of help our prayer shall be
For the souls it seeks out there in love.*

And for those who because of those events have already gone through the gate of death:

*Spirits of your souls, guardian guides,
On your wings let there be borne
The prayer of love from our souls
To those whom you guard here on earth.
Thus, united with your might,
A ray of help our prayer shall be
For the souls it seeks out there in love.*

May the spirit we are seeking as we work towards spiritual knowledge, the spirit who has gone through the Mystery of Golgotha for the good of the earth, for the freedom and progress of man, be with you and the hard duties you have to perform.

Dear friends, the points we shall consider today will once again be aphoristic. They may serve to round off one or another of the things I have spoken of before. The first point I want to refer to is the way we find the facts, the real nature, of the spiritual worlds when we ascend to those spiritual worlds and have taken the first steps Within them. Let me start by considering the problems we meet in our efforts to attain to the spiritual worlds. They are indeed considerable, and although it is certain that the path we take when we meditate, With all the work we do in the inner soul, must lead to the spiritual world — certain as this may be — it is also very easy to fail to recognize the particular kind of soul experience that takes the soul up into the spiritual worlds.

First of all there is the problem that we are in the habit of judging everything our soul comes upon on the basis of experiences we have gained in the world accessible to the outer senses. We could say that we really know nothing but what we have made our own out of the sense-perceptible world. Now we enter the spiritual world and find that everything is entirely different from the sense-perceptible world. Everything being different, the main problem is to extend the range of our attention to the things we are supposed to be seeing. The situation is that the whole of the spiritual world might lie spread out before us but we would see nothing. The reason is that whilst we are awake and in our earth bodies we are not in a position to withdraw our spiritual organs from this earth body, to draw them away from their union with the earth body.

Let me use a comparison I have used on a number of occasions to present an image of the soul element separating from the body. I have often said that it is just as impossible to recognize the immortal part of man from what he is here in ordinary life as it is to recognize the properties of hydrogen and oxygen by looking at water. Hydrogen is present in water, forming a compound with oxygen, the way our immortal part is present in the body. It will reveal nothing of its qualities until it is separated out of the water. It hides all those qualities. In the same way the soul hides its qualities when it is united with the body.

Our ordinary life between birth and death trains us to relate to the sense-perceptible world in such a way that whilst we are awake the organs of the mind and spirit are always tied up with the body in the same way as hydrogen is tied up with oxygen in water. The soul is therefore unable to depart from the body during the time between birth and death, except for the time between going to sleep and waking up again when it is in the spiritual worlds. During the time between going to sleep and waking up the

soul really enters the spiritual worlds. It is there in those worlds. It gains new strength for the daily round out of the spiritual worlds. It retains the habit, however, of perceiving lily with the physical organs, and the moment it reaches the point where it has gained the strength that would enable it to achieve perception within the spiritual sphere it wakes up. The soul is joined to the body through the powers within it; because of its ability to feel desire the soul is connected with the body. The moment its powers have been recharged and it is again able to be active it desires to return to the body as long as the body is still capable of life. In the first place it will therefore be necessary for us gradually to get our bearings after death.

In one of my public lectures I referred to the ability to remember as the ultimate soul activity [*Note 53 Berlin, 26 February 1915: 'Was ist am Menschen sterblich?' in *Aus schicksahragender Zeit* (GA 64). In English. 'Ethereic Man within Physical Man' typescript Z185 (tr. not mentioned).] Let us compare this with what happens when man learns to look into the spiritual world. It is something which to some extent does make us free of the bodily element. Modern science, as it continues to develop, will actually show that looking back to an earlier experience is a process occurring in mind and spirit. This process is however given enormous assistance, assistance provided by the body.*

It happens like this. When our soul dwells in the body, anything we entrust to our power of memory has the nature of an image to begin with; it is very similar to what we call imaginative perception. In ordinary life, however, we proceed to imprint everything that is to be memory into the bodily element. When we have an experience we first of all encounter the experience with our senses; we form an image of it. This image first of all imprints itself in the body; an imprint is left in the body, an imprint we could compare with the imprint left by a seal. It is important to understand that such an imprint is left. Conventional science takes rather a naive view of this. According to some authors, one idea is recorded in one part of the brain, another idea in another, and so on. That is not how it happens. The imprint a memory leaves in our physical body is really very dissimilar to what may later come up as a memory. To the clairvoyant eye it is a kind of image taking the form of the human head and a bit more, continuing on into the rest of the human being. Irrespective of the nature of the experience, the imprint will be of that kind; such an imprint is made into the ether body. If we were able to take this imprint out we would indeed have a thin, shadowy spectre of the head and its continuation. Another memory would also take the form of a shadow image of a head and its continuation. These images are certainly quite different from what we

experience as a memory. There is such a shadowy spectre within us for every single memory we have. They all merge into each other, they interpenetrate. What remains would from the outside appear as such a shadow picture and all one could say would be that one of them looks like this, another like that.

If memory is to arise the soul of man must first of all focus on the imprint left in the body and decipher it the way we decipher the peculiar symbols on a page when we are reading — symbols entirely different from what the soul experiences after reading them. The soul has to apply a subconscious reading process in order to convert those imprints into the actual memory we experience. Let us assume you are today recalling an event you experienced in your eighth year. The actual process consists in something making you focus your soul on this little head with its continuation that was imprinted at the time; your soul will now decipher it. As to the experience, as little remains of it in the body as the book you have read retains of what you experienced in the reading. When you read the book again you need to recreate the whole thing in your soul. All this happens without our noticing it. But someone who has not learned to read will be unable to tell from the symbols what they represent. The same applies to the memory process; it is an inner reading process. There is much that goes on below the threshold of consciousness in the human soul and is never considered by man. When we give ourselves up to memory, an infinitely complex process takes place in the human being. All the time, etheric seal imprints rise up from the dim twilight where all else in life is darkness and the inner process man experiences as memory consists in these imprints arising and being deciphered.

I am not telling you something I have thought up but a genuine fact discovered through occult investigation.

When we begin to strengthen the inner powers of the soul through meditation and concentration the process I have already mentioned will come about. The process which develops is not the one we have to call memory. We develop inner powers but an imprint also forms and is left upon the ether that is alive and present everywhere in the world outside us, it is objectively imprinted into the world. As we meditate, as we concentrate, we leave an imprint in the objective cosmic process. Basically the same thing happens when we devote our studies to what spiritual science has to give, for spiritual science has to do with supersensible, nonphysical, things. When we really take hold of the thoughts coming to us

from spiritual science we are already coming away from ourselves to such an extent that our mental effort has us working with the cosmic ether: when we think ordinary thoughts we merely imprint them within ourselves.

You realize, of course, that it is important for anyone wishing to make progress in soul development to put enormous emphasis on what we must call repetition of the same thought process. If we concentrate just once on some thought or other, it will merely leave a fleeting impression within the world ether. If however we nurture the same thought in our soul day after day, over and over again, the impression will also be made over and over again.

Here we must ask ourselves the following question. If we repeatedly make an impression in the world ether, repeating a meditation over and over again, what actually happens? Where is the impression made?

To answer this question, something else has to be considered first. If someone is genuinely looking for the way to the spiritual world and begins to be clairvoyant, he will find that his clairvoyant experiences take a very strange form. He will be very much aware that what he finds there is something which is experienced but, fundamentally speaking, there is something lacking in those experiences. I am presupposing that the person has reached the point where he has clairvoyant experiences. Afterwards, when we are no longer in those clairvoyant experiences but remember those clairvoyant experiences, we say to ourselves: It may be that I have nothing whatsoever to do with all those things. The impression is that the things experienced in clairvoyance are quite separate from us. Above all, it is impossible to find out how far we ourselves have anything to do with those experiences. That is the important point. Because of this it is easy to consider such experiences mere dreams. We only realize that we have something to do with it when we come to see that our own self has been confronting us there in another form. We come to realize that what we have experienced there is really very similar to our personal experiences and we could not have experienced what we did in clairvoyance if we did not exist.

To make it even clearer let me put it like this. Let us assume you have a dream which brings back something you experienced when very young. When you wake from the dream you only realize that those were dream experiences because among the mass of images you encountered there was also that childhood experience. Then you knew that the dream must have something to do with you. That is how it is with our first clairvoyant

experiences. You gradually come to realize that really it is someone else who is dreaming there and yet at the same time it is also you yourself. We come to recognize ourselves within the mass of clairvoyant experiences.

It is indeed an experience of some significance to learn that we have been within a great body of experiences yet it was we ourselves who were within it. One must first of all discover oneself within those clairvoyant experiences. We then come to realize that we are not only inside our bodies but also in the world outside. It is an experience of tremendous significance which shows us that we have something which the spirits of the higher hierarchies hold and support, nurture and cherish. Here I am, we say to ourselves, in my body. I inhabit the enveloping form of the body and I am at the same time also in the spiritual world, held and supported by the spirits of the higher hierarchies. We must not allow ourselves to be distracted by the law which says that a particular entity cannot be in two places at one and the same time, for laws of this kind no longer apply in the spiritual world. I am inside me and at the same time I am also someone Who lets experiences arise within him in the spiritual world. We find ourselves held secure within the higher hierarchies. We know we have this kind of dual nature and we gradually come to realize that what we are in essence in the spirit does not really lie within the sense-perceptible world at all. It lies in the spiritual world and what exists in the sense-perceptible world is a shadow cast from the spiritual world. We slip into a spiritual 'body' existence and with this are outside ourselves, looking at ourselves from outside. Anyone not prepared to make himself familiar with such apparent contradictions will never arrive at concepts that can make the spiritual world explicable to him. The important thing is that in as far as we are part of the world of the senses we discover that we are beyond ourselves.

We have now reached the point where we can consider the question as to where our meditations are inscribed. Our ordinary memories are imprinted in ourselves. A seal imprint is always made which represents the upper part of the human being, the head and a few appendages. When we meditate or consider in our mind the ideas presented in spiritual science, we also produce imprints but these go to the other one I have just described, the one who is another self. These ideas go to the other one. We may experience something in Berlin or in Nuremberg; the imprint of this will be made in the same body. Everything we experience in the spirit, however, goes to the one who is another self. Everything is imprinted there. If our attitude is truly in accord with what is thought or felt or experienced in

spiritual science, we are working on the supersensible human being whom we also are, just as we work on the physical human being we are when facing everyday experiences.

You will now understand that it needs great inner strength to work on the supersensible human being. It clearly is easier to recall things that had an external effect on us through their colour, sound and so on, because we are in that case supported by the body. When a colour makes an impression on us this triggers a physical process within us. When it is our aim to enter into a purely spiritual idea we have to do without all those physical props; inner effort has to be made in the soul and the soul must gain greater and greater powers, growing so strong in itself that it really can make an impression on the cosmic ether outside.

If we look for union in this way with the human being we really are, the human being who is always there, we establish a relationship with our individual human identity, with what we really are as human beings. And what we really are as human beings, this lives among the forms of being that are the higher hierarchies the way our body lives among sense-perceptible processes in nature. We are part of earthly existence and in the same way we also partake of existence in the spirit, within all that takes place in the world of the higher hierarchies.

There is something else I want to mention. Being thus related to the spiritual world, we are related to many different spirits in the higher hierarchies. Among them are the spirits we only relate to as human individuals — they are not destined to have any kind of cosmic function. On the other hand we also belong to spirits that do have a cosmic function. We all belong to a folk spirit for instance. In the processes that belong entirely to the world of the senses we are connected with sense-perceptible nature. Reaching upwards we are connected with all those spirits which in a supersensible way reach down into the world of the physical senses. Here, we relate to things outside us and have thoughts and ideas about them. In the same way the different spirits in the higher hierarchies develop thoughts and ideas on the basis of the fact that we are objects to them. We are objects to the spirits in the higher hierarchies, we are the realm they have thoughts about. These thoughts are more will-like by nature.

The spiritual entities are different in kind because of the way the hierarchies relate to us. An important distinction will clearly emerge if we note how the evolution of such spirits in the higher hierarchies progresses, for instance in the case of the folk spirits. We also progress between birth

and death here on earth, for our ego grows more and more mature, gaining experiences about the world. A young Person cannot have learned as much as someone who is older. The same applies to the spirits of the higher hierarchies, except that their evolution proceeds somewhat differently from our own.

We are referring to a spirit belonging to the higher hierarchies when we speak of the Italian folk spirit. This Italian folk spirit goes through its evolution and we are actually able to pinpoint a particular time when this folk spirit passed a major stage in evolution. We know the relationship between the Italian folk spirit and individual Italians to be such that the Italian folk spirit acts through the sentient soul of individual Italians. The way this happens is that to begin with the folk spirit is, as it were, only acting on the soul element. It is only later, in the course of its further development, that the folk spirit, using its will, intervenes more and more in the way the soul comes to expression through the element of the physical body. If you consider Italian history you come to a very important year, around 1530. That is the year when the Italian folk spirit grew so powerful that it was then able to begin to work also on the physical body. From that time it started to develop very specific national characteristics. In occult terms this means that the folk spirit developed a much more powerful will; it began to engrave itself also into the physical element, developing national characteristics even at the physical level. Whilst our ego is becoming more and more independent of the body the folk spirit is evolving in the opposite direction. Having influenced the soul element for a time it is now beginning to influence the physical.

We find the same thing happened with the French folk spirit around the year 1600, and about 1650 for the English folk spirit. Before, the folk spirit had more or less only taken hold of the soul element but from then on it also intervened in the physical. Its will grew more powerful and the soul was less able to put up resistance against being given a configuration that had national characteristics. It was therefore at this time that national characteristics began to emerge more clearly. This happened because the folk spirit descended. It is higher up when it acts more on the soul sphere; it descends to act more on the physical aspect. The folk spirit of the Italian peninsula therefore descended around the year 1530. In France this happened at the beginning of the 17th century and in England in the middle of the 17th century. Shakespeare wrote his works before the folk spirit had passed this stage. This is what is so significant. It is the reason for the strange rupture which occurred in the way the English regard

Shakespeare, with the result that Shakespeare is actually more appreciated in Germany than in England. We are speaking of the way the folk spirit descends more and more into individual human beings.

If we now come to consider the evolution of the German folk spirit we can see something similar happening during the period between about 1750 and 1850. Yet oddly enough we have to say that in this case the folk spirit descended but then ascended again. This is what is so significant. We are able to observe a process in which the folk spirits of Western European peoples descended and took hold of those peoples. In the case of the German people we can also observe the folk spirit descending around the middle of the 18th century, but we then find it ascending again around the middle of the 19th century. The situation is therefore quite a different one. A beginning was made to develop the German character into an eminently national one, but it was only done for a while. When some of this had been done the folk spirit ascended again, once again to act only on the soul element.

German cultural life had its flowering period at the time when the folk spirit had descended to the lowest level. The folk spirit will of course always remain with these people, but it is now again in spiritual heights. That is the peculiar thing about the German folk spirit. It did descend at an earlier time but it then stopped before the people became too strongly national. The Western European peoples have become very much crystallized in their national characteristics, but in the case of the German people this cannot happen because of the peculiar nature of the German folk spirit. The result is that German attitudes will always have to remain more universal than those of other peoples. These things relate to profound realities in the spiritual world. If we had been looking for the German folk spirit in Goethe's time we would have found it at about the same level as the English, French or Italian folk spirit. If we want to look for it today we have to go higher up. There will be times when it descends again and others when it ascends again. It is this to-and-fro movement which is so characteristic of the German folk spirit.

The Russian folk spirit does not descend at all to achieve full crystallization of the people. It always remains something like a cloud hovering above the national character. We shall always have to look for it up above, and the Russian people will only enter into spiritual development when they make the effort to combine the fruits of the work done in the

West of Europe with their own essential nature. They must develop their culture in conjunction with the West for they will never develop a culture out of their own resources.

All this has to be understood in this way. The flexibility in German attitudes is due to the fact that the German has not united with his folk spirit the way this has happened in the West of Europe. This is also why it is so tremendously difficult to understand the Germans. They can only be understood if we are able to admit that it is possible to have a people whose folk spirit only comes in sporadically to intervene in their evolution. This is one of the most difficult chapters in historical development and you should not despair if it seems to be full of contradictions. We are, however, living in an age when we must try and really understand the origins of the enmity which shows itself so clearly now during these fateful days within Europe. With anything we experience, if you look more closely you'll always find that there is something coming in which might indeed be called incomprehensible and only becomes clear when we look more closely. Yes, of course, the Germans will be aware that fundamentally there is a tremendous hatred felt towards them. Looking at it more closely we shall find that this hatred is directed towards what in fact are the best qualities of the Germans. No particular hatred is directed towards their less desirable qualities.

