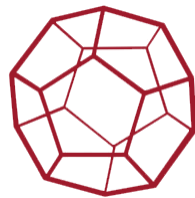


The Language of the Cosmos

GA 209



The Language of the Cosmos

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by

Rudolf Steiner

November / December 1921

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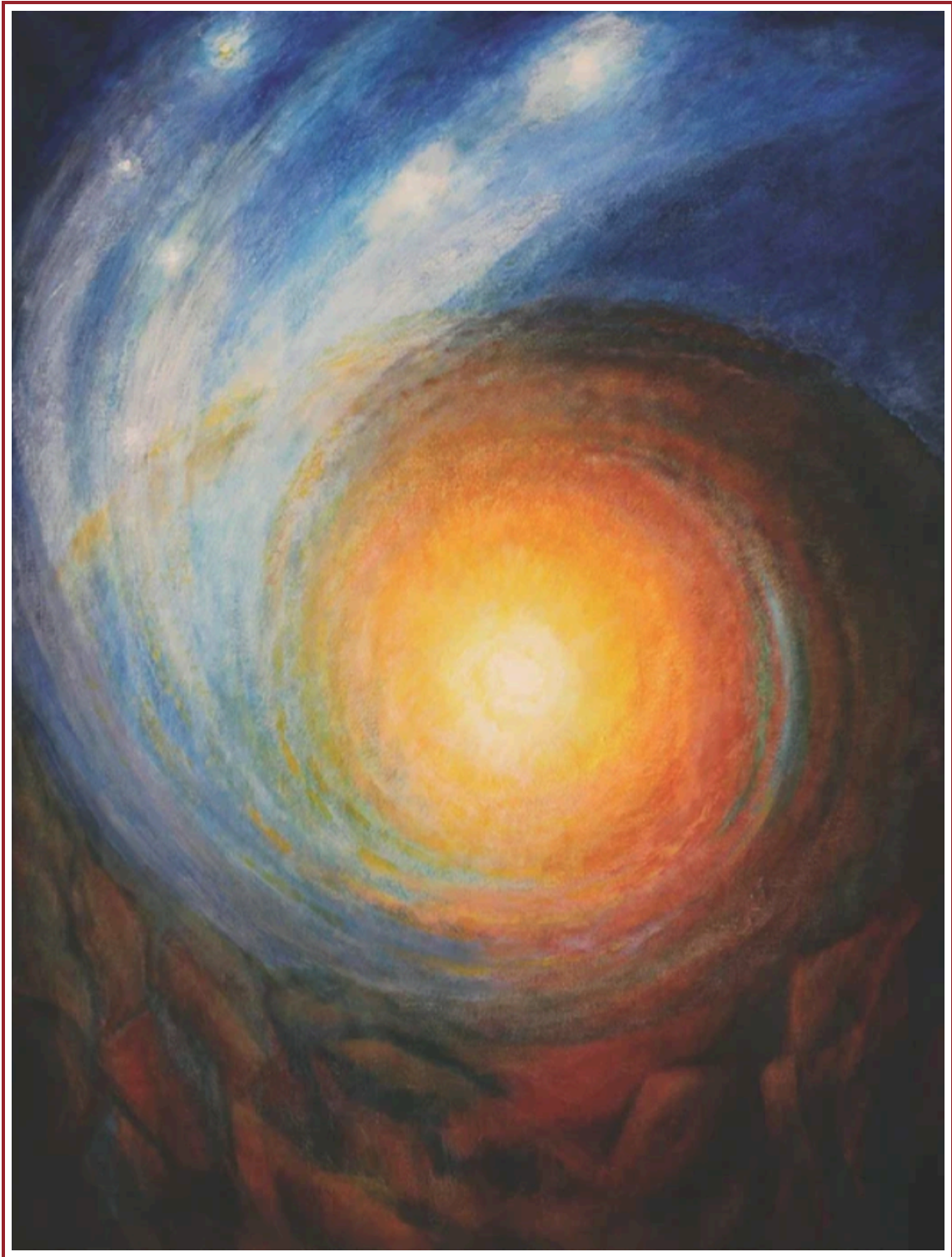
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"We are in this sense-perceptible world from the time of waking up until the time of falling asleep. Our soul is filled with the impressions made upon us by this sense-perceptible world. Now, when we enter sleep, we are no longer on this side of the sense world...in reality, we are then inside the things, we are then on the other side of this sense tapestry. But human beings living in their earthly consciousness know nothing of this and dream up all sorts of things presumed to exist beyond the realm of sense perception. They dream up molecules and atoms; but these are only dreams — dreams of the waking consciousness."

—Rudolf Steiner



Schöpfung (Creation) by Ninetta Sombart (1925–2019)

Introduction

This previously untranslated volume in The Collected Works of Rudolf Steiner comprises eleven lectures given to members of the Anthroposophical Society in Norway, Germany, and Switzerland in November and December of 1921. In Rudolf Steiner's biography, 1921 was a year of many trials. These lectures stand between the earth-shattering years of the First World War and the tragic destruction of the First Goetheanum. Indeed, precisely one year after the final lecture published in this volume, the Goetheanum — the house of the Word to which Steiner devoted all his forces — burned to the ground through an act of arson.

Though separated geographically, the lectures share a common thematic thread: the need for modern humanity, freely and out of inner initiative, to learn once again the language of the cosmos. This theme is taken up strikingly in the lecture of December 18, 1921, in which Steiner describes the spiritual reality of the human being not in familiar spiritual-scientific terms as consisting of physical body, etheric body, astral body, and "I," but instead imbues these otherwise abstract designations with inner content — the physical body as an echo of the activity of zodiacal forces and expressed as cosmic consonants, while the etheric body reveals an echo of the weaving of planetary spheres in the realm of vowels.

This interplay of the planetary forces in vowels and the zodiacal forces in consonants — which accompany the soul on its descent to Earth — was once perceived instinctively by ancient humanity. It was understood that names are not given arbitrarily based on the whim of the parents but are designations that correspond to those planetary and zodiacal forces that played the greatest role in that individual's path to earthly incarnation.

Abounding with penetrating insights, inspirations, and profound wisdom, this book speaks to all who seek a new understanding of humanity's place in the universe.

[The following is excerpted from the Introduction of the print edition of the book.]

*The stars once spoke to man,
Their silence is world destiny;
To perceive their silence
Can become pain for earthly man
But, in the silence, there ripens
What human beings speak to the stars;
To perceive this speaking
Can become strength for spirit man.*

*—Rudolf Steiner, verse given to Marie Steiner on December
25, 1922*

THIS VOLUME COMPRISES eleven lectures given to members of the Anthroposophical Society in Norway, Germany, and Switzerland in November and December of 1921. In Rudolf Steiner's biography, 1921 was a year of many trials. Not only did he face external opposition in the form of unscrupulous opponents who served up malicious slander daily but he also had to deal with difficulties within the Society from members who were not awake enough to grasp the seriousness of the times and the magnitude of their tasks.

It therefore seems fitting that Rudolf Steiner's three lectures in Norway, given between November 24 and December 4, 1921, begin with a reference to the years of the First World War — recently past but very much still present inwardly — and end with a reference to the opponents of anthroposophy. This bookending of the three lectures with grave matters strikes a note of urgency that can be felt throughout the lectures in this volume. The external opposition and the internal lack of understanding would increase over the coming year. Precisely one year after the final lecture published in this volume, the Goetheanum — the house of the Word to which Steiner devoted all his forces — would burn to the ground in an act of arson. The lectures here stand between the war years and the tragic destruction of the First Goetheanum.

Some years prior, in 1910, Steiner had given a lecture cycle in Oslo on the subject of "folk souls" in an effort to awaken mutual understanding between the peoples of the world as they hurtled toward the abyss of the First World War. In the first lecture of the present volume, given in Oslo eleven years after that folk-souls cycle, Steiner reminds his listeners of

those pre-war lectures. He points out how toward the end of the war, in 1918, he gave a copy of that lecture cycle to an influential German politician, Max von Baden, in the hopes that it would awaken in him a consciousness of how things really stood in Europe and how a true peace and international cooperation could arise after the war. Alas, as Steiner remarks in that lecture of November 24, 1921, "the maturity required to develop insight into the magnitude of the forces leading into decadence, although present in a number of human souls, was not present in the souls of those in charge, who were unwilling to strive for such maturity of insight". In solemn warning, he adds:

Today, everything depends on the awareness that the spirit, which lies hidden in European and American culture, is the important thing — the spirit from which people flee, which they would prefer to avoid for the sake of ease, but which alone can guide humanity to forces of ascent. But people like to build up foggy notions by preferring to repeat again and again that things will improve of themselves. They will not; the hour of a great decision has struck. Either human beings will resolve to elevate the spirituality of which I have spoken, or the decline of the West is inevitable. No hope, no fatalistic longing for things to right themselves will be of any help in this regard. Humanity has, after all, entered a time in which human forces are used in freedom; and it is essential that humanity actually apply these forces out of free will — in other words, it must now decide for itself whether it wants to have this spirituality or not. If the decision is affirmative, then progress will be possible; if it is negative, then the doom of the West is sealed. Then, in the wake of dire catastrophes, the further evolution of humanity will have to take a different course from the one imagined today by many people. If, however, the wish for true insight into these matters is present, then it is imperative that the soul-life of human beings in general, and of the various peoples in particular, be studied — particularly the soul-life of the peoples of the East and the West.

The following June, at the East-West Congress in Vienna, Steiner would expand on this study of the geographical and spiritual forces at work in the dynamic between East and West in a further attempt to awaken inner understanding among the peoples of the world.