Anyone wishing to penetrate these mysteries will have to consider these things more in their context. You might say that it is a case of German chauvinism if someone says such things now in Germany. Why should a German speak with appreciation and in praise of the German character? Yet if that were the case, these lectures would not be given and I would not speak in this way about the German people. It really does not need German chauvinism to characterize the nature of the German people in such a way that it is evident that it differs from the nature of other European peoples, and not to its disadvantage. To demonstrate this let me read to you a characterization of the nature of the German people given in a letter Ernest Renan wrote to David Friedrich Strauss.

It was around 1843. when I was at the St Sulpice Seminary, that I started to learn something about Germany through the works of Goethe and Herder. I felt I was entering a temple, and from that moment onwards everything I had formerly considered magnificent and worthy of the deity appeared merely as tired and faded paper flowers... Germany has the

most perfect legal title, because of a historical role of the utmost significance, a soul, I would say, a literature, men of genius, a unique view of things divine and human. Germany produced the most important revolution in recent times, the Reformation; what is more, over the last century one of the most marvellous developments of intellectual and spiritual life known in history has occurred in Germany, a development which — if I dare put it like this — has taken the human mind and spirit one step further in depth and breadth. People who have not been touched by this new development are to those who have gone through it as someone who only knows elementary arithmetic is in relation to someone well versed in differential calculus. [Note 54 Letter of 13 September 1870 in Strauss D. Gesammelte Schriften, (Bonn 1876 –78) Vol. I, p.311f.]

So that is what Ernest Renan wrote to David Friedrich Strauss in 1870. I am not going to go into the details of their correspondence, but let me just mention that Renan also wrote that there were only two alternatives. The first would be to take away French territory-The outcome would be revenge unto death against all that is German and alliance with all kinds of confederates. The other alternative would be to leave France untouched, and then the Peace Party would gain the upper hand and say: 'We have been extremely foolish, we want to make good where we have gone wrong, and the good of mankind will be preserved.'

I mention this in order to show you that when Renan wrote the letter, part of which I have just read to you, his mood was not exactly a conciliatory one with regard to the German character which had evolved in the course of human evolution. On the other hand he was prepared to represent the qualities mankind had gained through the German character in relation to everything else as being like higher mathematics in comparison to elementary arithmetic. There is no question, then, of being a chauvinist; one merely has to repeat what Renan wrote in 1870.

In thus speaking of man's relationship to the higher worlds we must realize that in concrete terms, in reality, man is able to have these relations because he bears this other one within him, because this other one is alive in him who has the same relationship to the higher world of the spirit as we have to the sense-perceptible world here in our body•;

The supersensible, intangible part of us gives us a certain relationship to all that is supersensible. And it is a truly living development we undergo — nothing theoretical — when our heart and mind enters into the experience I have described as the process of meditation. The soul is really inscribing something into the spiritual worlds. It inscribes it into what fundamentally speaking is we ourselves. If we really think about this, the idea of 'being within the living stream of spiritual science' links up with the idea of 'human responsibility'. This idea of 'human responsibility' really must arise in the soul of anyone pursuing spiritual science. We know that mankind is going through things in the course of historical development, that it undergoes change. Clairvoyance has been gradually disappearing and today we know that it will be necessary to regain the connection with the spiritual world that existed in the past. and that spiritual science is the path by which it can be regained. In the past, man's natural relationship to his body was such that part of him was always within the spiritual worlds. Today he is so much more closely bound up with his body that he must see to it that he gains understanding of the spiritual world independent of his body. We may say that man had a hereditary trait that gradually grew weaker and weaker and disappeared altogether in the present age. It is in our time, therefore, that work has to start that will take the soul up into the spiritual world.

Can you envisage the way the German folk spirit is again and again coming down to the German peoples and then going up again into the higher world? Why does it do this with just one particular people? It is because it is intended to evoke in this particular culture the powers that will lead to spiritual science in the truest sense of the word. When the folk spirit descends it firmly establishes the folk characteristics. When it recedes again, leaving the national characteristics in a state of fluidity, the people will have to go through that upsurge and regression of the folk spirit again and again in their own bodies, and they will learn how all 'beingness' is a state of flux between the sense-perceptible and the supersensible world.

You will recall my saying a week ago that the whole history of literature for recent decades will have to be rewritten. This is because certain individuals with spiritual insight have been forgotten, though they are of much greater significance than literary figures known to us today. That relates to the period when the folk spirit was once again ascending. It will now be necessary for us to unite ourselves in the greatest possible degree with spiritual science so that we may find the folk spirit in its ascent. In other words, Germans must come to understand their essential nature not just in the physical world but also in the supersensible world. It is to be

found in both these worlds. This is another reason why I have said — even in public lectures — that there is a certain inner relationship between the culture of the German spirit and the striving for spiritual science. Fichte [[Note 55 Fichte, Johann Gottlieb \(1762–1814\), German idealist philosopher.](#)] could only develop his views at a time when the folk spirit had descended. Because of this his philosophy can only be imperfectly understood and must indeed be misunderstood. All that busy activity in concepts and ideas where egoic nature had entered the way it had in Fichte's philosophy was possible only at a time when the folk spirit had descended to a lower level. Today we have to look for it at a higher level and we can only find it with the aid of spiritual science. This is due to the relationship of the folk spirit to the German people. It is entirely part of the nature of German cultural development that there is a profound relationship between German cultural life and the path which leads to spiritual science. It is much to be hoped that these things will gradually come to be understood more and more clearly.

It really has to be said that if you consider the events of the present time, the enormous sacrifices that have to be made, all the difficulties people have to live through because of present events, it should be obvious that what is coming to expression here is something far, far beyond anything we are able to comprehend by taking an external view. And we might paraphrase the words written by St Paul: 'And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain and your faith is also vain.' [[Note 56 I Corinthians 15: 14.](#)] Paul found affirmation for what he had to give to the world in the reality of the Resurrection. His words have been much misunderstood. With regard to what is happening now, we have to say: 'These deaths give expression to the belief, to the firm avowal, that man relates to more than merely the things existing in the world accessible to the senses.' It is not only that religious feeling is growing more profound, but it is possible to see that in these very times we live in souls are forcefully protesting against the whole of materialism, and they do this by the way in which they enter into death. We have to say that whatever else these events represent they also contribute to the overcoming of materialistic ways of thinking and the materialistic way of life which has gradually evolved. Out of a profound awareness of current developments, the human soul has to say to itself: 'If it were to happen that materialistic attitudes, materialistic ways of thinking were to prevail on earth once the sun of peace is shining again, would we not have to say that all these deaths must have been in vain — unless a spiritual way of thinking develops on the plane that lies open to the gaze of the dead?' We might therefore paraphrase the words of St Paul as follows: 'All the infinite suffering would be in vain, and all the

many individuals would have gone through death in vain at such a young physical age if a materialistic way of thinking and a materialistic way of life were to spread in the fields of peace.' These days will have to be like a great warning beacon for those who live through them, a light entering deeply into human hearts and minds and souls, that man shall develop a genuine desire to live in the sphere of the spirit. We cannot concern ourselves deeply enough with the events of our time. And this is also why one hopes that vision will broaden among those who profess themselves anthroposophists to extend beyond the narrow horizon that tends to limit it, towards an ever-expanding horizon. We really must come to understand the way everything happening here on earth is connected with events taking place in the spiritual world. This will give us a feeling for the tasks set for us in the difficult times of the present.

Some people have a facile way of saying that present events need not have anything to do with the spiritual development individual nations are undergoing. To anyone able to see through these things and discern their true course, everything happening in the external world is an expression of something spiritual. Let us hold on to this more and more, let us try more and more to use the very experiences that can come to us through spiritual science to take our self out of those narrower confines and to unite this self, a self freed by spiritual science, with the great events now taking place. Let us forget purely personal concerns and grow together with the profoundly disturbing events mankind as a whole must now experience.

This is the note I wanted to strike in your hearts with the things put forward in these lectures. I very much hope that they will be pondered before we meet again in April. An element put through the test of the great events of our time is now ascending into the spiritual world and bringing an influence to bear from up there. It must be met with the kind of understanding that can be won through spiritual insight, for only then will it be possible to achieve what these events are challenging us to achieve. It is true that:

*Out of courage shown in battle,
Out of the blood shed in war,
Out of the grief of those who are left,
Out of the people's deeds of sacrifice*

*Spirit fruits will come to grow
If souls with knowledge of the spirit
Turn their mind to spirit realms.*



11

Etheric Man within Physical Man

Berlin, April 20, 1915

Dear friends, once again let us first of all remember those who are out there at the front, in the great arena of present-day events:

*Spirits of your souls, guardian guides,
On your wings let there be borne
The prayer of love from our souls
To those whom you guard here on earth.
Thus, united with your might,
A ray of help our prayer shall be
For the souls it seeks out there in love.*

And for those who because of those events have already gone through the gate of death:

*Spirits of your souls, guardian guides,
On your wings let there be borne
The prayer of love from our souls
To those whom you guard in the spheres.
Thus, united with your might,
A ray of help our prayer shall be
For the souls it seeks out there in love.*

May the spirit we are seeking as we work towards spiritual knowledge, the spirit who has gone through the Mystery of Golgatha for the good of the earth, for the freedom and progress of man, be with you and the hard duties you have to perform.

Dear friends, I want to begin today by reminding you of something I have told most of you, I think, on previous occasions. If the soul of man develops in the way I have clearly enough described in my public and other lectures, we arrive at a different image of the world. The essential point is that the soul takes the path, as it were, from the sense-perceptible into the spiritual world.

As the development of the soul progresses the physical world will gradually change in our eyes into the spiritual world. We might say that the peculiar features of the physical, sense-perceptible, world gradually disappear and the forms, entities and realities of the spiritual world makes their appearance within the horizons of our conscious awareness. Something important comes to conscious awareness in this way, something I might describe as follows: We ourselves become different — as far as our vision is concerned, of course — we ourselves become different, and the world which is around us to be beheld With our senses then also becomes different. Let us stay with what is nearest to us to begin with: the world that is our earth. Basically speaking, people know really very little of the world beyond this earth during their life on this planet, at least if we persist in the way in which we have grown together with our earthly life. As we advance into the spiritual world—in which case we are outside our bodies — we shall find, as we look back on the body, or the whole of our physical life, or the whole human being, that basically it is growing richer and richer. This human being is all the time gaining in content, is expanding into a world. Man is actually growing and becoming a whole world as we look back on him. That is the reality of words we often hear stressed — in that through spiritual development man grows identical with the world. He sees a new world, a world he normally is within, and sees it as though arising out of himself. He expands into a world. As far as the earth is concerned, on the other hand, all that is solid in it, all we are used to seeing as its mountains, rivers and so on, disappears. It vanishes and we gradually come to feel ourselves within the earth — please note I am saying within the earth — as though within a great organism. We have left our own world and this inner world, this inner reality, becomes a wide world, whilst the earthly world that was spread out around us now becomes an entity, a being, we must imagine ourselves to be within. As we grow out of ourselves our human world expands into a wide world; at the same time we grow into the earth organism and feel ourselves to be within it just as our finger, say, would feel itself to be part of the organism if it were to have conscious awareness.

That is the experience human beings will have, an experience quite frequently brought to expression by more poetic natures. It is very common for instance for people to compare their awakening in the morning with the awakening of nature around them, their life in the course of the day with the ascent of the sun, and dusk with the need for sleep that develops as we get tired. Such comparisons arise with the feeling men have of being part of earthly nature. They are not worth much, however, for they do not touch on what really matters. As I have said on a number of previous occasions, if we want to choose a comparison that is really in accord with the facts we cannot compare what goes on when we go to sleep and wake up with the processes occurring in nature outside. Instead, we must compare 24 hours in our life with the seasonal cycle of the year. We must take the whole cycle of the seasons to make a fair comparison with what happens in us in a single waking-and-sleeping cycle of 24 hours. [Note 57 See, for example, the lectures Rudolf Steiner gave (a) in Augsburg on 14 March 1913 and (b) in Stockholm on 8 June 1913, both in *Die Welt des Geistes and ihr Hereinragen in das physische Dasein* (GA 150). In English as (a) 'The Interactivity of the Good Progressive Powers and of the Retarding Forces — The Significance of These Truths for Teachers' in *Anthroposophical News Sheet* 16:45-8 (NSL 398) (tr. not mentioned); and (b) 'Nature and Spirit in the Light of Spiritual Scientific Knowledge' in *Anthroposophical News Sheet* 3:42-4 (NSL 147) (tr. not mentioned).] It is quite wrong to compare the period during which a person is awake—between waking up and going to sleep — to summer for instance. This waking state has to be compared to winter in outside nature whilst summer has to be compared to the sleeping state in man. Making the comparison we would therefore say: The human being goes to sleep and this means he enters into the summer of his personal existence, and in waking up he progresses into the winter of his personal existence. The waking state would approximately correspond to late autumn, winter and early spring. Why would this be in accord with the facts? Because, in evolving into part of the whole earth organism in the way I have indicated, we would indeed have to note that the spirit of the earth is asleep in summer. The earth is then truly asleep; the great conscious awareness of the earth's spirit is dimming. As spring comes the earth's spirit begins to go to sleep. It wakes up again in autumn when the first frosts come. Then it is thinking, it is awake and thinking. That is how a day for the earth's spirit corresponds to the cycle of a year.

Looking back upon a sleeping person we can indeed see how his going to sleep means that ego and astral body are leaving the body. A kind of plant-type activity does actually develop in the organism when astral body and ego have departed from it. Their departure initiates a particular activity in

the inner man. We really experience the first stages of sleep as the onset of a vegetative process, and sleep progresses in such a way that to the clairvoyant eye the body is pervaded with vegetative growth processes that are genuinely apparent to imaginative perception. This vegetation has a different way of growing from that of the earth's vegetation, however. These things can be told and they can be much meditated on and in this way we continue to make progress.

The plants of the earth grow upwards from the soil. It is different when we observe this 'plant growth' in man. The plants have their roots outside and grow into the human being. This means that we have to look for the flowers inside the human being. The human being is very beautiful when seen asleep by someone who has grown Clairvoyant. He is like a whole earth shooting and sprouting, with vegetation growing into it. The picture is to some extent marred, however, for we get the impression at the same time that the astral body is gnawing away at the roots. That is how the progress of sleep presents itself. The animal world consumes, eats up, the plants that grow in summer. And we find that our astral body acts like the animal world except that it gnaws at the roots. If this did not happen we would not be able to develop that core which we take through the gate of death. What the astral body makes its own in this way is the harvest of life which we do, in truth, take with us through the gate of death. I am describing things the way they appear to clairvoyant awareness. And just as winter comes upon the fruits of the earth and its frosts kill those fruits of the earth, so the entry of our astral body and ego into the etheric and physical body is like a frost coming to kill the vegetation, the spiritual plant growth, that has come up in the organism during the night.

The entity I have called the earth's spirit is indeed an individual entity, just as we are, except that it has a different form of existence with a year being a day for it. Within the earth's spirit we are able to perceive everything I have said of the impulse of Golgotha, [*Note 58 This is a subject frequently referred to, e.g. in the following lectures: (a) Nuremberg, 23 June 1908, in *Die Apokalypse des Johannes* (GA 104); in English as *The Apocalypse of St. John* (tr. Johanna Collis) (London) Rudolf Steiner Press 1977; (b) Kassel 6 and 7 July 1909 in *Das Johannes-Evangelium im Verhältnis zum den drei anderen Evangelien, besonders zu dem Lukas-Evangelium* (GA 112); in English as *The Gospel of St. John in Relation to the Other Three Gospels, Particularly to the Gospel of St. Luke* (tr. S. and L. Lockwood) Anthroposophic Press, New York and Rudolf Steiner Press, London 1948.] for within it we find the life-giving energy that was not in the earth prior to Golgotha. In it we find ourselves secure, accepted by the spirit which has gone through the Mystery of Golgotha. We become aware*

of this when we are able to enter fully into the state where the earth has become a being, an entity, of which we are part of the way a finger is part of our organism. It is inevitable therefore that when modern man enters deeply into the world in an occult way there is also a touch to this of religious immersion in the divine element that streams through the world, filling it with spirit. It is a fact that genuine perception of the spiritual world will never deprive man of religious feeling but rather make such feeling more profound.