Steiner emphasizes the need for a penetrating understanding of the spiritual reality of the human being as a true microcosm of the spiritual macrocosm:

People must become interested again in the whole essential nature of the human being, not merely in the outer, physical sheaths. But this can only come about when the human being will once again be regarded as belonging not only to the earth, to the cosmic "mole-burrow," but rather to the whole cosmos; when it is clearly recognized that between death and a new birth the human being passes through the world of the stars; and when this world of the stars, to which we can only gaze upward from the earth, will be known once again in its living essence, in its soul essence, and in its spiritual essence.

In the other lectures in this volume, given in Berlin, Dornach, and Basel, he expands on this theme — notably in the lecture of December 18, 1921, in which he describes the spiritual reality of the human being not in familiar anthroposophical terms as consisting of physical body, etheric body, astral body, and I, but rather imbues these otherwise abstract designations with inner content: the physical body is an echo of the active working of zodiacal forces, expressed as cosmic consonants, while the etheric body reveals an echo of the weaving of planetary spheres in the realm of the vowels. This interplay of the planetary forces in the vowels and the zodiacal forces in the consonants, which accompany the soul on its descent to earth, was once perceived instinctively by ancient humanity. It was understood that names are not given arbitrarily based on the whim of the parents but are designations that correspond to those planetary and zodiacal forces that played the greatest role in that individual's path to earthly incarnation:

When the human being expressed the secret of his own nature, as it could be learned in the mysteries, he voiced how he had descended through Saturn or Jupiter while they were transiting the constellations of Leo or Virgo, that is, how he descended through the A or the I in the constellations of the M or the L. In that way, the human being uttered what he had experienced of the music of the spheres — and that was his cosmic name. And in those ancient times people were certainly aware, instinctively aware, that the human being brought along a name, while descending from the cosmos to the earth.

This theme of learning once again to understand the language of the cosmos continues through Steiner's Christmas lectures. It culminates in his final lecture on New Year's Eve 1921/22, in which he points to the future-bearing impulse of anthroposophy, its relation to the past and its work in preparing a new cosmic year:

But the cosmic year has ended; the cosmic New Year's Eve is here. A new cosmic year must begin. What we were able to say about Christmas is what we also want to experience in relation to a symbolic festival such as the one that is approaching us at this moment; we want to experience it in the same way; we want, through such a festival, to experience symbolically the turning point in time — which must, even today, already be perceived as a cosmic turning point in time. Times have become serious; they have become so serious today that we must of necessity look upward from the narrowly defined events occurring within the limited horizon — which the majority of humanity prefers to recognize as the only legitimate one — to the cosmic expanses, also to the cosmic expanses of human soul-spiritual experiences. This is where we witness the cosmic turning point in time.

If we become aware of this cosmic turning point in time, then we become aware that a cosmic New Year of the spirit must begin for humanity. Only if we learn to recognize such things will we be able to feel true humanity in our present era. For true humanity is experienced only when the human being,

who goes through repeated lives on earth, finds the possibility in each single earthly life not only to feel as a human being in general, but as a human being with specific tasks related to the specific epoch during which one of these lives is taking shape

Human beings can live with eternity only if they find the possibility of living in time in the right way. For the eternal should not only be revealed to the human being in time; rather, through the human being and through time, the eternal should become something that can be experienced by the human being. The eternal holds sway in timeless duration; it also holds sway in timeless duration through all human existence. But its pulsations are seen in the events of each single epoch, and in how they impact the human experience. And it is only when we experience these pulse beats and are able to unite them into a comprehensive rhythm that we will experience the eternal through time. Duration belongs to our true human nature. We can only experience duration if we lovingly, and with inner strength, let the individual pulsations of the eternal cosmic essence become our own experience.

Thus on the very last day of this year of difficult trials — one year before the burning of the Goetheanum — Rudolf Steiner left those who were seeking to work toward a new human community, however modest their efforts may have been, with a challenge, a mighty task: to learn to understand the nature of our age, its needs and possibilities, and to strive toward the light of a cosmic New Year.

—The Editors

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Cosmic Forces in Man

24 November 1921, Oslo

Only if it is regarded as a time of trial and testing can anything propitious emerge from the period of grave difficulty through which humanity has been passing. I cannot help thinking to-day of the lectures given in this very town many years ago, before the war, and those of you who have studied what was then said, will have realised that certain definite indications were given of the terrible times ahead. The lectures dealt with the Folk-Souls of the European peoples (*The Mission of Folk-Souls*. Eleven lectures, Christiania 7th — 17th June, 1910), and as a reminder of them — in order, too, that you may realise their purport more clearly — I would like, by way of introduction, to speak of a certain interesting episode.

In the year 1918 I had a conversation in Middle Europe with someone who in the autumn of that year played a brief but significant part in the catastrophic events which were then assuming a particularly menacing form. Those who were able to follow the course of events, however, realised already in the early months of that year that this particular man would be in a key position when matters came to a point of decision. As I say, I had a talk with him in the month of January, 1918, and in the course of our conversation he spoke of the need for a psychology, for teaching on the subject of the Folk-Souls of the European peoples. The chaos into which humanity was falling would make it essential — so he said — for those who desired to take the lead in public affairs to understand the forces at work in the souls of the peoples of Europe. And he expressed deep regret that there was really no possibility of basing the management of public affairs upon any knowledge of this kind. I answered that I had given lectures on this very subject and I afterwards sent the volume to him, having added a foreword dealing with the situation as it then was — in January, 1918. I tell you this merely in order to indicate the real purport of the lectures. Their aim was to give true guiding lines for counteracting the forces which were leading straight into confusion and chaos. And it was for the same reason that I again made use of them in the year 1918, in the way I have indicated. But it was all quite useless, in spite of the preface dealing with the necessities of the situation that had later arisen, because

ripeness of insight was required to understand the strength of the forces leading to decay, and although this ripeness of insight would have been within the reach of many leading men, they were not willing to strive for it.

And it is the same to-day. People are still terribly afraid to envisage, in their true form, the forces that are leading straight into chaos. Instead of facing these forces of decay, they prefer to spin all kinds of fantastic notions, believing that if they take refuge in them, life will go on quite peacefully. But those who will have nothing to do with this kind of thinking and who face the realities of the situation, hold no such belief. Far from it.

Precisely here in Norway destiny made it necessary to speak of the relations between the European Folk-Souls, and indeed I have been speaking of the same theme, with its different ramifications, more or less in detail for many years. I have said more than once that a time will come in European affairs when much will depend upon whether Norway can count among its people, men who will range themselves on the side of true progress and devote their powers to furthering it. The geographical position of Norway renders this imperative and indeed possible. Up here there is a certain detachment from European conditions and this can help many things to ripen. But this ripeness must unfold, gradually, into fruit — into a true and quickened spiritual life.

In the years that have passed since we were last together, you yourselves have had many experiences in connection with the great European War, but only those who lived in the very midst of things were able to realise their full significance. It is difficult to find words of human language that can give any adequate idea of the awful catastrophes. One is tempted to use the word 'senseless' about it all, because nearly everything, in the domain of the public affairs of Europe up to the beginning of the twentieth century resulted in some form of senselessness. What went on between the years 1914 and 1918 was a kind of madness, and since then matters have not greatly improved although it may perhaps be said that the senseless actions of the materialistic world are not so outwardly patent as they were during the actual years of the war.

To-day it ought to be realised much more fully than it is, that Europe is bound to come to grief if attention is not turned to the *spiritual foundations* of human life, if merely for purposes of convenience men brush aside all that is said with the intention of helping humanity to emerge from the chaos of anti-spirituality. The fact that my lectures on Folk-Psychology were ignored by one who held a leading position during this period of senseless

action, seemed to me to be deeply symptomatic. And it is still the same today. Everything is brushed aside by those who have any influence in public life.

It is a pity that the significance of certain words spoken by an Anglo-South African statesman has not been grasped in Europe. The words were not spoken from any great depth, but none the less they indicated a certain feeling for the way in which affairs are shaping at the present time. This statesman said that the focus of world-history has shifted from the North Sea to the Pacific Ocean — that is to say from Europe in general, to the Pacific Ocean. And this too may be added: — That for which, up till now, Europe was a kind of centre, has ceased to exist. We are living in its remains. It has been superseded by great world-affairs as between the East and the West. What is going on now, all unsuspectingly in Washington, is nothing but a feeble stammering, surging up from depths where mighty, unobserved impulses are stirring.

There will be no peace on the Earth until a certain harmony is established between the affairs of East and West, and it must be realised that this harmony has first to be achieved in the realm of the *Spirit*. However glibly people may talk in these difficult times about disarmament and other 'luxuries' of the kind — for luxuries they are, and nothing more — it will amount to no more than conversation, as long as the Western world fails to discover and bring to light the spirituality that is indeed contained, but allowed to lie fallow in the culture which has been developing since the middle of the fifteenth century. There *is* a store of spiritual treasure in this culture, but it lies fallow.

Science has acquired a magnificent knowledge of the world and we are surrounded on all hands by really marvellous technical achievements. It is all splendid in its way, but it is dead — dead as compared with the great currents of human evolution. And yet in this very death there lies a living spirituality which can shine into the world even more brilliantly than all that was given to man by oriental wisdom — although that must never be belittled. Such a feeling does in truth exist in all unprejudiced observers of life.

We do right to turn to the great wisdom-treasures of the East — of which the Vedas, the wonderful Vedanta philosophy and the like are but mere reflections; and we are rightly filled with wonder by all that was there

revealed from heavenly heights. It has gradually fallen into a certain decadence, but even in the form in which it still lives in the East, it arouses the wonder and admiration of anyone who has a feeling for such things.