I wanted to give an indication of what it really looks like when we enter into the world of images of spiritual reality. What we seem to be to ourselves in our ordinary everyday physical awareness is mere semblance, is only an inner core. Yet at the same time it has to be said that this is not correct, for it is not easy to find the words for these significant truths. What we seem to be to ourselves is always at our periphery when we are outside the body with our soul element. It is therefore not correct to say it is a core, for a fruit has its shell or peel on the outside and its valuable part inside. But many things are the other way round when it comes to the spirit, and the valuable Part of man is outside and the shell or peel equivalent is inside. The inner part is shell-like by nature and the spiritual part is what may be called the shell-like part in terms of space. We come to see when we take the path into the spiritual world that the human being is far from simple and indeed very complex. Something we have already made our own to quite an extent is the knowledge that man bears within him something through which he takes part in all the worlds that are accessible to him. Through our physical body we are part of the physical world, through the soul element within us we are part of the soul world, and, through our spirit, of the spiritual world. We extend into these three worlds. We know that when a human being takes the path into the spiritual world he will in fact experience himself in a kind of multiple reproduction. This is what causes anxiety. Our comfortable feeling of being of one piece is broken up and one does indeed get the feeling of belonging to several worlds. This may be presented from many different points of view. Today I shall take one particular point of view, drawing your attention again to what has been the basis of my recent lectures.

Considering the life of man in its inner aspects we must think of it as based on a number of principles, and when we step outside the body man will indeed be found to be divided into four principles. First of all there is the power on which our memory is based. Through memory we raise into consciousness the things we experienced earlier on in life. Memory creates a context for our life, making this life between birth and death a whole. A

second principle is the one we call thinking, the forming of ideas. I cannot define it in detail here, for that is not the point, but the activity of forming ideas takes place in the present. And moving further ahead we come to feeling and yet further on to will activity. Looking into ourselves, our own inner life appears in the activities of remembering, thinking, feeling and exerting our will. Now we may ask: 'What is the essential difference between these four functions of the soul?' Psychologists will merely list these functions as a rule, making no further distinction between them. We shall arrive at the truth only by going into the essential nature of these four functions of the soul. We shall then find that will activity is more or less the baby among our soul functions; feeling activity is older, thinking still older, and the activity performed in remembering is th'old man', the oldest of our soul functions. You will understand this more clearly if I present the matter to you from the following point of view.

It has been said on a number of occasions that man's development has not been on this earth only but that his present evolution was preceded by evolution on the Old Moon, the Old Sun and on Old Saturn. Man did not just come into being on this earth. To become what he is now he needed to go through evolution on Saturn, Sun and Moon. Now, you see, any will activity we develop is a product of man's earth life. Will evolution is not yet complete, in fact, and it is entirely a product of earth evolution. During Moon evolution man was not yet endowed with an independent will. Angels willed for him. Will activity may be said to have radiated in only with earth evolution. Feeling on the other hand was already acquired during Moon evolution, thinking during Sun evolution and remembering during Saturn evolution. If you now take this together with the thoughts expressed in my *Cosmic Memory* and *Occult Science*, [*Note 59 Steiner, Rudolf: Aus der Akasha-Chronik, 1904 (GA 11); in English as Cosmic Memory: Atlantis and Lemuria (tr. Karl E. Zimmer) Rudolf Steiner Publications, New York 1971. Die Geheiniwissenschaft im Umriss, 1910 (GA 13); in English as Occult Science: An Outline (tr. G. and M. Adams) Rudolf Steiner Press, London 1969.] you will discover an important connection. During Saturn evolution the first beginnings of man's physical body arose; during Sun evolution those of man's ether body; during Moon evolution those of man's astral body; and now, during earth evolution, the human ego is evolving.*

Let us now take a separate look at the process we call remembering. What is this? The soul retains something of the image of an event we have experienced just as a book we are reading has within it something of the thoughts of the person who wrote it. When you have a book before you, you are able to read and to think—not always perhaps, but I'll ignore that

— everything thought by the person who wrote the book. Remembering is a subconscious reading process; the record consists in signs the ether body has engraved into the physical body. If something happened to you years ago, you went through the experiences to be gained from that event. What remains of this are impressions made by the ether body in the physical body. When you recall the event now, the act of remembering is a subconscious reading process.

The hidden processes in the organism which enable the ether body to engrave the signs on which memory depends were in-formed into it during Old Saturn evolution. It is a fact that our organism holds within it this hidden Saturn organism. This may be perceived as a genuine entity into which the ether body is able to enter the signs which record the experiences that come from outside, to recall them again in the process of remembering. Essentially, man owes this subconscious recording faculty to the fact that his body, and specifically the element within the physical body which is to receive those imprints, is still pliable during the first seven years of life. It is therefore important not to subject children to forced memory training. I have drawn attention to this in *The Education of the Child*. [Note 60 Steiner, Rudolf: 'Die Erziehung des Kindes vom Gesichtspunkte der Geisteswissenschaft' (1907) in *Lucifer-Gnosis: Grundlegende Aufsätze zur Anthroposophie aus den Jahren 1903–1908* (GA 34): in English as *The Education of the Child In the Light of Anthroposophy* (tr. M. and G. Adams) Rudolf Steiner Press, London 1975.] During the first seven years the still pliable organism should be left to its own elementary powers and we should not use coercion. We should tell children as much as we can but not attach too much value to artificial memory development, rather leaving the child to itself where memory development is concerned. This is a point where spiritual science is of tremendous importance in educational life.

The ability to remember is thus one of the oldest elements in human nature. The activity on which thinking is based is part of what may be said to have evolved on the Sun. It, too, is relatively ancient. The Sun-forces contain a principle which organizes man's ether body in such a way that it is able to perform this specific function of thinking, of forming ideas. So you see that it is necessary to go far, far back in the cosmos in order to answer the question: Why is man able to remember, and why is he able to think? It is necessary to go back as far as the Saturn and the Sun stages of evolution.

To consider man's ability to feel we need only go back as far as the Moon, and for will activity to earth evolution. This will make many things clear to you. Certain individuals bear a particularly strong imprint of earlier incarnations; they are not pliable but clear cut. Much will imprint itself upon their organism. These are people with an almost automatic memory who however cannot be very creative in their thinking.

The faculty of remembering thus relates predominantly to the physical body; the ability to think to the ether body; man's feelings and emotions to the astral body; and his will activity above all to the ego. Man is only able to refer to himself as T because he is a creature of will. If he were only able to think, life would proceed as in a dream. All this means that we are an organic complex of soul functions which were imprinted into our soul life in the course of evolution. I have said that our will activity only evolved during earth evolution and that spiritually higher hierarchies, the Angeloi, willed for man on the Moon. The result was that during Moon evolution all will activity in man was such that if we recall it to clairvoyant consciousness we will indeed see it to have been at a higher level, yet it was involuntary will activity in man, as we see it in animal evolution on earth today. Animals will of necessity follow whatever seethes and boils up within them for they live within the common will of the species.

During Moon evolution, therefore, spiritual entities of a higher kind, the Angeloi, did our willing for us. Now, the spiritual entities of a higher kind are active in determining our karma from one incarnation to the next. The Angeloi are no longer active in our will but in the ongoing stream of our karma. During Moon evolution man did not feel his will to be his own; in the same way we do not, living on earth, believe that we make our own karma. It is controlled by spirits from the higher hierarchies. Only at times when our will is for once able to be still, as it were, will it be possible to have a glimmer of the progress of karma even for nonclairvoyant consciousness, a progress that normally stays hidden.

Please hold on to the fact I have stated — that a core forms in man which enters into the spiritual realm through the gate of death. This core is the vehicle for our karma. Karma has today already determined what each of us will be doing tomorrow. We would be able to see through our karma if it were not our mission on earth to develop the will. We would be able to see through it to the effect that we could under certain circumstances foresee our immediate future. But the will irrupts into the karmic stream and this

obscures the prospect, say, of what will happen to us tomorrow. The will has to be completely silent; only then will it be possible for something to come through of what will happen not through us but to us.

As an example, let me give you a story told of Erasmus Francisci. [*Note 61 von Schubert, Gotthelf Heinrich: Die Symbolik des Traumes (Leipzig 1840) S. 10 f*] This is based on the truth. As a young man Erasmus Francisci lived with his aunt. On one occasion he dreamed that a man whose name was shouted out to him in his dream was going to take a shot at him, but that he would not be killed, for his aunt would save his life. That was his dream. The next day, before anything had actually happened, he told the dream to his aunt. She got rather worried, telling him that someone had been shot dead quite recently in the neighbourhood. She strongly advised her nephew to stay at home so that nothing might happen to him. She gave him the key to the apple loft so that he might go up at any time and get himself some apples. The young man went up to his room and sat at his desk to read something. Yet what he had been reading was of less interest to him at the moment than the key to the apple loft which his aunt had given and which was in his pocket. He decided to go up there. Hardly had he got up from his chair when a shot rang out and the bullet went exactly to the place where his head had been. If he had not got up the bullet would have gone straight through him. A servant in the house next door — whose name was indeed the one called out to Erasmus Francisci in his dream, a name not known to him before — this servant had not known that the two guns he was supposed to clean were loaded and the gun went off as he started to handle it. If Francisci had not got up to go to the apple loft at that very moment, his aunt having given him the key, he would without doubt have lost his life. His dream therefore had shown exactly what was to happen the following day.

An event occurred of which we are able to say that the will was in no way involved, for Francisci would not achieve anything with his will. He could in no way protect himself; something irrupted into the karma of this individual to the effect that this life was to continue. The spirit controlling his karma had already had the idea that would save his life. The dream represented the pre-vision of the spirit guiding the young man's karma, perceiving what was to happen the next day. Francisci's state of soul was such that a certain depth had already been achieved through natural meditation as it were, and as a result something occurred which I might also compare with something in external life. I think you will agree that man's gift of prophesy with regard to external life on earth is rather limited. In a certain sense we are all prophets for we all know that dawn will come at a certain time

tomorrow and so on, or someone walking across a field today will be able to say what that field is going to look like tomorrow. He will not be able to foretell whether rain is going to fall on that field the next day and so on. It is the same with regard to the inner life. Man lives according to his will, and his karma lies within that will. It is possible to develop a certain sense for what is coming next, and in the same way there are certain people whose inner soul has been deepened and for whom an inner point of light may arise for events where the will has to fall silent. It is important in the pursuit of spiritual science to consider such things on occasion, for we then see that there certainly is something alive within man that points to the future, something man is not able to encompass in his ordinary state of consciousness. Karma emerges through a will that has fallen silent.

All the things brought before our soul in this way through spiritual research are able to show us that what we call the great illusion consists predominantly in man being unable to perceive the full picture, in his ordinary consciousness, of what he is — that man is part of the whole world whilst his ordinary consciousness really only shows him the shell, as though he were enclosed within his skin, and so on. Yet what he is shown within this enclosedness is merely a fraction of what man really is, for he is as big as the whole world. We really only look back on man from the outside in ordinary life. In becoming fully aware of these things we can gradually develop a feeling for the presence in man of what is known as his ether body. It is indeed possible to make observations in ordinary life that show at least this second human being, the etheric man, within the physical human being. Imagine you are having a nice lazy lie-in one morning, not feeling inclined to get up as yet; you'd like to stay in bed and it is difficult to find the resolution to get up. If you depend entirely on what is within you it will be difficult to reach the point of getting up. But now imagine there is something in the next room which you have been waiting for during the last few days. The thought occurs of something out there and you will find that this thought can bring about a minor miracle. You will find that once you enter into this thought for a bit you will actually leap from your bed! What has happened? As you woke up, entering again into the physical body, you felt whatever the physical body made you feel and this was not likely to give rise to the thought of getting up. Your ether body then came to act independently, because you engaged it in something outside yourself. There you can see how you have been opposing your ether body to the physical body and how the ether body took hold of you and lifted you out of bed. You arrive at a very specific feeling regarding yourself, the feeling of being an onlooker and making distinction between two kinds of human actions which we perform. There are the actions we

perform in the ordinary run of life and those where one is aware of inner activity coming to the fore. These are rather subtle observations and it is, of course, always possible to deny them. We have to attune our observations to life and really see through life and the way it presents itself. Then man's whole inner perception will move in the right direction. It has to be clearly understood that the path to the spiritual world cannot be achieved all at once. It gradually leads out of the world so that we ascend to the point I have just referred to, where what used to be the world for us loses its deadness and itself becomes a living entity.

Gaining in insight, man thus grows together with the spiritual world. He grows together with what we may call his portion which remains when he has put away from him everything gained through the instrument of the physical body, everything which essentially made up his life between birth and death. In going through the gate of death we grow into a world very similar to the one I have just spoken of as the one revealed to higher perception. And then we shall discover something that is very important. In the world we enter on passing through the gate of death, if we want to make ourselves at home in it in the right way, we shall just as we need a light to illumine a dark room — need whatever we have been able to develop within our innermost souls whilst here on earth. Earth life is not something to be regarded merely as a dungeon, a prison cell. It is certainly part of the natural progress of evolution that man has to go through the gate of death. And he can of course live the life between death and rebirth. But life as a whole exists in order that every part of us adds something that is necessary, something new. As we go through the present cycle, life here is to give us something that ignites like a torch, so that we are not merely alive in this life of the spirit but gain insight and live so as to illumine the whole of this life. The light which illumines us is the one thing we gain between birth and death that shall remain for our life between death and rebirth.

This is the one thing of which we must say again and again that as many people as possible must come to understand it, particularly in the present time. All we come to understand of the spiritual world whilst here in the physical world in our physical bodies shall be as a flame to illumine the life of the spirit. In a certain sense all the difficult things the most developed part of mankind has to go through in the present time serve as a reminder that we need to deepen the life of the soul, and it will have to come about that from the depths of the human soul a longing is brought forth for the worlds of which man is part because of his soul. Let us hope that the present time will cause a longing to arise in which every soul says to itself:

Man is something quite different again from what he appears to be in so far as he wears the garment of a body. May the events we are experiencing serve to remind us of the need to deepen our soul life, to let the soul become immersed in spiritual perceptiveness, spiritual vision.

Out of our awareness for this need to enter deeply into spiritual science in the present time, and the awareness that the difficulties of the present time are intended as a warning, let us again conclude the way we have always concluded these meetings. I hope it will be possible to continue in the not too distant future. For today let us conclude with the words:

*Out of courage shown in battle,
Out of the blood shed in war,
Out of the grief of those who are left,
Out of the people's deeds of sacrifice
Spirit fruits will come to grow
If souls with knowledge of the spirit
Turn their mind to spirit realms.*



12

The Group Sculptured for the Building in Dornach

10 June 1915, Berlin

Dear friends, once again let us first of all remember those who are out there at the front, in the great arena of present-day events:

*Spirits of your souls, guardian guides,
On your wings let there be borne
The prayer of love from our souls
To those whom you guard here on earth.
Thus, united with your might,
A ray of help our prayer shall be
For the souls it seeks out there in love.*

And for those who because of those events have already gone through the gate of death:

*Spirits of your souls, guardian guides,
On your wings let there be borne
The prayer of love from our souls
To those whom you guard here on earth.
Thus, united with your might,
A ray of help our prayer shall be
For the souls it seeks out there in love.*

May the spirit we are seeking as we work towards spiritual knowledge, the spirit who has gone through the Mystery of Golgotha for the good of the earth, for the freedom and progress of man, be with you and the hard duties you have to perform.

Dear friends, it is to be hoped that the karma of the age, the karma of our movement, will one day permit the completion of the building at Dornach which is to further our movement. A group carved in wood will be given an important place in that building, in the part of it which goes to the east.

The aim is to bring to artistic expression, artistic in terms of spiritual science, and to put there before our physical eyes in that building the substance and content of our spiritual movement, and, above all, to represent what our movement is intended to signify for the present age and for the further cultural and spiritual development of mankind. Every detail is to be arranged in such a way that it may be seen as part not only of a spiritual scientific whole but also of artistic forms and indeed artistic installations and furnishings.

That is for example how we are trying to solve the problem of acoustics in the building. I am sure these problems cannot be solved at a first attempt, but orientation will be given by showing that calculations based on geometry and the usual rules applied in the external art of architecture cannot solve the acoustics problem. The solution will only be found by applying spiritual science.

The roof structure will be a double cupola functioning like the resonance board of a violin. This will partly bring to expression the acoustic concept of the interior space. Many details would have to be taken into account in elucidating the design specifically with regard to the way words and sounds are to be given their proper value, quite distinct from the way they are commonly treated in the present time. One does not normally design circular buildings specifically for their acoustics. Most buildings are designed in such a way that an individual note cannot be given proper value distinct from those that come before and after it, for at certain points one note will always flow over into another. We are going to try and achieve a space where each musical sound can be appreciated in all its fullness from all corners of the interior space and where clearly spoken words, too, can be given full value. But I only want to mention this briefly. My main topic will be the carved group which will be occupying an important position in the building. It is primarily a group of three. More may be added, and this can perhaps be discussed at some later date. These things are not done in accord with a pre-set fixed idea but on the basis of intuitions of the spiritual world that arise in the course of the work.

Three distinct figures are of primary concern. One stands erect, expressing the true essential being of man — not in symbolic form, the way attempts have been made to interpret it even among us, but in a genuinely artistic way.

Of course, it will be apparent in the figure that earthly humanity found expression in its most concentrated form in the figure in which the Christ dwelt for three years. It will be possible to see the figure as an expression of the Christ. But the issue should not be forced. We must not approach the group with the thought: 'I am now going to look upon the Christ.' If someone arrives at the idea out of their own feelings and out of artistic Intuition, that will be good — but it would be wrong to approach the group with the preconceived idea that that is the Christ. The point is not immediately to introduce symbolism again, saying 'That is the Christ'.

The figure stands by a small rock slope; behind it the rock rises up high. Its feet stand upon a projection of the rock and within this there is a deep cave. Another figure is sitting in the cave. I would say it is crouching there. This figure is intended to give expression to something that relates to the figure standing above it. This appears to be letting some kind of forces radiate, stream forth, from its hands: We see how those forces radiate into the cave in the rock. The hand is within the cave; forces radiate from it, creating the impression of a hand in the rock. We see the hand, yet it is not a hand; the forces are present, creating the imprint of a hand.

Only the head of this figure really has a form reminiscent of man, resembling man. Apart from this it has huge bat-like wings and the body is that of a dragon or worm. Something may be seen to be winding itself around this figure, with the figure itself writhing beneath it. And you will see that this has to do with the erect figure, that it is connected with the outstretched hand of that figure. Forces radiate in, from this hand, and these cause the winding and binding. If we allow the picture to act on our soul for a while we may come to feel that this is the gold flowing within the clefts of the earth and that the figure in the cave is held fast in the clefts of the earth by the gold.

The other hand points upwards. And up there on the rock is Yet another figure. Again the head appears human; the wings are not those of a bat but hang down to the ground. The form of the body is such that we may get an inkling... — well, what does this body represent? This body gives the impression that the whole person has become a face, as though a face has been stretched, drawn out like elastic, and body contours have arisen

from this. This figure is on the highest pinnacle of rock and it is falling down. As it falls the wings are broken. We see the hand reaching up from the main figure leaving its imprint in the wing.

And so we have three figures: Man in his essence; beneath him — no doubt you have an inkling who it is — Ahriman banned to the clefts of the earth by the power emanating from the outstretched hand of the principal figure, held fast by the gold in those clefts because he makes his own fetters of this. The other hand reaches upwards, breaking the wings of Lucifer and causing him to fall to the depths.

The point is that in the present time no one can produce such a work by simply applying the rules of the art of sculpture. (There has actually been some sort of an attempt at this when the idea had been put forward in a lecture.) It is not a question of expressing the idea in symbols; for every single trait in those three entities, down to the smallest detail, has to be created out of insight gained through spiritual science. The countenances of Ahriman and Lucifer, both resembling the human countenance, will have to be given a form that reveals the contrast between them. In the case of Lucifer this will involve the Peculiar way the upper part of the head is shaped so that it is merely reminiscent of the human. All is movement here within the spirit, nothing can force us to keep the various elements that make up the brow in the confines prescribed for the human brow. Every single element of the upper head is as mobile as the hands and fingers on our arms are mobile. It can of course only be represented like this if those movements are the genuine movements found in Lucifer. Something else to be noted is that this figure also contains an element which has remained with Lucifer from the Moon. This projects above a deeply receding countenance.

It will be evident to you from my description that we are dealing with something very different from the ordinary human countenance. It is as though the skull had an existence of its own, with the part which in man is the countenance pushed in beneath it. Another thing is that particularly in Lucifer there is a certain connection between ear and larynx. These two organs have only been cut apart in man since he started to live on earth. On the Moon they were a single organ. The small wing-like structures on the larynx were tremendously expanded at that time and then formed the lower part of the auricle (external ear). Huge auricles developed more or less in that region, with the upper ear, which now extends outwards, developing out of the brow. Today these organs are separate, and when we speak or sing those activities are directed outwards and it is only the ear

which listens. On the Moon they went in an inward direction and from there into the music of the spheres. Man was one great ear. The reason for this is that the wings were the ear. And so you have the ear, the larynx and the wing-like structures moving in melody and in harmony with the sound waves of the cosmic ether and these give rise to the peculiar appearance of Lucifer. They introduce something that is macrocosmic, for Lucifer merely shows in localized form something that in reality is entirely cosmic.

You will realize that concessions have to be made so that people do not get a shock on seeing a face that does not have human form. You will also realize that it has to be an elongated face. Lucifer has to look like an elongated face, for he is all ear; the wings are all ear' a long drawn-out auricle.

Ahriman is the exact opposite, and it comes naturally to merely hint at things in Ahriman that in Lucifer are fully modelled out and enormously expanded. In Lucifer the wing-like brow is greatly developed, in Ahriman the lower jaw. The whole of the world's materialistic attitude comes to expression in the development of the masticatory organs and teeth.

Of course, none of this can be done on the basis of such a description — instead, the description had to be made afterwards—Special importance, dear friends, attaches to the following. It proved necessary in modelling the principal figure to deviate from what would seem natural to everybody, which is to make the human countenance symmetrical. A countenance usually appears symmetrical. There are of course minor asymmetries but these are scarcely noticeable. In the case of the principal figure it is a question of the whole of the left side being orientated upwards, towards Lucifer, with the left brow formed differently from the right, the latter tending towards Ahriman, The left side of the face follows the upward moving hand, the right half the downward moving hand. And so it comes to expression that the principal figure had to be given greater inner mobility than one would find in a human being.

Above this sculptured figure the whole theme will be shown in painting so that the two may be seen in juxtaposition to demonstrate how the arts differ. Painting cannot convey the same thing in the same way. Everything has to be presented in a different way.

I want to stress the following. It will be very important for us to sculpt the movement of the hands in the principal figure — the way the left hand moves upwards and movement of the other hand is downwards. We must

make sure no one immediately feels that the principle figure is reaching up for Lucifer with the left hand, breaking Lucifer's wings with its emanations, and wrapping veins of gold around Ahriman. This must be avoided for the specific reason that at the present time in particular we are still in the process of really grasping the Christ through spiritual science. The Christ neither hates nor does he love unjustly. He does not stretch out his hand to break Lucifer's wings. The Christ is the one who stretches out his hand because it is his innermost nature to do so. He does not break Lucifer's Wings, but Lucifer up there cannot tolerate the emanations coming from that hand and breaks his wings himself. It has to be brought to expression in the figure of Lucifer that his wings are not broken by the Christ but that he breaks them himself. It is something one sees quite often in life that people living close to good people cannot tolerate this, for the influence of those good people makes them feel ill at ease. Lucifer feels something in his heart of hearts that causes him to break his own wings. Here Lucifer comes to recognize himself, to experience himself. The same holds true for Ahriman. Christ does not do anything to those two, neither his left nor his right hand is stretched out to harm either Lucifer or Ahriman. He does not do anything to them but they bring everything upon themselves.

This is the basis on which spiritual science intervenes in the present age to present Christ in his true light. Understanding this, we have to say: These things are put forward in all humility, for the building at Dornach is only a beginning — as yet feeble and imperfect — intended merely to show where the path leads, a path we can in no way claim to be perfect. I therefore ask you to take what I am going to say as being in no way presumptuous but very matter of fact.

There have been many portrayals of the Christ in the course of history. One of the greatest among them is Michelangelo's *Last Judgement* in the Sistine Chapel. Consider the Christ shown in the Last Judgement. His stature Napoleonic, poised in the ether, he shows tremendous power as he directs the good to one side and the sinner to the other. That is a Christ who cannot be the Christ of the future, for he rewards the good and condemns the evildoers. Future Christians will reward and condemn themselves because of what has come into the world through Christ. Michelangelo lived at a time when the most profound truths relating to the Christ could not yet be given expression. The figure presented by Michelangelo in fact has Luciferic traits on the one hand and Ahrimanic traits on the other. Those are painful words to have to say today. But the civilization of mankind only progresses when we show that past ideals cannot be our ideals for the future. The ideals of the future will be such

that the Christ principle is taken to be what it is and not merely what it does or will do when earth evolution has reached its end. It will be a principle which will cause to happen whatever has to happen within souls, just because it is there. The wood sculpture we will be placing in an important position in our building will also give expression to the fact that the view held of Christ until now cannot continue on into the future, because the relationship between Christ, Lucifer and Ahriman has not been rightly understood until now. We cannot understand the Christ unless we also have the right relationship to the powers seen as Lucifer on the one hand and as Ahriman on the other, for these are genuine cosmic powers.

The issue can be made clear by referring again and again to a pendulum. The pendulum swings to the left and to the right. Moving to one of the extremes it is not in a state of balance, and the same holds true for the other extreme. Yet it would be idle, inert, lazy if it were always to stay in a state of balance, if it were not to swing either way. It is in the right position when at the centre, but it cannot stop at the centre, it has to swing to the left and to the right.

Human life is like that. We are not in a position to say: 'I'll get away from Lucifer or get away from Ahriman'. If we were to say that we would not be living. It would be like a pendulum that does not swing. Human life does indeed go through pendulum swings, swinging towards Lucifer on the one hand and Ahriman on the other. We must not be afraid of this; that is important. If we were to run away from Lucifer there would be no art; if we were to run away from Ahriman there would be no science. All art not fully penetrated by spiritual science is Luciferic and all science that is not spiritual science is Ahrimanic. That is how man swings to and fro between extremes. The important point is to realize that he wants to be in balance, not at rest. There was a time when people said it was necessary to avoid the Luciferic element, to free oneself from it by being an ascetic. But it is important not to run away from the Luciferic element but truly to face up to Lucifer; we must really swing towards Lucifer on the one hand and Ahriman on the other. The point is that they are opposing forces, like other forces in nature such as positive and negative electricity, magnetism and so on. What matters, then, will be to recognize the triad of the Luciferic element, the Ahrimanic element and that which is the Christ principle. There has to be inner recognition of the inherent greatness of the Christ, a greatness not yet to be found in Michelangelo's Christ. That, dear friends, is what has to be achieved by working with spiritual science. At present we only have the beginnings of an insight that will have to become commonplace.

You see, I have also said here during these last weeks that from certain points of view Goethe's *Faust* has to be considered the greatest poetic work there is. [Note 63 15 April 1915: 'Der Schauplatz der Gcdanken als Ergcbnis des deutschen Idealismus' (incomplete set of notes. unpublished).] It is one of the greatest works ever produced by man because Goethe was able to give such tremendous depth to the human element.

Goethe attempted to make Faust a genuine representative of mankind. As I have said on a number of occasions, Mephistopheles is basically a mixture of Lucifer and Ahriman. [Note 64 Rudolf Steiner: *Goethes Geistesart in ihrer Offenbanmg durch seinen Faust und durch das Marchen von der Schlange und der Lilie* (GA 22): in English as *Goethe's Standard of the Soul* (tr. D.S. Osmond) Anthroposophical Publishing Co., London 1925. See also note 22.] What was the situation where Goethe was concerned? The situation was that he was not aware of there being two principles, Lucifer and Ahriman, and his Mephistopheles is hodgepodge of Ahriman and Lucifer. They are both contained in his Mephistopheles and that is the reason why the whole great work of Goethe's *Faust* [Note 65 Rudolf Steiner in his lecture 'Das Weltbild des deutschen Idealismus', Berlin. 22 April 1915. in *Arts schicksaitragender Zeit* (GA 64) p. 431 ff.] did not turn out to be what it might have been if Goethe had been in a position to show Lucifer to on side of Faust and Ahriman to the other. Then the threefold nature always present in mankind would have been apparent. That indeed was the problem Goethe had with his *Faust* [Note 4 *The Mission of the Individual Folk-Souls in Relation to Teutonic Mythology Christiania* 1910 (GA 121)] You see, when he started to write the work he could only take it as far as he himself had got by the 1770s. He was aware that the four disciplines representing science — philosophy, jurisprudence, medicine and, as he put it, 'theology, too, alas' — were inadequate. These Ahrimanic disciplines could not satisfy Faust. They merely gave him an Ahrimanic, intellectual relationship to the workings of the universe. He wanted access to the reality of the universe, to go to the sources of life and experience; something living, not thought up. Something living—the earth's spirit — appears on the scene. Yet Faust cannot endure his presence. And then — this is in Goethe's very first draft — the door opens and in comes Wagner. So many people keep talking about Faust today and one has the feeling that one hears Wagner talking about Wagner. People generally talk 'Wagner-style' about Faust as he appears on the stage. What exactly does Wagner represent? And what is coming in with the earth's spirit?

We know that all knowledge gained of the universe is knowledge gained of oneself. It is a part of Faust himself that enters with the earth's spirit, though it is part of the expanded soul that identifies with the cosmos.

Faust, however, is as yet unable to understand it. He cannot yet reach out to that element which is also part of himself. It is shown in the play how far he has developed. If we were to stage *Faust* properly today — more properly perhaps than even Goethe did — we would have to let Wagner appear as a slightly caricatured second Faust wearing the same costume and makeup; for it is another aspect, another part of Faust, that enters with Wagner. Faust himself says later: he was '...a worm, cringing with fear'. [*Note 66 Faust 1, verse 498.*] Then he understands himself. The earth's spirit has called out to him: 'You are like the spirit you understand and not like me!' [*Note 67 Faust 1 verses 512-13.*] And now comes the spirit he understands — Wagner. And so, one might say, it goes on. The earth's spirit has not been grasped and the figure which appears next is really only the earth's spirit in another form: Mephistopheles. He appears as Lucifer guiding Faust through everything the human being is capable of experiencing by following only his passions — lower passions in Auerbach's Cellar, and also more noble passions, though these are taken as far as witchcraft and black magic. In Part 2 Ahriman should really be taking Lucifer's place. All this is apparent if one reads Faust with real understanding, and there is also plenty of external evidence. I have already said on an earlier occasion that among the material later cut out by Goethe was a passage where Mephistopheles was referred to as Lucifer. [*Note 68 This probably refers to verse 527 in Goethe's Urfaust: 'He acts as though he were a prince's son.*

If Lucifer had a dozen of such princes,
they'd be sure to bring something in for him.']

Goethe always felt uncomfortable in presenting this figure which really is two figures. The Luciferic element emerges particularly when Faust's religious feelings come to the fore, made to sound peculiarly high-flown in his conversations with Wagner. Catechized by Margaret in their conversation about God, Faust says:

*'Feeling is all that matters,
The name is but an empty sound,
Smoke to obscure the warming glow of heaven!' [Note 69 Faust
1, verses 3456-8.]*

And this is considered the highest form of presenting the divine, as the highest form of presenting the religious element. No need to think — 'Feeling is all that matters'; this suggests that all we are able to have by way of a religious element is whatever the Margarets of this world are able to grasp, forgetting that Faust is giving instruction to a girl of 16, giving her only as much as she is able to understand. What he says about 'smoke to obscure the warming glow of heaven' is not intended for philosophers, and it shows lack of understanding when knowledge at the 'Margaret level' is over and over again seen in professorial array.