In vivid contrast to this there is the purely materialistic culture of the West, of Europe and America. This materialistic culture and its equally materialistic mode of thinking must not be disparaged, yet it is, after all, rather like a hard nutshell — a dying nutshell. But the kernel is still alive and if it can be discovered its radiance will outshine all the glory of oriental wisdom that once poured down to man. Let there be no mistake about it — as long as the dealings of Europeans and Americans with Asia are confined to purely economic and industrial interests, so long will there be distrust in the hearts of Asiatics. People may talk as much as they like about disarmament, about the desirability of ending wars... a great war *will* break out between the East and the West, in spite of all disarmament conferences, if the people of Asia cannot perceive something that flows over to them from the *Spirit* of the West. Western spirituality *can* shine over to Asia and if it does, Asia will be able to trust it, because with their own inherent, though somewhat decadent spirituality, the Asiatic peoples will be able to understand what it means. The peace of the world depends upon this, not upon the conversations and discussions now going on among the leaders of outer civilisation.

Everything depends upon insight into the *Spirit* that is lying hidden in European and American culture — the Spirit from which men flee, which for the sake of ease they would fain avoid, but which alone can set the feet of humanity on the path of ascent. People like to put their heads in the sand, saying that things will improve of themselves. No, they will *not*. The hour of a great decision has struck. Either men will resolve to bring forth the spirituality of which I have spoken, or the decline of the West is inevitable. Hopes and fatalistic longings for things to right themselves are of no avail. Once and forever, man has passed into the epoch when he must manipulate his powers out of his own freewill. In other words: *it is for men themselves to decide for or against spirituality*. If the decision is positive, progress will be possible; if not, the doom of the West is sealed and in the wake of dire catastrophes the further evolution of humanity will take a course undreamed of to-day. Those who would strive for true insight into these matters should not, nay dare not, neglect the study of the life of soul in mankind at large and in the different peoples, especially of East and West.

In these preliminary remarks I have tried to convey that if in this particular corner of Europe, qualities to which the Scandinavian Spirit is peculiarly adapted, can be unfolded, insight can ripen and work fruitfully upon the rest of the Western world. Indeed it will only be possible for a spiritual Movement to be taken seriously when with inner understanding men are prepared to ascribe to it a mission of the kind here indicated.

Modern thought studies everything in the universe beyond the Earth in terms of mathematics and mechanics. We look at the stars through telescopes, examine their substance by means of the spectroscope and the like, reducing these observations to rules of calculation, and we have finally arrived at a great system of 'world-machinery' in which our Earth is placed like a wheel. Fantastic notions are evolved about the habitableness of other planets, but no great significance is attached to them because we fall back upon mathematical formulae when it is a question of speaking of extra-terrestrial space. Man has gradually come to feel himself living on Earth just as a mole might feel in his mound during the winter. There is an idea that the Earth is rather like a tiny mole-hill in the universe. There is also a tendency to look back with a certain superciliousness to 'primitive' periods of culture, for instance to the culture of ancient Egypt, when men did not speak of the great mechanical processes in the Universe but of divine *Beings* outside, in space and beyond space — Beings to whom man was known to be related just as he is related to the beings of the three kingdoms of Nature on Earth.

The ancient Egyptian traced the origin of the spirit and soul of man to the higher Hierarchies, to super-sensible worlds, just as he traced the origin of his material, bodily nature to the mineral, plant and animal kingdoms. In our age, people speak of what is beyond the Earth out of a kind of weak and ever-weakening faith that much prefers to avoid scientific scrutiny. Science speaks only of a great system of world-machinery which can be expressed in terms of mathematics. Earthly existence has finally come to be regarded as confined within the walls of a little mole-hill in the universe.

Yet there is a profound truth, namely this: When man loses the heavens, he loses *himself*. By far the most important elements of man's being belong to the universe beyond the Earth and if he loses sight of this universe he loses sight of his own true being. He wanders over the Earth without knowing what kind of being he really is. He knows, but even then only from tradition, that the word 'man' applies to him, that this name was once given to him as a being who stands upright in contrast to the quadruped animals. But his scientific view of the world and technical culture no longer

help him to discover the true content of his name, for that must be sought in the universe beyond the Earth, and this universe is considered to be nothing but a great system of machinery. Man has lost himself; he has no longer any insight into his true nature.

A feeling of sadness cannot but overtake us when we realise that the heights of culture to which the West has risen since the middle of the fifteenth century have led man to wrench himself from his true nature and to live on the Earth divested of soul and spirit.

In the lecture to educationists yesterday, I said that we are prone to speak of only one aspect — and even that merely from tradition — of the eternal being of man. We speak of eternity beyond *death* but not of the eternity stretching beyond *birth*, nor of how the human being has descended from spiritual worlds into material, physical existence on the Earth. And so we really have no word which corresponds, at the other pole, to 'deathlessness' or immortality. We do not speak of 'unborn-ness' (*Ungeborenheit*) but until it becomes a natural matter of course to speak of deathlessness *and* unborn-ness, the true being of man will never be understood.

The meaning attaching to the word 'deathlessness' nowadays is very far from what it was in times when men also spoke of 'unborn-ness.' Innumerable sermons are preached to-day, and with a certain subjective honesty, on the eternal nature of the human soul. But get to the root of these sermons and see if you can discover their fundamental trend. They speculate strongly upon the *egotism* of human beings, upon the fact that man longs for immortality because his egotism makes the idea of annihilation at death distasteful to him. Think about all that is said along these lines and you will realise that the sermons are directed to the egotism in the members of orthodox congregations. When it comes to the question of pre-existence, of the life before *birth*, it is not possible to reckon with human egotism. Nothing in the egotistical souls of men arises in response to teaching about the life before birth, because no interest is taken in it. The attitude is more or less this: If indeed there was a life before birth, we are experiencing a continuation of it. One thing is certain! we are in existence *now*. What, then, is the object of speaking of what went before? It is, in short, only egotism that makes man hold fast to the teaching that death does not bring annihilation. And so, in speaking of the life before birth, one has to appeal to *selflessness*, to the quality that is the

very reverse of egotism. It is, of course, quite right to speak also of the life after death, although the appeal there is to the egotism of the soul. That is the great difference.

It is clear from this that egotism has laid hold of the very depths of the human soul. The anathema placed upon the doctrine of pre-existence is a consequence of the egotism in the soul. It behoves all who are earnest in their striving for spiritual insight to understand these things. Man must find himself again and be true to the laws of his innermost being. Interest must be awakened in the *whole* nature of man, instead of being confined to his outer, physical sheaths. But this end cannot be achieved until man is regarded as belonging not only to the Earth — which is conceived as a little mole-hill — but to the whole Cosmos, until it is realised that between death and a new birth he passes through the world of stars to which here on Earth he can only gaze upwards from below. And the living essence, the soul and the spirit of the world of stars must be known once again.

The first thing we observe about a human being is his outer, physical structure, but the essential principle, namely its *form*, is generally disregarded. Form, after all, is the most fundamental principle so far as physical man is concerned. Now when we embark upon a theme like this — which has been dealt with from so many angles in other lectures — it will be obvious at once that only brief indications can be given. Knowing something of the spiritual teachings of Anthroposophy, however, you will realise that what I shall now say is drawn from a deeper knowledge of the world and is something more than a series of unsubstantiated statements.

The human form is a most marvellous structure. Think, to begin with, of the *head*. In all its parts, the head is a copy of the universe. Its form is spherical, the spherical form being modified at the base in order to provide for the articulation of other organs and systems. The essential form of the head, however, is a copy of the spherical form of the universe, as you can discover if you study the basic formation of the embryo.

Linked to the head-structure is another formation which still retains something of the spherical form, although this is not so immediately apparent — I mean the *chest-structure*. Try to conceive this chest-structure imaginatively; it is as if a spherical form had been compressed and then released again, as if a sphere had undergone an organic metamorphosis.

Finally, in the limb-structures, we can discover hardly anything of the primal, embryonic form of man. Spiritual Science alone will make us alive to the fact that the limb-structures too, still reveal certain final traces of a spherical form although this is not very obvious in their outer shape.

When we study the threefold human form in its relation to the Cosmos, we can say that man is shaped and moulded by cosmic forces but these forces work upon him in many different ways. The changing position of the Sun in the zodiacal constellations through the various epochs has been taken as an indication of the different forces which pour down to man from the world of the fixed stars. Even our mechanistic astronomy to-day speaks of the fact that the Sun rises in a particular constellation at the vernal equinox, that in the course of the coming centuries it will pass through others, that during the day it passes through certain constellations and during the night through others. These and many other things are said, but there is no conscious knowledge of man's relationship to the universe beyond the Earth. It is little known, for example, that when the Sun is shining upon the Earth at the vernal equinox from the constellation of Aries, the solar forces streaming down into human beings in a particular part of the Earth are modified by the influences proceeding from the region in the heaven of fixed stars represented by the constellation of Aries. Neither is there any knowledge of the fact that these forces are peculiarly adapted to work upon the human *head* in such a way indeed, that during earthly life man can unfold a certain faculty of self-observation, self-knowledge and consciousness of his own Ego.

During the Greek epoch, as you know, the Sun stood in the constellation of Aries at the vernal equinox. In the Greek epoch, therefore, Western peoples were particularly subject to the Aries forces. The fact of being subject to the Aries forces makes it possible for the head of man to develop in such a way that Ego-conscious-ness, a faculty for self-contemplation, unfolds.

Even when the history of the zodiacal symbols is discussed to-day, there is not always knowledge of the essentials. Historical traditions speak of the zodiacal symbols — Aries, Taurus, Gemini, and so forth. In old calendars we frequently find the symbol of Aries, but very few people indeed realise the point of greatest significance, which is that the Ram is depicted with his head looking *backwards*. This image was intended to indicate that the Aries forces influence man in the direction of inwardness — for the Ram does not look forward, nor out into the wide world — he looks backwards, upon himself; he contemplates his own being. This is full of meaning. Once

again, and this time in full consciousness not with the instinctive — clairvoyance of olden times — once again we must press forward to this cosmic wisdom, to the knowledge that the forces of the human head are developed essentially through the forces of Aries, Taurus, Gemini and Cancer, whereas the forces of the chest-structure are subject to those of the four middle constellations — Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio. The human head receives its form from the in-working forces of Aries, Taurus, Gemini and Cancer — forces which must be conceived as radiating from above downwards, whereas the zodiacal forces to which the chest-organisation of man is essentially subject (Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio), work *laterally*.

The other four constellations lie beneath the Earth; their forces work *through* the Earth, not directly down upon it as those of Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, nor laterally as those of Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, but from *below upwards*. They work upon the limb-structures, and in such a way that the spherical form cannot remain intact. These are the constellations which in the instinctive consciousness of olden times, man envisaged as working up from beneath the Earth. When the constellations lie beneath the Earth, they work upon the limb-structures. And in days of yore there was consciousness of the fact that the forces by which the limbs are given shape are connected with these particular constellations.

The spherical form of the head — this was known to be connected with Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer; the forces working in the limbs were also conceived of as fourfold. Now it must be remembered that this knowledge was the outcome of ancient clairvoyance, hence the terms employed are concerned with conditions of life prevailing in those days. Thus, according to the wisdom of the stars, a man might be a hunter — one who shoots; the constellation which stimulated the corresponding activity in his limbs, making him a hunter, received the name of Sagittarius, the archer. Or again, a man might be a shepherd, concerned with the care of animals in general. This is implied in Capricorn, as it is called nowadays. In the true symbol, however, there is a fish-tail form. The Capricorn man is one who has charge of animals, in contrast to the hunter, the Sagittarius man.

The third constellation of this group is Aquarius, the water-carrier. But think of the ancient symbol. The true picture of this constellation is a man walking over hard soil, fertilising or watering it from a water-vessel. He represents those who are concerned with agriculture — husbandmen. This was the third calling in ancient times when there was instinctive knowledge of these things: huntsman, shepherd, husbandman.

The fourth calling was that of a mariner, In very early times, ships were built in the form of a fish, and later on we often find a dolphin's head at the prow of vessels. This is what underlies the symbol of Pisces — two fish forms intertwined — representing ships trading together. This is symbolical of the fourth calling which is bound up with activities of the limbs — the merchant or trader.

We have thus heard how the human form and figure originate from the Cosmos. The head is spherical; here man is directly exposed to the forces of the heavens of the fixed stars or their representatives the zodiacal circle. Then, working laterally, there are the forces present in the chest-organisation which only contains the human figure in an eclipsed and hidden form — Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio. And lastly there are the forces which do not work directly but by a roundabout way, via the earthly activities, through the influence upon man's calling. (For example, the archer — Sagittarius — is also portrayed as a kind of centaur, half horse, half man, and so forth).

Again in our time we must strive for a fully conscious realisation of man's place in the Cosmos. The form and shape of his physical body are given by the Cosmos. The upper part of his structure is a product of the Cosmos; the lower part a product of the Earth. The Earth covers those constellations which have a definite connection with his activities in life. Not until man's connection with the whole Cosmos is thus recognised and acknowledged will it be possible to understand the mysteries of the human form and its relation to earthly activities. And at the very outset the human form leads us to the zodiacal constellations.

This teaches us that to work as a husbandman, for instance, is by no means without significance in life. In the following lectures we shall hear how these things apply in modern times, but we shall not understand them until we realise that just as in earthly life between birth and death, man belongs to the powers of the Earth, so between death and a new birth he belongs to the Heavens; the powers of Heaven shape his head and it is left to the forces of Earth to shape and mould his limbs.

In the same way too, we may study man's stages or forms of *life*. For think of it — in the life of man there are also the same two poles. There is the head-life and the life that expresses itself in his activities, through the limbs more particularly. Between these two poles lies that part of his being which

manifests in the rhythms of breathing and the circulation of the blood. At the one extreme we find the head-organisation; at the other, the limb-organisation.

The head represents the dying part of man's being, for the head is perpetually involved in death. Life is only possible because through the whole of earthly life, forces are continually pouring from the metabolic process to the head. If the head were to unfold merely its own natural forces, they would be the forces of death. But to this dying we owe the fact that we can think and be conscious beings. The moment the pure life-forces flow in excess to the head, consciousness is prone to be lost. Basically speaking, then, life makes for a *dimming* of consciousness; death pouring into life makes for a *lighting-up* of consciousness. (See *Fundamentals of Therapy*, by Rudolf Steiner and Dr. Ita Wegman, Chapter I, pages 14 — 15.) If only very little of what is rightly located in the stomach, for example, were to pass up to the head, the head would be without consciousness — like the stomach. Man owes the consciousness of his head merely to the circumstance that the head is *not* permeated with life in the same way as the stomach. Lowered consciousness means that the forces of nourishment and of growth are acting with excessive strength in the head. On the one side, man is a dying being; on the other, a being who is continually coming to birth. The dying part — which, however, determines the existence of consciousness — is subject, in the main, to the forces working down upon the Earth from the outer planets: Saturn, Jupiter, Mars. That man is an integral part of the universe is not only due to the working of the fixed stars, but also to the working of the planetary spheres.

Saturn, Jupiter, Mars — the so-called outer planets — contain the forces which work chiefly towards the pole of *consciousness* in man. The forces of the inner planets — Venus, Mercury, Moon — work into his metabolic system and limb-structures. The Sun itself stands in the middle and is mainly associated with the rhythmic system.

Moreover the three first-mentioned are the three stages of life which rather represent the damping-down and suppression of life which is necessary for the sake of consciousness. Through this, we, in our earthly life, are likened to heaven, related to more distant planetary realms beyond. On the other hand, through the essentially thriving principle of life itself in us — that is through the forces of metabolism, the motor forces of the limbs — we are

related to the nearer planets: Mercury, Venus and Moon. The Moon, after all, is directly connected with the most thriving, with the most rampant life of all in man, namely the forces of reproduction.

When we study the human *form*, we are led to the spheres of the fixed stars, that is to say, to their representatives, the zodiacal constellations. When we study the *life* of man, to discover where it is a more thriving and where a more declining life, we are led to the planetary spheres.

In the same way we can study man's being of soul and of spirit. This shall be done in the following lectures. To-day I only wanted to indicate very briefly that it must become possible for man once again to regard himself not merely as an earthly being, connecting his form and his life simply and solely with earthly forces of heredity, digestion, the influences of autumn, spring, wind, weather and the like. He must learn to relate both his life and his form to the universe *beyond* the Earth. He must find what lies beyond the earthly realm — and then he will discover his true being, he will find *himself*.

It would augur dire misfortune for the progress of Western humanity if the conception of the Cosmos as a great system of machinery to which the scientific view of the world since the middle of last century has led, were to remain, and if man were to wander on Earth knowing nothing of his true being. His true being has its origin and home in the Universe beyond the Earth, therefore he can know nothing of himself if he sees only what is earthly and thinks that what is beyond the Earth can be explained in terms of mathematics and mechanics. In deed and truth, man can only find himself when he realises his connection with the universe beyond the Earth and incorporates its forces into his moral and social life — indeed this must be, if moral and social life are to thrive. No real wisdom can arise in moral and social life unless a link is forged with cosmic wisdom. And that is why it has been imperative to infuse something of Anthroposophy into the domain of moral and social life too, for we believe that these impulses can lead away from the forces of decline to the forces of upward progress.



2 The Soul Life of Man

27 November 1921, Oslo

We have heard how in accordance with anthroposophical knowledge, the being of man must be viewed in relation to the whole universe. We considered the human form and figure and its relation to the fixed stars, or rather to the representative of the fixed stars — the Zodiac. We heard how certain forces proceed from the constellations of these stars when combined with the Sun forces, and how the shape and structure of the human head and the organs connected with it, are related to the upper constellations of the Zodiac: Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer. The structure of the human chest-organisation is connected with the middle constellations; Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio. Finally the metabolic-and-limb system is connected with the lower constellations: Sagittarius, Capricorn, Aquarius, Pisces — that is to say with their forces when they are, in a sense, covered by the Earth. So that we can say: The fixed stars — for the Zodiac is only the representative of the fixed stars — work upon the human *form* and *structure*.

The planetary spheres work upon man's stages or forms of *life*. It must indeed be quite clear to us that man has various kinds of life in him. We should not be able to think, the head would not be an organ of thought, if life were as rampant there as it is in the metabolic system, for example. When metabolism becomes too strong in the head, consciousness is extinguished; we lose our consciousness of self.

From this it may be concluded that for consciousness, for mental presentation, a damped-down, suppressed life, a declining life is necessary; while a thriving life, vehement and intense, is necessary for what works more from out of the unconscious, to become *will*.

We have therefore among the various stages of life some which tend towards self-extinction, and some in which strong, intense organic activity manifests, as in a child, in whom thought is not yet operating. We have this child-like life continually within us; but into this child-like life, the life that is involved in a gradual process of death, inserts itself.

These different stages of life are connected with the planetary spheres. Whereas the fixed stars work in man through his physical forces, the planetary spheres work through his *etheric* forces. The planetary spheres, therefore, work upon man in a more delicate way. But the human physical body has already received its form, its shape from the fixed stars, not from anything earthly; and its stages of life from the planetary spheres.