It is evident from all this that Goethe initially gave expression to the Luciferic principle in its double aspect. In Part 2 it is more the Ahrimanic principle, with Mephistopheles causing the Homunculus to be created, Helena to be conjured up and all the things that give Faust a knowledge of the world that is entirely different from everything he had 'studied assiduously, in zealous toil.' [*Note 70 Faust 1, verse 357*]

It has to be said that even today there is much misunderstanding where many of the details are concerned. There is the passage where it is expressly said that Homunculus intends that something within man shall be developed to fully human status: '...and you'll have time until humanity is attained', [*Note 71 Faust 2, verse 8326*] for the path first leads through lower regions. The words are: 'But do not strive for higher accolades' (in German, *nach Orden*). [*Note 72 Faust 2, verse 8330*] Very curious explanations have been given for this. In reality the words should of course be — Goethe was once again using the Frankfurt dialect — 'But do not strive for higher places' (in German, *nach Orten*). It does not mean to say that Homunculus and others like him are awarded decorations the way people are.

Then there is the scene where Homunculus is created and Wagner describes something stirring in the retort:

.....
'There, it emerges! The mass is stirring, getting clearer, Super-creation getting ever nearer.' [*Note 73 Faust 2, verse 6855-6*]
.....

The word super-creation is a compound of creation just as superman is a compound of man. People have only been talking of the existence of superman since Nietzsche wrote of 'superman'. [*Note 74 Nietzsche: Also*

spach Zarathustra (In English *Thus Spake Zarathustra*), Vorrede, 3 and 4: also Part 3 'Der Genesende'.] Yet Goethe spoke of superman long before that. As it is, people read the word to be *UeberZEUGUNG* (conviction) when in fact it is a compound of *Zeugung* (procreation, creation) and therefore *UEBERzeugung* (super-creation), just as we speak of man and superman.

These things have to be understood in detail before we can perceive what Goethe intended to say. But we also need to achieve a grand and independent vision. We really have to realize the mission of our age where spiritual science is concerned, and that a mind like that of Goethe was seeking to prepare his age for this mission.

In 1797 when Schiller pointed out that he ought to complete his *Faust*, Goethe said he had dug the old tragelaph up again — a tragelaph being a creature half-animal and half-human. [Note 75 See Correspondence between Schiller and Goethe. 6 December 1797. Goethe had already communicated to Schiller on 22 June of that year that he intended to complete his *Faust* and Schiller furthered the project by showing continued interest.] Goethe called it an old tragelaph, and at the end of the 18th century he called it a barbaric composition. This is something we must take very seriously for Goethe knew well how good and how bad his *Faust* was. All these are things spiritual science should bring out so that we achieve independent vision where these things are concerned. Goethe wanted to show the spiritual self, the immortal part of man, working to attain to higher things. This is evident from an outline he wrote around the turn of the 18th century as to what he intended his *Faust* to be. First he wrote: 'Pleasures of life for the individual, seen from outside' then: 'Pleasure of creation, seen from within'. Finally, when he had followed Faust's path all the way, he wrote: 'Epilogue in the chaos on the road to hell'. [Note 76 Reproduced in the commemorative edition. *Die Faustdichtungen, Paralipomena* Vol. 5, p. 541 (Artemis, Zurich 1949).]

Oh! the discussions I have had to listen to on the subject! They are enough to cause the deepest surprise, for people were reflecting: Did Goethe really still believe at the turn of the 18th to the 19th century that his *Faust* would have to go to hell? The answer is simply that it is not *Faust* who is speaking the epilogue but Mephistopheles, taking his departure when *Faust* has taken the path to his immortal self.

We therefore see something in *Faust* that is on the way, though only on the way, to what the dominant sculptured group in our building is intended to convey — the figure of man in truly concrete terms. On the one side appears the one tendency followed by the pendulum of the soul, on the

other the opposite principle. It is not possible to truly understand the nature of man as long as one is merely holding everything together or looking for a duality. That is the essential point. We must hold on to the fact that it is indeed German culture out of which this idea will take form. Two civilizations on this earth represents opposite poles and in making reference to them one is showing their justification rather than otherwise. On the one hand there is purely Oriental culture. What does it consist in? The Oriental nature of this culture consists in purely inward deepening being sought, casting off all that is merely external process in this life. We observe how in the culture which represents the highest flowering of Oriental culture, in the Indian culture, all instruction, all knowledge, is designed to influence the soul to the effect that it becomes free of the physical body. It is a purely Luciferic culture, an entirely Luciferic culture. The further east we go the more we find the Luciferic element.

And when we consider the West, what do we find there? Let us go straight away to the extreme West. It is natural for us, particularly if we have learned something of spiritual science, and I want to illustrate this with an example — when we see someone who comes to accept a more spiritual philosophy where previously he followed a more materialistic one — it is natural for us to ask ourselves: 'What goes on in the soul of such a person?' It is particularly when we see such a major change in the soul of a person that we have to enter into the heart and mind of this person to share in the experience his soul has gone through. Nothing appears more significant to us than to share such an experience with another human being.

You see, in America people have also been seen to go through what is known as 'conversion', that is a change from a materialistic to a spiritual point of view. And what does one do? One sits down — I am presenting rather a radical picture, but it does happen like this — one sits down and writes to these people, asking them to give the reasons why they underwent such a change of heart. And then — well, one then makes a table, establishing categories, like this for instance:

Category 1 Fear of death and of hell (making a pile of those letters) — 14%

Category 2 Altruistic reasons, selflessness

Category 3 Egocentric motives — 6% (categories 2 and 3)

Category 4 Striving for a moral idea — 7%

Category 5 Bad conscience and awareness of sinfulness — 8%

Category 6 Obedience to teaching (1, 2, 3 letters)

Category 7 People have reached a certain age (1, 2, 3 letters), And then

Category 8 Imitation (1, 2, 3 letters). — 13% (Categories 6-8)

Again a category of people who have seen others believing in God and have imitated them. Then

Category 9 Getting a hiding — 19%

And so you have 'conversion'.

This, then, is the opposite. In Indian culture there is no regard for what goes on externally. It would seem quite wrong to an Indian, he would call it 'mad', to work out the percentages of the converted in such a way, classifying the motives that led to their conversion. In the West no heed is paid to the inner life, all trace of the inner aspect is wiped out. The most external aspect of all that is external is here compiled in tables, purely Ahrimanic. If we go to the East: innermost inwardness, purely Luciferic. Thus the globe may be said to show us the contrast between Ahrimanic and Luciferic trends. And between those two we are not at rest but in balance. It is not a question of simply rejecting the one or the other of them. We have to be aware that a culture that really extends into the future consists in finding the right measure for both, knowing how to give each it proper due.

The whole of earth destiny is brought to expression, I feel, in the sculptured group. It is the mission of Europe to establish the balance between East and West. In the East the pendulum swings to one side, in the West to the other. It is not for us Europeans merely to ape the East or to ape the West. It is our mission to stand our own ground quite independently and give full recognition to the rightful existence of the one as well as the other. That comes to expression in the sculptured group. The work put in a particular position within our building therefore also relates geographically to our mission. It is placed to the east, but with its back to

the east, facing west. It is in a state of balance, holding within it the fruits of a long sojourn in the East; and it will not be satisfied with the purely Ahrimanic culture which is what the West has to offer mankind.

Dear friends, if our age can come to understand these things, doing so in a thinking way, with feeling, and bringing perceptiveness into it—there is no reason here for pride — it will become clear to our age that even the very painful and profoundly saddening events happening now only serve to make mankind aware of the mission it will have to fulfil in the immediate future. It is only to be hoped that the tremendous and painful experiences mankind now has to go through will truly serve to deepen human hearts and minds. Unfortunately it is true that nothing of the great seriousness the present age demands of us is to be found in what is currently brought to expression in the spoken word and also in literature. Much will still have to come upon human hearts and minds before they are really filled with the great seriousness of purpose — and it is a comforting seriousness — that man will be supported in the tasks set before him. Seriousness is demanded of us, but on the other hand it is a comforting seriousness, a bringer of hope and confidence. We merely have to realize that we are living in an age when great things are asked of us, but that we are also capable of doing these great things. Nor can we come to a pessimistic view of things in the present time.

On Tuesday 22 June I shall go into these things in more detail, throwing additional light on certain points. I also intend to speak of man's immediate task for the future and the way spiritual science will help to achieve this. [Note 77 The lecture notes do not include the mantram which Rudolf Steiner usually spoke in those days.]



13

The Prophetic Nature of Dreams: Moon, Sun and Saturn Man

22 June 1915, Berlin

Dear friends, once again let us first of all remember those who are out there at the front, in the great arena of present-day events:

*Spirits of your souls, guardian guides,
On your wings let there be borne
The prayer of love from our souls
To those whom you guard here on earth.
Thus, united with your might,
A ray of help our prayer shall be
For the souls it seeks out there in love.*

And for those who because of those events have already gone through the gate of death:

*Spirits of your souls, guardian guides,
On your wings let there be borne
The prayer of love from our souls
To those whom you guard here on earth.
Thus, united with your might,
A ray of help our prayer shall be
For the souls it seeks out there in love.*

May the spirit we are seeking as we work towards spiritual knowledge, the spirit who has gone through the Mystery of Golgotha for the good of the earth, for the freedom and progress of man, be With you and the hard duties you have to perform.

Today it will be my task to sum up some of the things we may know already, though it is good to review them again and again, for they may serve as guide-lines for our work in spiritual science.

Above all we must every now and again return to the thought that our present life on earth, between birth and death, really is an interlude between our many past earth lives and the many lives we have already lived between death and rebirth on the one hand and the many earth lives and lives between death and rebirth that lie ahead in the future on the other. An interlude is what I have called this life of ours. We may therefore expect to find something in our present life that may, as it were, be considered to have arisen out of what has gone before, and also something that may be seen to point us towards the future. Some of the things we shall discuss today will relate particularly to the latter.

A person could easily believe, in considering his life, that there is really nothing in this life to indicate that the germs, the seeds of our future life are already within us. Yet that is the case. It really is the case that what is to happen with us in the future is already in preparation. We merely have to interpret our lives correctly and we shall find out that something already lies hidden within us just as the plant now before us holds within it the hidden seed of the future plant' for a plant that is still to come into being.

One element in our present life which often tends to be incomprehensible is our dream life, a subject only too well known to us all. Our dream life does of course have aspects that we may consider to be to some extent comprehensible. We dream about things which remind us of something or other we have gone through in life. It does, of course, often happen that things we have gone through the day before or some time ago appear changed in our dreams, that they have undergone some kind of transformation. But still, it will often be fairly obvious that part of the life we have behind us comes up in what we are dreaming, even if it has changed. On the other hand I think no one who pays at least some attention to himself and the world of his dreams can deny that there are dreams which show us such strange things that we really cannot say they derive from something or other we have gone through in our lives. It really is a fact that a person only needs to reflect a little on his dreams and he will be perfectly aware that things come up in his dreams which he could never have thought up, could never have had an idea of, at least as far as he is aware from what he remembers.

We shall understand how all this fits together if we take a closer look at what really happens when we dream. As you know, when we are asleep we are outside the physical and ether bodies with our astral body and ego. The physical and ether bodies are lying on the couch; with our astral body and ego we are outside them. Under present conditions on earth it is not possible for any one to have conscious awareness of what the astral body and the ego go through whilst they are asleep — unless they somehow acquire special faculties. These things are at a subconscious level. However, clairvoyant perception shows that what the astral body and ego live through outside the physical body is just as rich and varied, just as clearly defined, as what the physical body experiences. It is just as rich and varied, showing just as great a variety of form as many of the things we experience here on the physical plane. Our consciousness cannot take it in, but it is there and it is experienced. The astral body and the ego are normally so far away from the physical and ether bodies during sleep that these are not aware of anything that goes on in the astral body and the ego. Dreams arise when the astral body and the ego come so close to the physical and ether bodies that the ether body is able to receive impressions of what goes on in the astral body and the ego. When you wake up knowing that you have been dreaming, it strictly speaking means that the contents of your dream have become conscious because the astral body and the ego were re-entering. And before the physical body was able to become conscious of having the astral body and the ego within itself again, the ether body became conscious of this. The ether body rapidly took in what the astral body and the ego had experienced and this gave rise to the dream. A dream therefore arises through interaction between astral body and ether body.

As a result the dream is given a particular colouring. It is given a kind of coating, one might say. As you know, at death the human being departs with his astral body, ego and ether body and the ether body then immediately sees the past life in retrospect. This vision of the past life is in fact attached to the ether body and the review comes to an end when this dissolves. The ether body therefore has the capacity for carrying the imprint of all the events in one's life. The ether body really bears the imprint of everything we have gone through in life.

This ether body has a very complex structure. If we were able to dissect it out in such a way that it retained its form, it would be a mirror of our present life, a picture of our life going back to the moment, the point in time, to which our memory extends. As we enter into the ether body with our astral body and ego and the ether body comes to meet the incoming

astral body, it carries things — memories of things it has experienced — towards that which is coming in with the astral body and it uses its own images for what in the astral body is something real.

I want to put it more precisely. Let us assume someone is asleep and with his astral body and ego out there encounters, let us say, another individual. The person will know nothing about this. He experiences the encounter; he experiences a certain friendly feeling towards the other and knows that he is about to do something together with this other individual. Let us assume he experiences this outside his ether body. This is possible. Yet he'll know nothing about it. Then the moment of waking comes. The astral body and the ego return to the ether body, bringing towards the ether body whatever has been experienced. The ether body meets the astral body with all that is inherent within it, with its world of images, and the sleeper dreams. He dreams of something he undertook maybe ten, twenty years ago. And the person will say to himself: 'Ah yes, I have been dreaming about something I experienced ten, twenty years ago.' But if he reflects carefully he may well find that the past event has undergone a complete change. It will still, however, remind him of something he experienced in the past. Now what did really happen in this case? If we follow the process carefully, using clairvoyant perception, we find that the ego and astral body have experienced something that in fact will only take place during the person's next incarnation: an encounter with an individual, something or other which has to do with the individual. But the person is not yet able to take this in with his ether body, for this only contains, is only able to hold, the images of his present life. When the astral body enters, the ether body expresses what really is part of a future life in images belonging to the present life. This peculiarly complicated process actually takes place all the time in the human being when he is dreaming.

Considering everything you have already heard in spiritual science, this will not seem strange to you. We must be aware that in the principles which depart from our physical and ether bodies, in the astral body and the ego, we have that which tends towards our next incarnation, which is preparing in us for our next incarnation. As we gradually learn to separate our dreams from the images deriving from our present life, we come to know the prophetic nature of dreams. The prophetic nature of dreams can indeed be revealed to us; we merely have to learn to strip our dreams of the images in which they are clothed. We need to consider the nature of the experiences in our dreams rather than the actual experience. We might say to ourselves for instance: The fact that I dream of an individual is due to the nature of my ether body, the way in which my ether body goes out

to meet the experiences gained by the astral body with images relating to the present. To identify the things which have already been prepared for our next life, we have to focus our attention more on the manner or essential nature of the dream, separating it from the image belonging to the ether body. Through our dreams we really have prophecies in us of things that will happen in the future. It is really most important to pay serious attention to this. Human life will be more and more revealed the more we take account of its complex nature. We'd like to have it simpler, that would be easier, but the fact is that it is complicated.