We have thus considered the *form* of man's physical body, the *life-stages* of his ether-body. We can now proceed to consider his life of soul-and-spirit. But here our mode of study must be different. What is it that our physical and our ether-body provide for us in waking life? They provide what we perceive through our senses and what we can work over in our thoughts. We are only really *awake* in our acts of sense-perception and when we work over them in thought.

On the other hand, consider the life of *feeling*. It is obvious, even to superficial study, that feeling does not indicate a state of awakesness as complete as that of thinking and sense-perception. When we wake in the morning and become aware of the colours and sounds of the outside world, when we are conscious of the conditions of warmth around us, we are fully awake and then, in our thoughts, we work over what is transmitted by the senses. But when feelings rise up from the soul, it cannot be said that we are *conscious* in them to the same extent. Feelings link themselves with sense-perceptions. One sense-impression pleases us, another displeases us. Feelings also intermingle with our thoughts. But if we compare the pictures we experience in dreams with what we experience in our feelings, then the connection between dream-life and the life of feeling is clearly noticeable.

Dreams have to be grasped by the waking life of thought if they are to be valued and understood aright. But feelings too must be observed, as it were, by our thought-life if we are to understand them. In our feelings we are, in reality, *dreaming*. When we dream, we dream in pictures. When we are awake, we dream in our feelings. And in our *will* we are asleep, even when fully awake. When we raise an arm, when we do this or that, we can *perceive* what movements the arm or hand is making, but we do not know *how* the power of the will operates in the organism. We know as little about that as about the conditions prevailing from the time we fall asleep until we wake up. In our willing, in our actions, we are asleep, while in our sense-perceptions and our thoughts, we are awake. So we are not only asleep during the night; we are asleep, in part of our being, during waking life too. In our will we are asleep and in our feelings we dream. What we

experience during actual sleep is withdrawn from our consciousness. But in essence, the same is true of feeling and willing. It is therefore obviously important to realise what it is that the human being experiences in these realms of which ordinary life is quite unaware.

You know from many anthroposophical lectures that from the time of going to sleep until that of waking, the Ego and astral body are outside the physical body and the ether-body. Now it may be of very great importance to learn about just those experiences which the Ego and the astral body pass through from the time of falling asleep to that of waking up. When we are awake, we are confronted by sense-perceptions of the material world. To a certain extent we reach out and encounter them; but with our sense-perceptions, our waking thoughts, we reach no further than the surface of things.

Of course someone may object, saying that he *can* get further than the surface of things, that if he cuts a piece of wood which is there before him as a sense-perception, then he has penetrated inside it. That is a fallacy, however, for if you cut a piece of wood, you have again only a surface, and if you cut the two pieces again, still you have only surfaces; and if you were to get right to the molecules and atoms, again you would have only surfaces. You do not reach what may be called the inner essence of things, for that lies beyond the realm of sense-perception. Sense-perceptions can be conceived as a tapestry spread out around us. What lies this side of the tapestry we perceive with our senses; what lies on the other side of the tapestry we do not perceive with the senses. We are in this world of sense from the time we wake up until we fall asleep. Our soul is filled with the impressions made upon us by this world of sense. Now when we pass into sleep, we are not in the world this side of the senses, we are then in reality *inside* things, we are on the *other* side of the tapestry of sense-perceptions. But in his earthly consciousness, man knows nothing of this and he dreams of all sorts of things lying beyond the realm of sense-perception. He dreams of molecules, of atoms; but they are only dreams — dreams of his waking consciousness. He invents molecules, atoms and the like, and believes them to be realities. But study any description of atoms, even the most recent... you will find nothing but minute objects which are described according to the pattern of what is experienced from the surface of things. It is all a tissue woven from the experiences of waking consciousness on this side of the tapestry of sense.

But when we fall asleep, we emerge from the world of sense and penetrate to the other side. And whereas we experience Nature here with our waking thoughts, in yonder world, from the time of falling asleep until the time of waking, we live in the world of Spirit, that world of Spirit through which we also pass before birth and after death. In his earthly development, however, man is so constituted that his consciousness is extinguished when he passes beyond the world of sense; his consciousness is not forceful enough to penetrate to the spiritual world. But what Spiritual Science calls Imagination, Inspiration, Intuition — these three forms of super-sensible cognition — give us knowledge of what lies on the other side of the tapestry of sense. And what we discover first, is the lowest stage of the world of the Hierarchies.

When we wake from sleep we pass over into the world of animals, plants, minerals — the three kingdoms of Nature belonging to the world of sense. When we fall asleep, we pass beyond the world of sense, we are transported into the realm of the first rank of Beings above man — the Angels. And from the time of falling asleep until waking, we are connected with the Being who is allotted to man as his own Angel, just as through our eyes and ears we are connected with the three kingdoms of Nature here in the world of sense. Even if at first we have no consciousness of this connection with the world of the Angels, it is nevertheless there. This connection extends into our astral body.

If, living in our astral body during sleep, we were suddenly to wake up, we should contact the world of the Angels, in the first place the Angel who is connected with our own life, just as here in the earthly world we are in contact with animals, plants, and minerals.

Now even in the earthly world, in the world of sense, if a man is attentive and deliberately trains his thinking, he sees much more than when he is unobservant and hasty. His connection with the three kingdoms of Nature can be intimate or superficial. And it is the same with regard to the world of spiritual Beings. But in the world of spiritual Beings, different conditions prevail.

A man whose thoughts are entirely engrossed in the material world, who never desires to rise above it, or to acquaint himself with moral ideas extending beyond the merely utilitarian, who has no desire to experience true human love, who in his waking life has no devotion to the Divine-Spiritual world — on falling asleep, such a man has no forces which enable him to come into contact with his Angel. Whenever we fall asleep, this

Angel is waiting as it were for the idealistic feelings and thoughts which come with us, and the more we bring, the more intimate becomes our relation to the Angel while we are asleep. And so throughout our life, by means of what we cultivate over and above material interests, we garner, in our waking life, forces whereby our relation to the Angel becomes more and more intimate.

When we die, all sense-perceptions fall away. The outer world can no longer make any impression upon us, for this must be done via the senses, and the senses pass away with the body. In like manner, the thinking that is connected with sense-perception is extinguished, for its realm is the ether-body. This ether-body only remains with us for a few days after death. We see it at first as a tableau — a tableau which under certain circumstances can be glimpsed during life but which will inevitably arise before us after death.

This ether-tissue dissolves away into the universe, just as the ordinary thoughts acquired from the world of sense pass away from us. They do not remain. All purely utilitarian thoughts, all thoughts connected with the material world, drift away from us when we pass through the Gate of Death. But the idealistic thoughts and feelings, the pure human love, the religious feelings which have arisen in our waking life and have united us with our Angel, these accompany us when we pass through death.

This has a very important consequence during the period lying between death and a new birth. Even during earthly life we are connected with the higher Hierarchies and it is correct to say that when we fall asleep and our idealistic experiences reach to the Angel, this Angel is in turn connected with the Archangels, the Archangels with the Archai, and so on. Our existence continues in a rich and abundant world of Spirit. But this spiritual world has no special significance for us between birth and death. This world of the higher Hierarchies acquires its real significance for us when it becomes our environment between death and a new birth. The more we have delivered over to our Angel, the more *conscious* life is this Angel able to infuse into us after death when we are beings of soul-and-spirit, the more gifts are bestowed by the Hierarchies upon the conscious life of soul. What our Angel unfolds, together with the higher Hierarchies (that is to say, what the Beings of the First Hierarchy unfold together with higher Hierarchies *through* our Angel) is for our consciousness in the spiritual world between death and rebirth what our eyes and ears are in the

physical world. And the more idealistic thoughts and feelings, human love and piety we have brought to our Angel, the clearer does our consciousness become.

Now between death and a new birth there comes a time when the Angel has a definite task in connection with us. The Angel has now to achieve a more intimate relation with the hierarchy of the Archangels than was formerly the case. I have described the time through which man lives between death and a new birth from many different points of view, notably in the Lecture-Course given in Vienna in 1914, entitled *The Inner Nature of Man and the Life between Death and a new Birth*. I will now describe certain other aspects.

When a somewhat lengthy period has elapsed after death, the important moment comes when the Angel must as it were deliver up to the Archangels what he has received from us through the 'idealistic' experiences described. It is as though man were placed before the world of the Archangels, who can then receive these experiences he has unfolded in his soul and Spirit during his life between birth and death. There are great differences among human souls living between death and a new birth. In our epoch there are persons who have brought very little in the way of idealistic thoughts and feelings, of human love, of piety, when the time comes for the Angel to pass on to the Archangel for the purposes of cosmic evolution, what has been carried through death. This activity which unfolds between the Angel and the Archangel must, under all circumstances, take place. But there is a great difference, dependent upon whether we are able to follow consciously, by means of the experiences described, what takes place between the Angels and the Archangels or whether we only live through it in a dull, dim state, as must be the lot of human beings whose consciousness has been purely materialistic. It is not quite accurate to say that the experiences of such human beings are dull or dim. It is perhaps better to say: they experience these happenings in such a way that they feel continually rejected by a world into which they ought to be received, they feel continually chilled by a world which should receive them with warmth. For man should be received with loving sympathy into the world of the Archangels at this important moment of time; he should be received with warmth. And then he will be led in the right way towards what I have called in one of my Mystery Plays: "The Midnight Hour of Existence."

Man is led by the Archangels to the realm of the Archai where his life is interwoven with that of all the higher Hierarchies, for through the Archai he is brought into relation with all the higher Hierarchies and receives from

their realms the impulse to descend to the Earth once again. The power is given him to work as a being of soul-and-spirit, to work in what is provided, later on, in material form, by the stream of heredity.

Before the Midnight Hour of Existence man has become more and more estranged from earthly existence, he has been growing more and more into the spiritual world — either being received lovingly (in the sense described above) by the spiritual world, being drawn to it with warmth, or being repelled, chilled by it. But when the Midnight Hour of Existence has passed, man begins gradually to long for earthly life and once again, during the second part of his journey, he encounters the world of the Archangels. It is really so: Between death and a new birth, man ascends, first to the world of the Angels, Archangels, Archai, and then once again descends; and after the world of the Archai his most important contact is with the world of the Archangels.

And now comes another important point in the life between death and a new birth. In a man who has brought through death no idealistic thoughts or feelings, no human love or true piety, something of the soul-and-spirit has perished as a result of the antipathy and chilling reception meted out by the higher world. A man who now again approaches the realm of the Archangels in the right way has received into him the power to work effectively in his subsequent life on Earth, to make proper use of his body; a man who has not brought such experiences with him will be imbued by the Angels with a longing for earthly life which remains more unconscious. A very great deal depends upon this. Upon it depends to what people, to what language — mother-tongue — the man descends in his forthcoming earthly existence. This urge towards a particular people, a particular mother-tongue may have been implanted in him deeply and inwardly or more superficially. So that on his descent a man is either permeated with deep and inward love for what will become his mother-tongue, or he enters more automatically into what he will have to express later on through his organs of speech.

It makes a great difference in which of these two ways a man has been destined for the language that will be his in the coming earthly life. He who before his earthly life, during his second passage through the realm of the Angels, can be permeated with a really inward love for his mother-tongue, assimilates it as though it were part of his very being. He becomes one with it. This love is absolutely natural to him; it is a love born of the soul; he grows into his language and race as into a natural home. If however a man has grown into it the other way during the descent to his next earthly

life, he will arrive on the Earth loving his language merely out of instinct and lower impulses. Lacking the true, inward love for his language and his people, he will be prone to an aggressive patriotism connected with his bodily existence. It makes a great difference whether we grow into race and language with the tranquil, pure love of one who unites himself inwardly with his folk and language, or whether we grow into them more automatically, and out of passions and instincts express love for our folk and our language. The former conditions never come to expression in chauvinism or a superficial and aggressive form of patriotism. A true and inward love for race and language expresses itself naturally, and is thoroughly consistent with real and universal human love. Feeling for internationalism or cosmopolitanism is never stultified by this inner love for a language and people. When, however, a man grows into his language more automatically, when through his instincts and impulses he develops an over-fervid, organic, animal-like love for language and people, false nationalism and chauvinism arise, with their external emphasis upon race and nationality.

At the present time especially, it is necessary to study from the standpoint of life between death and a new birth what we encounter in the outer world in our life between birth and death. For the way we come down into race and language through the stream of heredity, through birth, depends upon how we encounter, for the second time, the realm of the Archangels.

Those who try to understand life to-day from the spiritual vantage-point, know that the experience arising in the period between death and a new birth when man comes for the second time into the realm of the Angels, is very important. All over the Earth to-day the peoples are adopting a false attitude to nationality, race and language, and much of what has arisen in the catastrophe of the second decade of the twentieth century in the evolution of the Western people, is only explicable when studied from such points of view. He who studies life to-day in the light of anthroposophical Spiritual Science must assume that in former earthly lives many men became more and more deeply entangled in materialism. You all know that, normally, the period between death and a new birth is lengthy. But especially in the present phase of evolution, there are many men whose life between their last death and their present birth was only short, and in their former earthly life they had little human love or idealism. Already in the former earthly life their interests were merely utilitarian. And as a result, in their second contact with the realm of the Angels between death and a new birth, the seeds were laid for all that arises to-day in such an evil form in the life of the West.

We shall have realised that man can only be understood as a spatial being when it is known that his form and structure derive from the realm of the fixed stars and his life-stages from the planetary spheres. As a spatial being, man draws the forces that are active in him, not only from the Earth but from the whole Cosmos. Now just as it is necessary to go beyond what is earthly in order to understand man as a spatial being, so it is necessary to go beyond life between birth and death in order to understand social life, racial life on the Earth.

When we carefully observe the life of to-day we find that although men claim their right to freedom so vociferously, they are, in reality, inwardly unfree. There is no truly free life in the activities which nowadays manifest such obvious forces of decline; instincts and lower impulses are the cause of the misery in social life. And when this is perceived we are called upon to understand it.

Just as a second meeting with the Archangels takes place, so when man once again approaches earthly life, he enters into a more intimate union with his Angel. But at first he is somewhat withdrawn from the realm of the Angels. As long as he is in the realm of the Archangels, his Angel too is more strongly bound with this realm. Man lives as it were among the higher Hierarchies and as he draws near to a new birth he is entrusted more and more to the realm of the Angels who then lead him through the world of the Elements, through fire, air, water and earth, to the stream of heredity. His Angel, leads him to physical existence on Earth. His Angel can make him into a man who is in a position to act freely, out of the depths of his soul-and-spirit, if all the conditions described have been fulfilled by the achievements of a former earthly life.

But, the Angel is not able to lead a man to a truly free life, if he has had to be united automatically with his language and his race. In such a case the individual life also becomes unfree. This lack of freedom shows itself in the following way. Instead of forming free concepts, such a man merely thinks *words*. He becomes unfree because all his thinking is absorbed in words. This is a fundamental characteristic of modern men.

Earthly life in its historical development, especially in its present state, cannot be understood unless we also turn with the eyes of soul, to the life which runs its course between death and a new birth, to the world of soul-and-spirit.

To understand the human *form*, we must turn to the heaven of the fixed stars; to understand the stages of *life* in man we must turn to the planetary spheres. If we wish to understand man's life of *soul-and-spirit*, we must not confine our attention to the life between birth and death, for as we have seen, this life of soul-and-spirit is rooted in the world of the higher Hierarchies and belongs to the higher Hierarchies just as the physical body and ether-body of man belong to the physical and etheric worlds.

Again, if we wish to understand thinking, feeling and willing, then we must not merely confine our attention to man's relation to the world of sense. Thinking, feeling and willing are the forces through which the *soul* develops. We are carried as it were through the Gate of Death by our idealistic thoughts — by what love and religious devotion have implanted in these thoughts. Our first meeting with the Archangels depends upon how we have ennobled our thinking and permeated it with idealism. But when we have passed through the Midnight Hour of Existence, our thinking dies away. It is this thinking which now, after the Midnight Hour of Existence, is re-moulded and elaborated for the next earthly life. And the forces which permeate our physical organs of thinking in the coming earthly life are shaped by our former thinking. The forces working in the human head are not merely forces of the present life. They are the forces which have worked over into this life from thinking as it was in the last life, and give rise to the form of the brain.

On the other hand, it is the *will* which, at the second meeting with the Archangels, plays its special part in man's life of soul-and-spirit. And it is the will which then, in the next life on Earth, lays hold of the limb-and-metabolic organism. When we enter through birth into earthly life, it is the will which determines the fitness or inadequacy of the limbs and the metabolic processes.

Within the head we really have a physical mirror-image of the thoughts evolved in the previous life. In the forces of the metabolism and limbs we have the working of the newly acquired forces of will which, at the second meeting with the Archangels, are incorporated into us as I have described — either in such a way that they are inwardly active in the life of soul, or operate automatically.

Those who realise how this present life which generates such forces of decline in humanity of the West, has taken shape, will look with the greatest interest towards what was active in man between death and a

new birth during the period of existence preceding this present earthly life. And what they can learn from this will fill them with the impulse — now that the dire consequences of materialism are becoming apparent in the life of the peoples — to give men who already in their last incarnation were too materialistic, that stimulus which can lead once again to a deepening of inner life, to free spiritual activity, to a really intimate, and natural relation to language and race which does not in any way run counter to internationalism or cosmopolitanism.

But first and foremost our thinking must be permeated with real spirituality. In the Spirit of modern man, there are, in reality, only thoughts. When man speaks to-day of his Spirit, he is actually speaking only of his thoughts, of his more or less abstract thinking. What we need is to be filled with Spirit, the living Spirit belonging to the world lying between death and a new birth. In respect of his form, his stages of life, his nature of soul-and-spirit, man must regard himself as belonging to a world which lies *outside* the earthly sphere; then he will be able to bring what is right and good into earthly life.

We know how the Spiritual in man is gradually absorbed by other domains of earthly existence, by political life, by economic life. What is needed is a *free and independent spiritual life*; only thereby can man be permeated with real spirituality, with spiritual substance, not merely with thoughts about this or that. Anthroposophy must therefore be prepared to work for the liberation of the spiritual life. If this spiritual life does not stand upon its own foundations, man will become more and more a dealer in abstractions, He will not be able to permeate his being with living Spirit, but only with abstract Spirit.

When a man here, in physical life, passes through the Gate of Death, his corpse is committed to the Earth, or to the Elements. His true being is no longer within this physical corpse. When a man passes through birth in such a way that through the processes described he has become an 'automaton' in his relation to his nation, language and conduct — then his living thinking, his living will, his living nature of soul-and-spirit *die* when he is born into the physical world and within physical existence become the corpse of the Divine Being of soul-and-spirit.

Our abstract, rationalistic thinking is verily a corpse of the soul-and-spirit. Just as the real human being is no longer within the physical corpse, so we have in abstract thinking, a life of soul that is devoid of Spirit — really only the corpse of the Divine-spiritual. Man stands to-day at a critical point

where he must resolve to receive the spiritual world once again, in order that he may pour new life into the abstract thinking that is a corpse of the Divine-Spiritual, opening the way for instincts, impulses and automatism.