You see, someone who is in the outer, physical world does not realize that there are all kinds of things within him. We have just come to see that there is a foreteller of future lives within us. But there are many other things in us, and in gaining self-knowledge we come to see more and more of what there is in us, what is at work within us, making us happy or unhappy — for all the things that are in us make us happy or unhappy. People do not usually realize that prior to this earth life they went through life on Moon — not they themselves but that which has made them human beings on earth. We know something of life on Moon and also of earlier life stages on Sun and on Saturn. Let us first of all consider life on Moon. At present we are of course living earth lives, but life on Moon was essential if earth life was to come about. Life on Moon was preparatory, producing the causes of life on earth, and in a certain way this Moon life is still in us. On Moon man had a dream-like clairvoyance. He perceived reality through dream images. Today we still have in us what we once have been on Moon; it is still in us. Yes, I know Moon man has become earth man, but this effect still holds its original cause within it, we still have Moon man in us. Looking upon this Moon man we are able to say: 'He is what we call the dreamer in us.' Yes, indeed, We all carry a dreamer in us, a dreamer who actually thinks and feels and uses his will in a less dense, in a thinner, way, but who is really also wiser than we earth individuals are. We have a dreamer in us. We all carry another subtle human being within us. The way we walk about on earth, thinking, feeling and using our will, is something we have been given in the course of earth evolution. What Moon evolution has left in us is a dreaming human being. We are however given more in this dreamer than we are able to have in our thoughts, feelings and will impulses, and this dreamer is not entirely inactive. We do not take him into account, but we do many, many things that we are really only half aware of, things the dreamer in us is directing and guiding. We arrange things, but the dreamer in us also does his part, guiding our thoughts in this or that direction. We may think up a sentence, for example. The dreamer will make us say that sentence in a specific way, giving it a point, a particular

nuance of feeling. The dreamer is what is left in us of Moon. Let us refer to an outstanding individual and show how the dreamer can be found in him. When people get to know people in life, or get to know outstanding individuals through their writings, they usually consider the other as a human being on this earth and not as a dreamer, a poet. Yet it is there that he expresses himself more profoundly.

Emerson was a great writer. [Note 78 Emerson, Ralph Waldo (1803–82) American philosophic writer and essayist. Quotes taken from his *Essays and Poems* Collins, London & Glasgow 1954.] He had the peculiarity that he always became so engrossed in whatever subject he was dealing with that it is easy to show up the occasional contradiction in his work. The reason is that he was always completely taken up with the subject he was dealing with at the time, failing to take into account that what he was characterizing at the moment was contradictory to the characterization he had given when involved in another subject. In the case of Emerson it is always possible to detect subtle undertones of his Moon being, of the dreamer, wherever he became completely involved in a person or an object. Emerson wrote two excellent essays — one on Shakespeare as the typical poet and one on Goethe as the typical writer. Now what happens is that people read this and that in Emerson's essay on Shakespeare and read this and that in the essay on Goethe and this satisfies them, they are content. But we can also take things further and say to ourselves: 'Surely there is some subtle touch of something unusual in these works of Emerson?' And We shall discover something very strange indeed, for Emerson's intention was not to characterize Shakespeare as Shakespeare, but to make him the representative, the example, of poets. It is very strange to see what has come about through Emerson's becoming engrossed in Shakespeare — if we perceive the subtle undertones that are present in this work.

You know I would not say anything derogatory about Shakespeare out of chauvinism, for nationalistic reasons. Of course I consider Shakespeare a great poet, certainly one of the greatest poets of all time. But let me bring out those subtle undertones that are there in Emerson's characterization of Shakespeare. He wrote that it was not originality which made a great man. Characterizing a great poet one should not demand such a great person to be original in everything he did.

And you'll find that in his characterization of Shakespeare Emerson makes it clear that the poet went to all kinds of sources, taking anything he liked and using it in his own poetic works. Emerson was making an effort, as it

were, to excuse Shakespeare for not being original, for collecting his material from all kinds of sources — Italian, Spanish, French and German — and of course also from English history. Oddly enough, Emerson, a man giving such loving concern to the work of Shakespeare, characterized Shakespeare in the following words:

'Great men are more distinguished by range and extent, than by originality. If we require the originality which consists in weaving, like a spider, their web from their own bowels; in finding clay, and making bricks, and building the house; no great men are original. Nor does valuable originality consist in unlikeness to other men.'

He excused Shakespeare's lack of originality, the fact that he collected his material from many sources. Indeed, he went so far as to say that one had to consider the nature of English audiences at the time, for Shakespeare sought to be to their taste. Emerson wrote some strange things about Shakespeare:

'It is easy to see that what is best written or done by genius in the world, was no man's work but came by wide social labour, when a thousand wrought like one, sharing the same impulse.'

And the strangest thing Emerson said about Shakespeare in his loving characterization, the strangest thing—please listen to this:

'It has come to be practically a sort of rule in literature, that a man, having once shown himself capable of original writing, is entitled thenceforth to steal from the writings of others at discretion.'

Emerson was therefore trying to demonstrate Shakespeare's world renown exactly by showing that great men plagiarize on each other's works and that the themes he used in his numerous works were actually taken

from the work of others. That is the subtle undertone to be found initially in Emerson's Shakespeare characterization.

Let us now consider his loving appreciation of Goethe. Emerson characterized Goethe as representative of writers. Yet he said with reference to Goethe that nature depended on her wonders being put in words. Every stone, every plant, every creature in nature was waiting to be uttered in words by the soul of man. The writer, Emerson said, would be in immediate contact with nature. It was as though the creator himself has first made provision for the idea and then one day the writer would appear. It was strange, Emerson said with regard to Goethe, how this man owed none of his gifts to his people, his country, his environment, for everything bubbled up out of him. Truth and error, too, was determined by Goethe himself, everything was his own.

In his characterization of Goethe, Emerson sought to find his concepts from all kinds of sources. Characterizing Shakespeare as a splendid robber he presented Goethe as someone working out of the centre of the world, as nature herself. Here are some passages from Emerson's description of Goethe:

'The secret of genius is to suffer no fiction to exist for us; to realize all that we know in the high refinements of modern life, in arts, in science, in books, in men, to exact good faith, reality and a purpose; and first, last, midst, and without end, to honour every truth by use.'

Elsewhere he said:

'I find a provision, in the constitution of the world, for the writer.'

He characterized Shakespeare as being the way his audiences wanted him, Goethe as a man who had been envisaged from the very beginning of the world.

'He is not a debtor to his position, but was born with a free and controlling genius.'

And again:

'He sees at every pore, and has a certain gravitation towards truth. He will realize what you say. He hates to be trifled with, and to be made to say over again some old wife's fable, that has had possession of men's faith these thousand years.'

Those words were used to characterize Goethe. In his characterization of Shakespeare, Emerson said that he could never do enough to collect material from all kinds of sources, particularly written sources. I would say that in his characterizations of Shakespeare and of Goethe Emerson succeeded marvellously well in bringing out the difference between Shakespeare and Goethe. Out of what we feel about this we are then able to discover what the dreamer has contributed in either case, that is how Emerson came to characterize Shakespeare as a great robber and Goethe as the great ally of the truth. This is extremely interesting, for there was no conscious intention; yet there is this particular tinge to both essays.

You see, there is another way of reading than just picking up a book and going through it. In fact we do not find out the most important aspects of things if we just take them by themselves, but only by comparing them, by letting one thing act on us side by side with another.

It has been possible for me to give this example because in the case of Emerson it is often the dreamer who is speaking. It is absolutely possible to be aware of two persons speaking in his voice. Emerson was of course aware of the contradictions which your run-of-the-mill reader finds in his works. After all, some of the contradictions in Emerson are so glaringly obvious you really cannot miss them. On the one hand he calls the English the greatest nation on earth, on the other he puts the Germans above them. One thing is said out of surface consciousness, the other out of the dreamer. It is particularly interesting to read the two conclusions to the essays on Shakespeare and Goethe one after the other, taking them simply as conclusions. In the essay on Shakespeare, Emerson wrote that none has

as yet attained to what the poet represented in the world: 'The world still awaits the poet-priest.' Something of a feeling of resignation is apparent in the conclusion of the Shakespeare essay. At the end of the Goethe essay we find the exact opposite: that we are spurred by him to revere all truth by not merely giving it recognition but also making it the guide-line for our actions. The Shakespeare essay ends in words of resignation, the Goethe essay in words of confidence and hope.

We are living in an age when it is important to consider these things to some extent, to realize them to some extent. We shall find that in all human beings there is a dreamer who makes himself known through their actions. Clairvoyant awareness is able to perceive him directly; in ordinary life we can recognize him by studying people. That is something we can do in the case of Emerson. Studying Emerson is of definite interest.

The dreamer is the principle in us which is influenced by everything that is supposed to influence us from the spiritual world without our being aware of it. In the experiences we gain as human beings on earth we form thoughts and will impulses. The things we know in the ordinary way are the things we discover in the course of life. Into our dreams however come the Inspirations of the angels, of the entities known as the Angeloi. These in turn are inspired by entities from higher hierarchies. Into our dreams enter things — more so in some and less in others — that are more sensible than anything we have gained from everyday life, anything we encompass in everyday life as we think, feel and use our will. The element that guides us, the element which is more than earth-dwelling man is or ever was, enters into the dreamer in us.

You see, this dreamer is capable of evoking many things that at present are unconscious in us. Oh yes, everything influencing us from the higher world by way of the entities belonging to the hierarchy of the Angeloi influences the dreamer; but all Ahrimanic, all Luciferic influences also influence the dreamer, they really act on the dreamer. A great deal of what people put forward—not entirely from their consciousness, I'd say, but at an instinctive level — is due to influence brought to bear on the dreamer from the spiritual world.

Again I would like to give you an example. I would like to take this example from contemporary history on a somewhat wider scale. I have told you on several occasions that we come to know the European peoples by understanding the way the folk soul speaks through the sentient soul to the Italian, through the intellectual or mind soul to the French, through the

spiritual soul to the English, through the ego to the Germans, through the spirit self to the Russians. This communication through the spirit self in the case of the Russians takes the form of instincts today that will only develop further in the future. What the Russian folk soul has to say will only become apparent in the distant future, once the human soul has developed as far as the spirit self. This is why everything that emerges to the east of us is still only germinal. Those peoples to the east of us are, however, instinctively aware that they belong to a different cultural stream. They feel that they must wait. Yet no one likes to wait in reflecting on his awareness of the present. The point is that they are supposed to wait and consciously absorb European culture. Yet there is an instinct in them that they ought to lead and to guide, that they cannot put Europe to death quickly enough. The natural course of events, however, is that in Central Europe there develops whatever can develop in the dialogue between the folk soul and the ego.

As for the Russian folk soul, it must learn its lessons from Central Europe. Once it has worked through what is already being worked through in advance in Central Europe, it will be able to make its own Contribution to European culture. Instead, wild, chaotic instincts are giving rise to something very strange so that we are able to see that these instincts are brought to life in the dreamer out of all kinds of Ahrimanic and Luciferic impulses. It is due to these Ahrimanic and Luciferic impulses that the East of Europe has now turned against Germany in such a horrific way.

One mind in whose utterances the dreamer is apparent is that of Yushakov [*Note 79 Yushakov, Seigel (1849–1910): Der Englisch-Russische Konflikt Petersburg, 1885.*] He gave his views in 1885 on the relationship between Russian and English culture. I suggest you consider his ideas, for it seems most desirable that as many people as possible today ideas like those which not all that long ago arose in the mind of a Russian who then wrote them down. We should consider these ideas not so much for their content but rather as symptoms of something to be found in all Russian peoples. develop

Yushakov said that the West had grown decadent and was ripe for decline — everything in the West had outlived its time and had to disintegrate. Russia would have to come in at this point. But Russia should not merely cultivate the West, redeem the West from its barbarism; Russian would have to redeem the whole world and Particularly Asia. The way Yushakov envisaged this redemption of Asia for the sake of the soul is as follows.

Let us consider Asia. Asiatic culture really originated from Iran. Iranian culture based on Ormazd. [Note 80 *Ormazd (German spelling 'Ormuzd') is equivalent to Ahura Mazda (translator).*] The Iranians had realized that there was conflict between Ormazd and Ahriman and it has always been possible to see how the Iranians did everything in their power to spread the beneficial influence of Ormazd in Iran. Then, however, the Turanian peoples appeared on the scene. They were independent of Ahriman and constantly harried, fought and overcame the Ormazd culture. First Ormazd was in conflict with Ahriman in Iran. But If we look at the way the peoples of Europe behaved towards this Ormazd culture we find that this lovely culture had spread in the areas which were then predominantly colonized by the English. The English were absolute barbarians when it came to the Ormazd culture. Russia will have to make up for many crimes committed by the English in Asia. The English went there, took possession of large parts of Asia and exploited the Ormazd culture, sucking it dry. What did the English have in mind? Those Englishmen believed the Ormazd culture to exist for their benefit; those Englishmen said that all those parts of Asia existed only to wear English fabrics, fight among themselves with English weapons, work with English tools, eat from English dishes and play with English trinkets. Asian culture, they felt, existed for no other purpose. The whole of Asia was to their mind booty won by England. Yushakov put it very precisely:

'England is exploiting millions of Hindus, and her whole existence depends on the obedience of the various peoples inhabiting that rich peninsula. I desire nothing of this kind for my own country — I can only rejoice that it is sufficiently far removed from this brilliant yet at the same time also lamentable situation.'

That was written in Russian by Yushakov in 1885. And what did the Russians do? Yushakov asked. They had not been able to emulate the Western European nations, the English, and without legal justification attack and arrogate for themselves the Ormazd culture which existed in Asia. They only went to the places where the Ahriman culture had spread, holding back the peoples in whom Ahriman was at work, so that they could do no further harm to all that Ormazd had achieved for Asia. Once the Russians had liberated the peoples of Asia from the evil of Ahriman they would have to liberate them from the evils due to the sins the English had

committed against the Ormazd culture in those areas. To prepare for their future mission in Asia, following the liberation of Asia from Ahriman, they would also have to make good the harm European peoples, and above all the English, had done to the Ormazd culture. Asked why those peoples were unable to carry on with the Ormazd culture, Yushakov's reply was that they had become slaves to industrialism and individualism, that they always thought of themselves first whilst the Russians always thought of themselves last. Such people were of no use. Having blended industrialism into their individualism they had become bloodsuckers in Asia. Russia, he said, would forge different links; a link between the Cossacks, with their brilliant military skills, and the country people who were working with nature. Out of this would come the people who were to liberate the people of Asia. The individual who was to liberate human evolution would come from Asia. That was Yushakov's ideal — that the one to liberate the world would come out of the union between the Cossacks and the country people tilling the soil.

Dear friends, you see an ideal set up here that surely makes it clear beyond doubt that something of the Ahrimanic spirit entered into Yushakov's own mind, into the dreamer. This influence on the dreamer has gradually created a mood in a whole nation — the mood we now perceive in the people who are to the east of us. We are dealing here with a popular mood, a mood brought to expression in Yushakov's words.

You see, I also wanted to show how spiritual science lets us enter more and more closely, giving us deeper insights, into what people say and dream. We all have the dreamer in us, the dreamer is in all of us. Both good and evil powers influence the dreamer.

We have the dreamer in us who has brought Moon nature into us, and we also have a Sun man in us from Sun evolution. This Sun man, however, is no longer able to dream. His conscious awareness is of the same kind as that of the plants. We have within us a plant or Sun man, who is asleep. And then we have in us a Saturn man who is completely dead, as dead as a stone. We have the Sun man in us who is asleep and also Saturn man who is at an even lower level of consciousness, below the level of consciousness we have in sleep. Saturn man I'd say, is our oldest cause, the innermost core in us. All the knowledge man gains at the present time in external life or in science is gained because the external world influences the Saturn man in us. We are not aware of being influenced in this way, but we are nevertheless influenced. Everything we think, feel and will

penetrates to Saturn man. And Saturn man is what finally remains of us on this earth, irrespective of whether we are cremated as far as our physical body is concerned or whether we decompose.

The principle we call the dreamer does not endure; the Sun man does not endure. Saturn man becomes part of the elemental realm of the earth in form of very, very fine dust particles. This endures. The earth will always contain a trace of what there has been in us. If you investigate the elemental world today you can find in it the remains of Abraham, Plato, Socrates, Aristotle, though in the form of very very fine dust particles. You can find the part of them that was their Saturn man. The part of man that was his Saturn man is given to the earth, remains with the earth, remains in the earth with our permanent essential character.

It was not like this in earlier times. It has been like this since the 15th and 16th centuries. Previously, the whole of the human being dissolved; only those who had been well ahead of their time, like Abraham, Plato and Socrates, left their remains to the earth. By now, of course, it has gradually come to be like this for all people. For this is what is so strange: everything presently achieved by following the path of external science is imprinted in this Saturn man and becomes part of the earth when he does.