What I said at the end of my lecture to students here (*On the Reality of Higher Worlds*. 25th November, 1921.) is deeply true: If he is to pass from a decline to a real ascent, man must overcome the abstraction which, like a corpse of the soul is present in the intellectualistic and rationalistic thinking of to-day.

An awakening of the soul and spirit — that is what is needed! The social life of the present day points clearly to the necessity for such an awakening. Anthroposophy has indeed an eternal task in regard to that living principle in man which must continue beyond all epochs of time. But Anthroposophy has also a task to fulfil for the present age, namely to wean man from externalisation, from the tendency to paralyse and kill the Divine-Spiritual within him. Anthroposophy must bring back this Divine-Spiritual life. Man must learn to regard himself not merely as an earthly but as a heavenly being, realising that his earthly life can only be conducted aright if the forces of heavenly existence, of the existence between death and a new birth, are brought down into this earthly life.



3

The Mission of the Scandanavian Peoples

4 December 1921, Oslo

The two previous lectures dealt with important questions relating to the nature and destiny of man. We heard that the human physical body and ether-body are not connected merely with the external world perceived by the senses and that this bodily nature of man can only be understood aright when we also recognise its relation with the Zodiac. And we then tried to understand how the heaven of the fixed stars and the planetary spheres work upon what lies within the outer covering of man, shaping and imbuing it with life. In the last lecture we also heard how the inner, spiritual core of man's being is related to the world of the higher Hierarchies. It was indicated that this connection with the world of the higher Hierarchies becomes especially noticeable when we observe how in his physical life on Earth, man can achieve union with the spiritual world through morality, religious devotion and love for his fellow-men; in this way he enables his Guardian Angel so to order his descent at the end of his life between death and a new birth that he again acquires the full power of individuality and is able, as a free individual, to take hold of his human nature. We also heard that if a man has not established this relation to the spiritual world in some incarnation, his link with his nation, for example, is of a purely external kind, and that this, in its extreme form, leads to chauvinism.

Such studies show us that man's life can only be truly understood when the other side, too, is considered, that is to say, the life stretching between death and a new birth. As soon as we come to study the inner nature of man, this life between death and a new birth must be taken into consideration.. For life here on the Earth is in truth a reflection of the life between death and a new birth. Life in matter is the bodily life and what we have developed in the world of spirit-and-soul before birth expresses itself in this bodily life.

What we must acquire *anew*, what must be built up anew in the core of our being, is the element appertaining to the will, and in a certain respect also to the life of feeling. The faculty of thinking that is bound up with the head — this we bring with us from the spiritual world — to the extent to

which thinking is unmixed with feeling. Our thinking faculty *per se* comes with us at birth into physical existence and we have only to develop it during physical life or allow it to be developed by education. What we mainly acquire in the new incarnation through intercourse with the outer world are the qualities inherent in feeling and in will, which for this reason play an extremely important part in education.

In the sphere of education, if through our own short-comings as teachers we are incapable of helping the child to *think* properly, we may leave undeveloped much that by virtue of his previous incarnations he could have brought to expression. If, however, we are unable to work on the child's life of feeling and of will through our natural authority and our example as teachers, then we fail to impart to him what he ought to receive in the physical world, and thus we do injury to his subsequent life after death. In the modern world this is a cause of deep pain to anyone who understands these things. In the world of education to-day people insist upon the importance of the child being made to use his brain, upon the cultivation of his intellect. True, much that the child brings with him through birth is brought out by these means. But it can only be of real use when earthly life, too is presented to the child in the right way, that is to say, when we are able through example and authority to impart to him the intangible qualities belonging to feeling and to will. We injure the child's eternal life if we fail to cultivate in him the right kind of feeling and will.

The faculty of thinking which we bring with us at birth, comes to an end here, in the material world, it dies with us. Only what we cultivate through feeling and will — which is nevertheless unconsciously permeated with new thoughts — this and this only we take with us through the Gate of Death. In our present very difficult times, religion, education, indeed every domain of mental and spiritual life must begin to take account of man's *eternal* nature, not merely of human egotism.

Religions of the present day speculate far too much upon human egotism. On the one side they encourage inertia by not spurring men on to acquire those things which are eternal by inner individual effort in the life of feeling and of will; and on the other side they enhance egotism by speaking only of eternal life after death, not of what was there before birth or conception and has come down with us into the physical world. I have said before that this life before birth is connected with *selflessness* in man, whereas human egotism comes into play whenever mention is made of the life after death. Life after death assumes an egotistic form in the religious concepts of to-day. The idea is put before man in such a way that his longings are

satisfied. When the religions believe that they have helped the egotistic life of soul in man, they think they have done what is expected of them. But through a truly spiritual understanding of the world, mankind must be brought to realise how essential it is for the whole life of the human being to be viewed in the light of eternity, free from every trace of egotism and moulded accordingly by those whose task it is to teach and educate.

Now this has a significant bearing upon public life too, and it is of this that I want to speak to-day. For it is in the highest degree necessary that what we gain from an anthroposophical knowledge of higher worlds should be carried into actual life, that we should know how to bring it to expression in life. Abstract theories are really of little use. Life on the Earth is many-sided, full of variety. If, for example, we consider the life of the peoples, it is not only obvious that Indians differ from Americans or Englishmen, but Swedes are often said to differ from Norwegians although they live in such near proximity. We cannot let ourselves be guided entirely by general principles; concrete, *individual* conditions prevail everywhere and it is these that are important. It is just these individual conditions that we shall fail to recognise if we do not take our start from the Spiritual. Modern man does not really *know* the world. He talks a great deal about the world but he does not *know* it, for he is unaware that the soul-and-spirit extends into physical existence and that, fundamentally, this physical existence is governed by the Spiritual. This knowledge is not acquired by studying abstract, general principles. These abstract principles are often perfectly correct, but they do not carry us very far in the world as it actually is.

Certainly it is quite correct to say: 'God rules the world.' But in face of the manifold variety of the world it is purposeless to keep repeating: 'God rules the world in India, God rules the world in England, God rules the world in Sweden, God rules the world in Norway.' Certainly, God rules the world everywhere, but for the purposes of life in its immediate reality, it is necessary to know how God rules the world in India, in England, in Sweden, in Norway. In spiritual study the individual conditions must be observed in every case. Of what use would it be, for example, to take a man into a Geld, show him a plant with yellow flowers and round petals and merely tell him, "That is a plant" — and then take him to a plant with thorns and pointed, tapering petals, repeating: "That is a plant." It is the specific and individual properties of the plant that must be made clear to him. But in spiritual matters man has become so easygoing and slack that he is content with general principles. He only wants to hear: 'God rules the world,' or 'Man has a Guardian Angel' and he feels no desire for detailed

knowledge of how life is differentiated in the various regions of the Earth, or how its various manifestations have been influenced by the spiritual world.

This, then, will be the theme of the lecture.

It is precisely in these days of tumult, when people all over the world are so utterly at sea in public affairs, when congresses and conferences produce no result, and in spite of high-sounding programmes, men disperse without having come to any real decision — it is precisely now that deeper questions should be raised concerning all that is revealing itself from the spiritual world in the different regions of the Earth.

Think of the peninsula which you, together with the Swedes, have as your earthly dwelling-place. There is something about it that presents a kind of riddle to those who do not live in Sweden or Norway, as well as to those who actually live here. There was certainly a great difference in the way in which since 1914, let us say, you thought about the tumultuous events going on in the world. These events have struck their blows in manifold ways but man to-day is largely unaware of their effects; he does not realise what deeper forces have been and are in operation. Looking down to Middle Europe, to the South of Europe, to Africa, even to regions of Asia, the events will have seemed to you to be the direct expression of violent, elemental passions, whereas up here you were merely experiencing the consequences and reverberations of those events. People up here in the North may well have been perplexed, for it really was as though men had suddenly become frenzied with desire to tear one another to pieces. Those who were only onlookers must certainly have been perplexed when they thought about these happenings more deeply.

But such things cannot be explained by studying only the one period — even a period fraught with happenings as momentous as those of recent years. True, someone may say that it seems to him as though he had lived through centuries in these few years, but in general there will only be a very gradual realisation that this is actually so. Most people are living and thinking to-day exactly as they did in 1914. In countries like these in the North, this is in a way understandable. But that it is also the case in Middle Europe is terrible. The normal feeling would be one of having lived through events which would otherwise have come to pass only in the course of centuries. Everything was compressed into a few short years. Events like those of 1914-1915 embraced within a brief space of time as much as

about ten years of the Thirty Years War, and a measure of illumination can only be shed upon them when they are studied in a much wider historical perspective.

From the vantage-point of your Northern peninsula you will be able to realise that it is only since the beginning of the present epoch that things have been happening South of you in which your participation has been different from that of the peoples who live in the South of Europe, in Western Asia, or in Middle Europe. There has really been an utter contrast between the South and the North of Europe in this respect.

I want you to think of the fourth century A.D., or rather of the period which reaches its climax in that century. In the South, on the Greek peninsula and especially on the Italian peninsula — also in the life of Middle Europe which was in contact with Italy — you see the spread of Christianity. But something else as well is to be perceived. Christianity makes its way from the East into the Pagan world of Europe, expressing itself in many different forms. When we consider the early centuries, the first, second and even the third centuries, we find the old, inherited wisdom being brought to bear upon Christianity. Efforts are made to understand Christianity through the Gnosis, as it is called, to interpret Christianity in the light of the highest form of wisdom. A change comes about in this respect, but not until the fourth century, just at the time when Christianity begins to spread more towards the regions of Middle Europe. The Gnostic conceptions, the wisdom-filled conceptions of Christianity now disappear. A writer like Origen who wants to introduce something of the old Gnostic wisdom into Christianity is branded as a heretic: Julian, the so-called Apostate, who wants to unite the old pagan wisdom with Christianity, is ostracised. And finally Christianity is externalised by the deed of Constantine into the political form of a Church. In the fourth century, that which in Christianity had once been quite different, those secrets which were felt to need the illumination of the highest wisdom if they were to become intelligible — all this begins to take on a more superficial character. Men are called upon to lay hold of Christianity in a more elementary way, with a kind of abstract feeling. Christianity makes its way from the South towards the North. It is, of course, true, that from the fourth to the fifteenth centuries, the Christian life which develops in the South and especially in Middle Europe, is rich in qualities of soul, but the Spiritual in its living essence, has receded. The Gnosis is regarded as an undesirable element in Christianity... There you have one or two cursory flashlights upon happenings among the peoples of Europe more towards the South.