Everything else there is to man will be lost, dissolving into the universe once the earth has reached its goal. The minerals, plants and animals around us will pass away. Only the Saturn man you have been remains, in the form of fine dust particles. It will go over from earth to Jupiter existence, forming the solid skeleton of Jupiter. Those are real atoms for Jupiter. People studying external science today, people thinking in an external way, influence their Saturn man to the effect that they produce atoms for Jupiter in their Saturn man. That is how Jupiter get its atoms. If that, however, were the only thing to happen, the whole of Jupiter would be merely a mineral or mineral-like sphere. Jupiter would merely be a mineral-like sphere without plant growth. What we are able to take across to Jupiter through the Saturn man in us merely causes Jupiter to be a mineral sphere. Plants could not grow on it. If plants are to grow on Jupiter the Sun man in us must also be given something. This Sun man in us only receives something from now on and into the future if men and women absorb concepts developed in spiritual science; for the concepts we absorb outside, from external science, enter into Saturn man. What we absorb by way of thoughts engendered through spiritual science enters into the Sun man. This is why spiritual science calls for greater activity. Its thoughts differ from those of external science in that they are active. They have to

be grasped in a living way and it is impossible to remain passive towards thinking activity the way we do in the external world. In spiritual science everything has to be actively thought out, we have to be inwardly active. This has an effect on the Sun man in us. And if there were no Sun principle in man, the Jupiter of the future would be entirely mineral, with no plant world. People going through spiritual development take something across that will give rise to a plant world on Jupiter. Through the Sun principle in us we take across the future plant world. All we have to do to make Jupiter barren is reject spiritual science. We can establish spiritual science now in order that there shall be vegetation on Jupiter.

Unlike others, we spiritual scientists do not talk of the marvellous progress we have made. Just listen to a modern physician, one who is very much taking the present-day point of view, or to a modern philosopher and so on. They say: 'We need not go far back to find people who amounted to nothing at all. Someone like Paracelsus really was in idiot, and a grammar school teacher today is cleverer than Plato every was.' Plato's philosophy was thoroughly picked to pieces by Hebbel. The latter put down in his diary, as an idea for a play, that a grammar school teacher had a reincarnated Plato in his class. [*Note 81 Hebbel, Friedrich (1813-63): Tagebücher No. 1335: 'The transmigration of souls makes it possible for Plato to be getting a thrashing at school today because he is unable to grasp Plato.'*] He intended to make a dramatic figure of him, showing the schoolmaster to be dealing with his reincarnated Plato who was quite incapable of grasping anything his teacher was saying about Plato. Hebbel intended to make a play of this. It really is a pity he did not do so, for it really is a very good idea.

But we do not consider ourselves to have made marvellous progress. We hold a different point of view. What people consider philosophy today holds the ego-boosting view that anything going back ten years is already out of date. We know that we have to present spiritual science today the way we do. We also know, however, that a time must come when everything we now present as spiritual science will be a nonsense in a future where quite different work will have to be done within mankind. What we have to present as spiritual science today has the form appropriate for the moment, seeking out from eternity what will be for the benefit of the present age. A time will come, however, when it will be necessary for us to try and influence the dreamer in us just as we influence the Sun man, and the whole of our external science influences Saturn man. Jupiter as mineral mass will be based on what external science makes of Saturn man. Its vegetation will be based on what spiritual science makes of Sun man.

Animal life on Jupiter will arise from something that is going to follow on after spiritual science. It will be based on the spiritual science of the future. Then something else will follow which will influence man on Jupiter, something which is still to come. It will provide the basis for Jupiter culture in the real sense.

At present, therefore, we are in a period in life where we prepare the mineral nucleus of Jupiter through external science and where spiritual science influences its plant life, providing the basis for vegetation on Jupiter. The future will bring the principle that influences the dreamer, and this will provide the basis for animal life on Jupiter. Only after this will come the principle which corresponds to what man is today producing in his thinking, feeling and will activity. This is guided by higher wisdom to the effect that when earth evolution has come to an end man will be able to take himself, as man, across to Jupiter.

This is how we are involved in the evolution of the earth, and we perceive, out of our very own human nature, that we are part of the great world, of the macrocosm. We know that everything we do is of account. We know that in joining in the pursuit of spiritual science we contribute to vegetative life for Jupiter and that through the things we put in words we create what will be given to the future at the Jupiter stage of the world.

Just think, dear friends, as I have told you, everything belonging to the mineral kingdom will disperse in the world; everything belonging to the plant kingdom will disperse; everything belonging to the animal kingdom will disperse. Nothing will continue on from the earth except for the mineral atoms coming from man, from the Saturn parts of human beings. Nothing of the mineral, plant and animal worlds passes across to Jupiter. The only thing which will continue is the Saturn man now within us. This will be the mineral kingdom on Jupiter.

I do not know if some of our friends still remember how we first started many years ago in Berlin. We were a small band in those days — some who shared in the experience are still with us — and we started to consider these things.

Let us imagine ourselves on the Jupiter of the future. What are the atoms of Jupiter? They are the Saturn parts of present-day man. It is a nonsense to talk of atoms of the kind modern physicists speak of. Everything man gains from the whole of the earth enters into Saturn man and later becomes Jupiter atoms. It is pure nonsense to say that our minerals,

animals and plants contain what physicists are looking for in them. Our present earth atoms were prepared during Moon existence and are what will prepare us to be Sun men, just as we are now preparing the Saturn man in us. I have previously spoken of the way the atom is prepared out of the whole cosmos. You'll find this in the lectures given at the very beginning of our work in Berlin. [Note 82 See the lectures given in Berlin on 16 and 23 December 1904, in *Die Tempellegende and die goldene Legende* (GA 93); in English as *The Temple Legend* Or. John M. Wood) Rudolf Steiner Press. London 1985.] Today I'll have to be brief, also taking into account what we have gone through in the meantime.

Our stars, too — the external physical stars, the physical sun, the physical moon we see out there in the universe — that, too, is not the way physicists see it. Physicists would be most surprised if they managed to get up to the sun, for they would find nothing at all of what they have construed. They'd be most surprised at what they saw there. What we would find if we ever could travel up there — in accord with the times it would have to be in a balloon that is still to be invented, in an ether balloon — we'd find the unexpected. We would not find what the physicists have construed; we'd find nothing at all by way of a physical body. It merely looks like that. The sun, moon and stars are part of a whole that arose at some point after Moon evolution. After Moon evolution it was not only the Moon which perished but everything that is part of the visible universe entered into night. And everything there is in the universe today really belongs to the earth, so that the end of the earth will not only mean the plant and animal kingdoms perishing with it but everything out there in the cosmos perishing as well. The stars in their present form will perish into night. And then the future Jupiter world will emerge. Its atoms will be the Saturn parts of present man. Its environment will look very different from our earth environment.

A person considering all this today might ask: 'What will remain of the present world when earth evolution has come to an end?' Mineral, plant and animal kingdoms — all that disperses and passes away. What man gains today by virtue of being man, the external power of discernment he is acquiring, will pass over into the mineral kingdom of Jupiter. The spiritual science he gains will pass over as Sun man and establish the vegetation. What we say — the words we speak — will pass over. Anything moral that happens will pass over.

Was not the One who was to give meaning and direction to the whole of earth evolution able to say some very special words? Was he not able to say: 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away'? [Note 83 Mark 13:31. Mark 13:31.] Are we not now beginning to grasp the utter profundity of the words Christ spoke: 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away'? Is that not literally true?

Words coming from external science influence Saturn man and become the atoms of Jupiter. Words coming from spiritual science and influencing Sun man pass across to form the vegetation on Jupiter. That which acts on the dreamer passes across to form the animal kingdom on Jupiter. The moral progress made by man and what he gains through words of the spiritual science of the future — that will be man on Jupiter. It will be words, wisdom of thoughts. This shall endure. Everything all around us in the cosmos will perish. 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.'

So we gradually come to see words of profound wisdom flowing from this central place of activity we call Golgotha. They flow from that point. As I once said, the whole earth evolution to follow exists so that gradually men shall come to understand the words spoken by the One who went through the Mystery of Golgotha. Today I have tried to explain to you, out of the whole of spiritual science as we know it so far, Christ's words: 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.' Again and again in the future there will be people who know how to explain other words spoken by Christ out of spiritual science. There will have to be many of them before the full meaning of Christ's words can be understood, for they are words of guidance, words given out of the spirit, yet it will only be in the course of time that they can be understood out of what human beings are able to summon up out of the science of the spirit.

We need to enter into this with our feelings if we are to get a feeling for the utter uniqueness of the Mystery of Golgotha. Through perception directed upwards to the infinite we shall gain the marvellous insight into the one thing that has given the earth meaning from the world's beginning to its very end—the Mystery of Golgotha.

Dear friends, it will be another few weeks until we can talk again. And so it has been my task today to speak of something we are able to take into our hearts and minds and meditate on a great deal in the weeks to come. I wanted to put some ideas into your hearts and minds which you could then develop further. It always has been our summer task in spiritual science to

develop further what has entered into our hearts and minds so that our souls shall grow more alive and mature. We do not progress in spiritual science by absorbing it as something theoretical, by merely absorbing ideas, but rather by transforming those thoughts into our whole inner life, letting them become living experience. If we let this thought of how man is part of the whole macrocosm act on our souls, we will come to feel part of it all as human beings. Faintheartedness, hesitation, lack of hope will have to vanish before the magnitude of this thought. We must then at last come to feel ourselves human beings in all humility. And all we have been able to absorb of spiritual science, all that can and shall come alive in us out of spiritual science — as has always been our principle until now—needs to be given emphasis in the present day. Again and again we have to remember, as we consider things today, that the great events happening in our time are a warning. We must remember those who are leaving their ether bodies behind for us while still young, ether bodies that will be a great help to us in letting the spirit enter into the culture of the future. If the spirit is to come in there must be souls that understand something of these spiritual things, souls that look up into that world and know that up there is not only what, in abstract terms, is called attraction, but up there are the living dead, up there is what they have given to mankind on earth of their own life — their unused ether bodies. Souls that have some understanding of these things will have to work together, souls whose thoughts reach upwards to meet what is streaming down from the unused ether bodies of those who have died before their time.

We must fill our souls with this image of the spiritual streaming down to join the earthly. Above all, we must look up to the spiritual realm with all our thoughts, with the part of us that is already spiritual. This I have always summed up in conclusion in the words that shall also be our conclusion today:

*Out of courage shown in battle,
Out of the blood shed in war,
Out of the grief of those who are left,
Out of the people's deeds of sacrifice
Spirit fruits will come to grow
If souls with knowledge of the spirit
Turn their mind to spirit realms.*



14

The Cosmic Significance of Our Sensory Perceptions — Our Thinking, Feeling and Will Activity

6 July 1915, Berlin

Dear friends, once again let us first of all remember those who are out there at the front, in the great arena of present-day events:

*Spirits of your souls, guardian guides,
On your wings let there be borne
The prayer of love from our souls
To those whom you guard here on earth.
Thus, united with your might,
A ray of help our prayer shall be
For the souls it seeks out there in love.*

And for those who because of those events have already gone through the gate of death:

*Spirits of your souls, guardian guides,
On your wings let there be borne
The prayer of love from our souls
To those whom you guard here on earth.
Thus, united with your might,
A ray of help our prayer shall be
For the souls it seeks out there in love.*

May the spirit we are seeking as we work towards spiritual knowledge, the spirit who has gone through the Mystery of Golgotha for the good of the earth, for the freedom and progress of man, be with you and the hard duties you have to perform.

There are a number of things I want to recall in this extra session today, themes spoken of in different lectures which we shall bring together and consider from a particular point of view today. The rays of light which arise will then be directed at subjects we have previously considered from one angle or another. There is a particular prejudice, a feeling people have, which stops them from accepting spiritual science in the present age. People have so little idea of how small a proportion of whatever a human being accomplishes at any hour, any moment, basically is within his ordinary awareness of being a human individual in the physical world. Just consider how little we would be able to function as human beings if we were fully conscious of everything we needed in order to live as human beings. It is often stressed, and quite rightly so, that modern man knows very little — taking first of all the purely physical functions in life — how his brain, liver, heart and so on really work in order to accomplish what man has to accomplish to enable him to live on this earth as a physical entity. All the things man has to accomplish merely to let his external physical life progress — all those things he simply has to accomplish. But consider how little man is able to follow this with his conscious mind. Just consider some quite minor thing happening in everyday life and you'll immediately see that man as an entity in this world, an entity on earth, is one thing, and what may be called 'conscious man' is something quite different. In relation to what man is within his whole compass, this conscious man is small, very small indeed. It should therefore not come as a surprise that man feels a natural urge to extend this small conscious man more and more into the region that opens up when we consider man as part of the cosmos. We shall do this today by returning to aspects considered in earlier lectures and considering them in a different context.

Our conscious existence as a human being starts, in a way, with sensory perception, with everything our senses perceive of the world outside us. Sensory perception — the fact that impressions are made on our senses, with those impressions arising on the basis of certain processes, is something quite different from our being aware of this. Imagine you are sleeping with your eyes open, not closed. Hares are capable of this. Unless it were pitch dark the environment would constantly leave impressions on the eye, only you would not be aware of those impressions. Our ears are of course always open, and every sound, all the things we are constantly aware of during the day when we are awake, are of course also processed in the ear when we are asleep. Our sense organs may always be engaged in the whole process of earth life; yet any significance they may hold for us

depends on our following this process in the sense organs in conscious awareness' Only the things we take into conscious awareness are actually ours in this life on earth.

Do these sensory perceptions as we call them, the ability of our eyes, ears and so on to perceive, have significance only for us as human beings living on earth, or do they also hold a wider, cosmic significance?

To answer this question we need to use clairvoyant insight to form an opinion as to what it is that we actually see of the stars in the universe. I think we may say that people taking the point of view of materialistic physics would say: 'Well, when we see a planet, the light of the sun has fallen on it and been reflected, and that is how we see the planet.' That is, in fact, the way objects on earth are seen. Physicists therefore concluded, on the basis of mere analogy, that planets are seen in the same way. There is no reason at all why something applicable on earth — the conclusion that light falls on objects and these objects become visible through that light being reflected — should also apply to heavenly bodies. There is absolutely no reason to say that this conclusion also applies to the universe. As to the fixed stars, well, the physicists say these give off their own light. I remember how, as quite a young fellow, I asked a former schoolmate from our village school: 'What are they teaching you about light?' Even in those days I had listened with a certain youthful scepticism to what was said of the 'real' origin of light, of all the tiny dancing particles of ether and of light-waves. The other boy, who had had his further education at a seminary, had heard nothing of this as yet. He told me: 'Whenever the question came up as to the nature of light we were simply told: "Light is what makes bodies luminous".' Well, you see that really is saying something quite brilliant about light, to say that light is what makes bodies luminous. Yet modern materialistic physicists are not really saying much more than that when they say that we see heavenly bodies because they radiate light. It is very much the same in principle.

I did mention on another occasion that materialistic physicists might get quite a surprise if they were able to travel to the sun to look and see what the sun really is like. I said that because in fact there is nothing at all there in the place where the sun is. What we would find would be a composite of purely spiritual entities and energies. There is nothing material there at all.

If we use clairvoyant awareness to investigate the stars and inquire into the reason for their luminosity we find that what is actually there, what we call their luminosity, really consists in the ability to perceive, an ability

which is rather crude in man and more highly developed in other entities. If some entity were to look down on the earth from Venus or Mars and find the earth luminous, it would have to say to itself: 'This earth is luminous not because it reflects the rays of the sun, but because there are men on earth who perceive with their eyes.' The process of visual perception holds significance not only for our own conscious awareness but radiates out into the whole of outer space. The light of this particular heavenly body consists in what men do in order to see. We do not merely see in order to become aware of the results of visual perception, we also see in order that because of this process the earth becomes radiant to outer space. And it is a fact that every one of our sense organs has the function not only to be what it is for us but also has a function within the universe. Through sensory perception man is an entity within the cosmos. He is not merely the entity his conscious mind presents to him as a human being on earth, he is also a cosmic entity.

Considering the inner configuration of the soul at a deeper level, we come to our thinking activity. We are even more inclined to consider our thoughts our own. Not only are 'thoughts free from toll', as the saying goes, indicating that thoughts really hold significance only for the individual person, but it is widely thought that people merely go through an inner process when they think and that this thinking activity more or less holds only personal significance for them. The truth is very different. Thinking activity is, in fact, a process occurring in the ether body. And people know extremely little of what really goes on when they are thinking. Extremely little of what goes on when he is thinking enters into man's conscious awareness. As he thinks, he is aware of part of what he is thinking. Yet infinitely more thinking activity is associated with this even when we think in the daytime. What is more, we continue to think during the night, when we are asleep. It is not true that we stop thinking when we go to sleep and start again on waking. Thinking activity is continuous. There are many different dream processes, processes in our dream-life, and part of all this is that man's ego and astral body enter into his ether body and physical body on waking. He comes in with these two principles and finds himself in the surging billows of something very active and alive. Giving just a little consideration to this he will realize that these are weaving thoughts and that he is becoming immersed in an ocean consisting entirely of weaving thoughts. People often say to themselves on waking: 'If only I could remember what I was thinking just now. Those were very sensible ideas, something that could help me enormously if only I could remember!' And they are not mistaken. There really is something like a billowing ocean down there. It is the billowing, weaving, etheric world, and this is not

simply a more subtle form of matter, the way English theosophists like to present it, [[Note 84 Rudolf Steiner was probably referring above all to the works of Charles Webster Leadbeater \(1847 –1934\).](#)] but the world of weaving thoughts, something genuinely spiritual. We become immersed in a world of weaving thoughts.

As human beings we are really much more sensible and intelligent than we are just as conscious human beings. This is something that has to be admitted. It would indeed be most regrettable if we were no more sensible at the unconscious level than we are at the conscious level. For we could do nothing else in that case but repeat ourselves at the same level of intelligence life after life. In fact, we already have within us during our present life the potential for our next life; this will be the fruit. If we were always able to catch hold of this element we become immersed in, we would catch hold of much of what we will be in our next life. So there is billowing, weaving life down there. It is the germ of our next incarnation and this is what we take into ourselves. Hence the prophetic nature of our dream life.

Thinking is an immensely complicated process and man only takes a small proportion of what it involves into his consciousness. A thought involves something which is a process in time. Our sensory perceptions made in conscious awareness also make us part of the cosmos. The activity of seeing causes the earth to grow luminous and this makes us part of cosmic space. The processes involved in thinking activity make us part of cosmic time; all that happened before we were born and all that is going to happen after death plays its part in this. Through our thinking, then, we take part in the whole cosmic process of time, through our sensory perception in the whole cosmic process of space. Only the earth-based process of sensory perception is for ourselves.

Let us move on to feeling. We are even less aware of feeling activity than we are of sensory perception and of thinking activity. Feeling is a very profound process. You see, to discover the true significance of thinking, to find the real truth — that thinking has cosmic significance — it is necessary to progress to imaginative perception, as described in *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds*. [[Note 85 Rudolf Steiner: *Wie erlangt man Kenntnisse der höheren Welten?* \(GA 10\); in English as *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds: How is it Achieved?* \(tr. not mentioned\) Rudolf Steiner Press. London 1976.](#)] Stripping our thinking of the abstract nature we consciously associate with it, and entering into that ocean of weaving thoughts, we encounter the necessity to have not only the abstract thoughts in there that we have as citizens of

the earth but to conceive images in it. For everything is created from images. Images are the true or origins of things; images are behind everything around us; and it is into these images we enter when we immerse ourselves in the ocean of weaving thoughts. Those are the images Plato spoke of; they are the images all who have spoken of spiritual primary causes had in mind, the images Goethe had in mind with his archetypal plant. These images are to be found in imaginative thinking. This imaginative thinking is a reality and we become immersed in it when we enter the billowing world of thoughts that move with the stream of time.

We only enter into the depths of feeling when we attain to what is called Inspiration. This is a higher form of perception compared to Imagination. Everything that lies at the root of feeling in us really is a surging sea of Inspirations. Just as the image reflected in the mirror is merely an image of the object which exists in the world outside, so our feelings are merely reflections mirrored in our own organism of Inspirations that come to us from the universe. They are a mirror image which relates to the flowing movement in the universe the way a dead mirror image relates to the living creature it is reflecting. Each of those images reflects the attributes of entities belonging to higher hierarchies who express themselves in the world through Inspiration. If we do not stop at feeling activity but progress to clairaudient perception we perceive the world as the united activity of a great multitude of entities within hierarchies. The world is this entity arising out of the united actions of entities from the hierarchies. The deeds of the higher hierarchies are happening in the world. And we are involved. We are in the mirror. And the deeds of the higher hierarchies are reflected in our mirror. We then perceive what has been reflected — through conscious awareness. As human beings active in feeling, we live in the womb of the attributes of the hierarchies, perceiving those attributes because we have consciousness.

When it comes to being conscious of his feelings, man is even smaller compared to what he really is in his ability to feel than he is compared to his sensory perceptions and his thinking activity. As feeling human beings we are also part of the hierarchies, are also working in the sphere where the hierarchies are at work. We are active in creating the fabric. We perform deeds that are not for ourselves alone, deeds through which we share in the great work of building the world. Through our feelings we are the servants of the higher entities that are the world builders. We may think, as we stand before the Sistine Madonna for example, that this merely meets certain emotional needs in us. The fact however is that when

a human being stands before the Sistine Madonna and responds to the painting emotionally this is an entirely real process. If there were no emotional element, no element of feeling, the entities which one day are to share in the work of building Venus as a heavenly body would lack the powers they need to do this work. Our feelings are needed for the world the gods are building, the way bricks are needed in building a house. Again we have only partial knowledge of our feelings. We know the joy we experience as we stand before the Sistine Madonna, yet what is happening there is one element within the universal whole, irrespective of whether we have conscious awareness of this or not.

As to our will activity, this, too, is but a mirror, though in this case the essential nature of individual members of the hierarchies is reflected. We are also an entity within the hierarchies but at a different level. Our reality lies in our will. We give substance to the world by somehow or other letting our will live in reality. Again it holds true that, in so far as we follow our will activity in conscious awareness, this has significance only for us as human beings. But apart from this, our will activity is a reality which is the material the gods used to build the world.

So you see how our sensory perceptions, our thinking, feeling and will activity, have cosmic significance; how they are an integral part of the whole of cosmic life. It really seems that modern man should have a fair degree of understanding and should, with some good will, be able to accept these things. Occasionally we come across evidence of someone being aware that there is a small human being — the conscious human being — and a big human being who is the cosmic reality. Friedrich Nietzsche spoke of this in his Zarathustra, for he had some idea of it. The same holds true for many other people, except that they do not make the effort to follow the paths that will show how we progress from being a small human being to being the greater one. It is really necessary, however, that a fair number of people come to realize that the times have passed when it was possible to manage without such insight.

In the past, something still remained of the old clairvoyance that enabled people to see into the spiritual world. In those days they really were able to see the way man does today when he is outside his physical and ether bodies with his astral body and ego and out there in the cosmos. Man would never have achieved complete freedom as an individual and dependence would have been his lot if the old clairvoyance had persisted. It was necessary for man to take possession, as it were, of his physical ego. The form of thinking he would develop if he perceived the surging

ocean of thinking, feeling and will activity that exists below consciousness would be a heavenly form of thinking but not independent thinking. How does man achieve independent thinking?

Well, imagine it is night-time and you are lying asleep in your bed. It is the physical body and the ether body which are lying in your bed. As you wake up the ego and the astral body enter from outside. Thinking activity continues in the ether body. And now the ego and the astral body enter, first of all taking hold of the ether body. This does not take long, however, for at that very moment the thought may flash up: 'What have I been thinking? Those were sensible thoughts.' However, the human being has a strong desire to take hold of the physical body as well, and the moment he does so everything vanishes. Now the human being is wholly within the sphere of earth life. It is because man immediately takes hold of his physical body that he is unable to gain awareness of the subtle swell of etheric thinking. To have the awareness 'It is I who am thinking' man simply has to take hold of his physical body and make it his instrument; otherwise he would not feel 'It is I who am thinking' but 'It is the angel guarding me who is thinking'. The conscious thought 'I am thinking' is possible only if the physical body is taken hold of. Man therefore must be able to use his physical body. In the time that lies ahead he will have to make use of what the earth is giving him and take hold of his physical body more and more. His justifiable egoism will grow and grow. This will have to be counteracted by taking hold of the insights provided through spiritual science. We are now at the beginning of this era. People might say:

No need to concern ourselves with this. What do we care as to the intentions of the gods? We have no desire to enquire into the will of the gods. We'll accept whatever they offer us in the course of life on this earth; they give us the physical body to be an ever more powerful instrument for physical thinking. But to feel concerned that we should start to gain something else that is more than just power — that is too much of an effort. And we do not really have to. The gods could take another course.

That, too, is what people say, only they say it by inventing philosophies and so forth.

It has to be clearly understood that in the world it really makes no difference if we decide to put a limit on what is to happen, a limit to suit our reluctance to be personally involved. It is quite impossible for the measure meted out to man to be reduced. If man is intended to develop certain powers within a particular era and only develops part of them, the rest will nevertheless emerge. It is not true to say that they do not emerge. When you heat up an engine the excess heat supplied does not disappear; it radiates from the engine. In the same way nothing that exists in human life can disappear. It is not true, therefore, that mystical powers — so much despised by modern man — do not exist. Man is able to deny them, yet they continue to exist as part of this world. You can deny them, you can be a great materialist in your conscious mind, but you cannot be a materialist with the whole of your being. What happens is that those powers will, unknown to man, develop in such a way that he will offer to Lucifer and Ahriman what he would otherwise have offered to the legitimate gods. Everything you suppress in your conscious mind, everything you will not allow to unfold, you offer to Ahriman and Lucifer.

No culture in the present age, dear friends, can have been more intensely materialistic down to the last fibre of the soul than the Italian culture. Present-day Italian culture, the culture of the Italian nation, has developed through the influence of the folk soul on the sentient soul. It is the current mission of English culture to develop materialism. Materialism will be on the surface there, but it will be the way it ought to be. The earth does need a certain materialism and this is developing there. It is the mission of the British to bring materialism into earth evolution. With them it cannot take root in the soul as deeply as it does with the Italians. An Italian feels everything deeply and in him materialism takes root at the very deepest level. This is why present-day Italian culture goes into positive frenzies of nationalistic materialism and does so with all its soul, when in fact materialism cannot be accepted with the whole of one's soul. We may be its protagonists in the world but we cannot really develop an enthusiasm for it — unless we are part of the Italian folk soul. It is true that the present age is the most materialistic ever. It is equally true that among the people living in the south of Europe the most materialistic attitudes of all arise from the sentient soul. Fichte said: `Anyone who believes in freedom within the life of the spirit is really one of us.' [[Note 86 Fichte, Johann Gottlieb: *Reden an die deutsche Nation*: Nr. 7 \(Addresses to the German Nation No. 7\) \(Berlin 1808\).](#)] His conception of nationalism was one entirely determined by the spirit. There is nothing of this in the Italian concept of nationalism. In their case it is entirely a matter of blood substance — their nationalism

is entirely naturalistic. One man's idea of what constitutes a nation is quite different from that of another. An utterly nationalistic materialism is alive among the Italian people. This, of course, only relates to the present day.

You must realize that when the soul is so determinedly aiming for naturalistic materialism in what a nation is intending, the sense for the mystical cannot be lost on account of this. It persists. It is merely thrust out from consciousness and comes to rest elsewhere. It is not thrust out from man's true and innermost being. It now serves the powers we refer to by the technical terms of Lucifer and Ahriman. Those human faculties are then not directed along the path of the progressive deities but into the path, of Ahrimanic and Luciferic powers.

One would assume that something will have to emerge in those nations when powers of a mystical nature are thrust out into public life. Can we find something of this kind in the South, a stream of mystical will that has been thrust out?

It was in May 1347, on Whitsunday, that Cola di Rienzi [[Note 87 di Rienzi, Nicholas \(or Cola\) \(c. 1313–1354\), Tribune of the People at Rome. See Robert Davidssohn: 'Vom Mittelalter zu unsren Tagen' in *Süddeutsche Monatshefte* 12: 121. 1915.](#)] walked up to the Capitol in Rome at the head of a great procession. He was wearing ancient Roman armour, which was in accord with the sentiments of that time, and had four standards. The Capitol is the place from which speeches concerning Rome civilization were traditionally addressed to the Romans. Rienzi proclaimed that he had come to speak in the name of Jesus Christ, as a man compelled to speak to the Romans in the name of freedom for the whole world. Rhetoric was very much the order of the day at the time. It did have a certain significance then — in 1347 — but no reality. The whole was something like a puff of smoke. But that is not really my point. I want to draw your attention to the fact that this happened on a Whitsunday — on 20 May 1347. It was then that the man representing this whole stream called himself an ambassador of Christ. Later, when he had further elaborated his message, he also called himself a man inspired by the Holy Spirit.

It was also a Whitsunday that war was declared against Austria. Immediately before that a man who did not call himself an ambassador of Christ but nevertheless let it appear in what he said that he was filled with the Holy Spirit, had walked at the head of a large procession and made speeches in Rome. There certainly was no vestige in the soul of this man of the mysticism out of which Rienzi had formerly spoken. Yet — and here we

get an element of mysticism that has been thrust out — the words were again spoken on a Whitsunday. Yet they were spoken in the service of those other powers. The Christ impulse had been thrust out from consciousness. And that it was very much the Ahrimanic element—an element we must of course expect in the present age—is evident from just a few words that were said at the time. A 20th century orator could not, of course, arrive in Roman armour and with four standards and so he came in a car. That is the kind of sacrifice one has to make in this materialistic age. But somehow he had to bring to expression — perhaps unconsciously — that an element of mystical power thrust out by man had been ceded to another power and was now on the move in the outside world, having been turned into its opposite. This man who calls himself d'Annuncio — in reality he is called something else [Note 89 At a later date Rudolf Steiner changed the line 'Dich. tönend von Lob and Macht' to 'Dich, tönend von Licht und Macht' ('Thee ringing with praise and power' to 'Thee ringing with light and power'). See *Wahrspruchworte—Richtspruchworte*. Dornach 1951 (proposed GA 41).] — spoke in such a way that people might have believed all the great flaming speeches of Rienzi were coming to life again — it is easy to do this in Italian — deliberately making every sentence reminiscent of him. After his oration, which to the Central European mind consists of nothing but empty words, he picked up a ceremonial sword and he kissed this sword to indicate that the power of his oratory should pass into this sword. The sword was the property of the editor of a magazine one commonly sees around when one goes to Italy. The editor of a magazine had presented the sword to the Mayor of Rome as a sacred relic on this occasion. The sword belonged to the editor of the cosmic paper *Asino*. In time to come a world judging these things on a different basis from that prevailing today will realize that many of the things happening at the present time have to be judged from the point of view I have presented — that much of what is present in man by way of mystical powers is thrust out, handed over to the world process, but does not get lost. It becomes the spoil of Ahrimanic and Luciferic powers. Rarely is the irony inherent in world history as obvious to the eye as in the case I have just presented.

Let us use all we have been able to absorb out of the work we have been doing these last years and try to understand clearly that there is a certain measure of spiritual power that is given to human nature. Mystical spirituality has to be thrust out of human consciousness in order that mankind can grow free in taking hold of the physical body. Yet on the other hand this mystical spirituality must be made part of our conscious life, otherwise Ahrimanic and Luciferic powers will take hold of what has been thrust out from conscious awareness. Again and again I want to remind

you, dear friends, that having made such efforts for many years to absorb this into our conscious mind, we also have the feeling arise in us that something will have to emerge from the bloodshed of the present time that will lead mankind towards spirituality, towards recognition of the spirit. This means, as I have often said, that there will have to be souls who have grown able, through spiritual science, to look up into the spiritual world where all the ether bodies that have come from young people are present. These have reached the spiritual world and will continue to be present because on that plane, too, powers are not lost. We must look up towards them. They will unite with the powers shining down for us from the spiritual world and what the dead have to say will form the impulses of the future — if souls are present who understand their language. It is in this spirit that once again we say these simple words:

*Out of courage shown in battle,
Out of the blood shed in war,
Out of the grief of those who are left,
Out of the people's deeds of sacrifice
Spirit fruits will come to grow
If souls with knowledge of the spirit
Turn their mind to spirit realms.*



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