Christianity spreads out, finds its way into the Greek world, the Roman world, into the life of Middle Europe, and there, in a certain sense it is stripped of spirituality. Think now of your Northern world in the third and fourth centuries, that is to say in the same early centuries of the post-Christian era. External history gives no true account of the conditions then prevailing. This period must be studied with the help of Anthroposophy. In connection with the European Folk-Souls this was done here some years ago (1910) but to-day we will think more of the external character of the peoples.

At the time when, in the South, the Spirit withdrew more and more towards the East — that is to say, shortly after the period I have described — the old Athenian Schools of Philosophy were closed and the last philosophers of Athens were obliged to make their way to the East, where they attached themselves to the mysterious academy of Gondi Shapur from which at that time a remarkable spiritual life was spreading via Africa and Southern Europe towards the rest of Europe, deeply influencing the spiritual life of later times. Yet it can truly be said that there, in the South, men looked back to a lofty spirituality they had once possessed.. The mighty Event of Golgotha had taken place. In the first centuries it had still been found necessary to understand the Mystery of Golgotha with the help of this sublime spirituality. This spirituality had been gradually swept aside; the *human* element had more and more taken the place of what may be called the working of the Divine in the life of man.

The Gnosis still helped man to realise the existence of the Divine-Spiritual within him. This Divine-Spiritual reality was more and more put aside and the *human* element brought to the fore. In this respect much was contributed by those peoples who took part in the migrations. In their migrations towards the South, in their conquests of the Southern regions, the Germanic peoples of Middle Europe who brought with them souls more naturally bound to the physical, contributed to this repression of the Spiritual. For they did not understand the old spirituality and brought a more fundamentally human influence to the South. And so the lofty primeval wisdom which had once been alive in men receded from the spiritual culture of the West. And at the same time when this repression of the Spiritual was taking place — in the third and fourth centuries A.D. — we find that up here in the North, teachings about the Gods were being spread among men.

In those days human beings who were inspired in an instinctive way were held in high esteem. These were times which had long since passed away for the Southern people. Up here in the North it still happened that here and there a man or a woman living in isolation would be sought out and listened to, when in a mysterious way, through faculties arising from their particular bodily constitution, they gave revelations concerning the spiritual worlds. These faculties were a natural gift in certain individuals who worked in this way among their fellows. And when the people were listening attentively to these isolated seers, they realised, when they went into the hut of one of these 'God-intoxicated,' 'God-revealing' men or women, that it was not really the physical man or woman to whom they were listening, but that it was the Divine-Spiritual itself which had descended and was inspiring such individuals in order that they might give forth the teaching of the Gods to their fellow-men.

It is very striking for the anthroposophical student of European history to find that the men of the North were still so constituted as to be able to receive divine teachings, to feel that the Gods — the Beings of the higher Hierarchies — were still living realities among them; whereas in the South, during the same period, the Spirit is becoming weaker and weaker and the *human* element which man brings to expression in his life on the physical Earth comes to the fore and supersedes the Divine. So it was in the decisive fourth century, when the men of the South were becoming more and more eager for human doctrine.

These individual revelations, springing as they did from obscure depths of spiritual life must be taken in all seriousness. It is verily as if in those times the Gods moved as teachers among the still childlike peoples of the North. This condition which was still present in a particular form in the North during the first centuries of the Christian era had long since vanished in the South. But it is a remarkable and significant fact in the destiny of the peoples that the men of the North became for the men of the South, the bearers of what had been learnt from the *Gods* — not from men.

This must be taken earnestly. The people who belonged, in the main, to the population of the West of your peninsula, whose descendants are the Norwegians of to-day, journeyed towards the West, towards the South West, and as a result of their wanderings, their sea-voyages and conquests, their influence reached right down to Sicily and North Africa. The sons of the Gods went to the sons of the World, bringing them what they had learned from their Gods.

It is an interesting chapter of history to study the migrations of the Northern peoples towards the South West and to see how — in continual metamorphosis, of course — the teachings of the Northern Gods spread towards the South West, deeply influencing the British Isles, France, Spain, Italy, Sicily and North Africa. Moreover, the effect of this influence is perceptible even to-day. The Roman, Latin form of life which makes its way from the South towards the North is permeated with the Northern influence. Whatever consciousness of the Divine has remained in the stream of civilisation from the South is here influenced by the Northern teachings of the Gods. But it takes on a peculiar character which is not fully noticeable until we look towards the Eastern side of this Northern peninsula — towards Sweden.

We need remind ourselves only of one fact — how the peoples of Eastern Europe turned to the Voreger, and how in the East of the Northern peninsula the trend is more towards the East. It is a really remarkable picture. The form of life that later on tends more towards the civilisation of Norway, streams towards the South West, and the life that later on tends towards the civilisation of Sweden, streams towards the South East. Everywhere, of course, there are the teachings of the Northern Gods, but they are presented in different ways.

The peoples who later on became the Norwegians, carry the element of activity, of strength, of enthusiasm, towards the South West. In this way the languishing Latin culture is stimulated and imbued with life. The influence of the Northern Gods in these migrations is such that it is a stimulus to activity in the whole life of the peoples. This is apparent everywhere and it is a most fascinating study.

But we also see what is happening in the East of this peninsula. — It is of course influenced by geographical conditions, but these geographical conditions are also reflected in the character of the people, for the human being does not grow out of the Earth but is born on the Earth, he comes down from world of soul-and-spirit and there is a real difference between being born as a Norwegian or as a Swede. We shall not get anywhere by simply saying that the geographical conditions are such and such, but we must question further as to why one soul has the urge to become a Norwegian, and another a Swede. But now think of the remarkable character — and this applies even at the present day — of the Eastern Scandinavian, the Swedish impulses which make their way towards the East.

These impulses stream towards the East but as they advance they are everywhere deflected. They do not become really active. They cannot maintain their stand against what is brought over from the East, first by other Asiatic peoples and later by the Mongols and Tartars, nor against the early, more characteristically Eastern form of Christianity. This stream flows towards the, South East but meets with obstacles everywhere and takes on a more passive character. The impulse as a whole is deeply influenced by the North. But what streams from the West of the Northern peninsula towards the South brings activity everywhere; whereas the influence that makes its way towards the East, is seized by the inactive, the more reflective element of the East and its own activity is in a way blunted.

As the Northern Gods send their impulses towards the West, they unfold, paramountly, their nature of *will*. As they send their impulse towards the East, they unfold their life of reflection, their contemplative nature.

External wars and conflicts are ultimately only the material images of what takes place in the way I have just indicated. Those who are abstract theorists, who view the whole world from the standpoint of some theory — and the empiricists of to-day are fundamentally the greatest theorists of all, for they never get down to realities, they *think about* things instead of trying to know them from inside — these theorists will bring forward all sorts of characteristics displayed by the Norwegians and the Swedes. The inhabitants of these countries themselves often emphasise the existence of outward divergencies simply because people to-day will not penetrate to the depths of human nature in order to acquire a real knowledge of life. But life must be observed in the way indicated in the two lectures I have given here. External life must be viewed not only from the standpoint of life between birth and death, but also from the standpoint of life between death and a new birth; we must be mindful not only of those things which satisfy the egotism of the human being who merely wants to be happy after death and because he still has physical life before him, does not trouble about the life before birth. We must study how we can apply in this earthly life what we have brought with us through birth from worlds of soul-and-spirit.

Then we begin to see that there are connections in the life of men and in the life of the peoples which are only revealed when we perceive what man is and has become through many earthly lives, when we have knowledge of the periods he spends between death and a new birth.

A most remarkable connection is then revealed, helping us to understand what comes to pass on Earth. In the external national character of the Norwegian of the present day there are traits which have been inherited from those men who once migrated towards the South West and by their revelations of the Gods poured life and activity into the Roman-Latin form of civilisation. At that time something developed in the great plan of the world which gave the Norwegians their special character, their particular task. And those who are born in Norway to-day will understand their destiny and task in the world as a whole, only if they look back with spiritual understanding to the times when Norway was able to develop in a particular way, when the Northern people went forth on their migrations, their raids and their campaigns of conquest towards the South West, to fulfil a task on Earth. The task sprang out of the character of the people who inhabit these countries. Their character, it is true, was different in those times but something remains as a heritage in the present-day Norwegian and endows him with certain faculties which are important from the point of view of man's eternal life, of man's immortality.

From the Eastern part of this peninsula where the Swedish character has developed, the old teachings of the Gods were carried towards the East, to men whose own religious doctrines had been preserved in a certain mystical, oriental form. What was more a revelation from Nature met with little response in the East; those who wandered towards the East, therefore, were destined to lead a more contemplative life.

But this again has left a heritage which has set its stamp upon the character of the people. And if we are to understand the western and the Eastern parts of the Scandinavian peninsula, we must look back to what these peoples have experienced through the centuries, realising what they have become to-day as a result of these experiences. We have every reason at the present time to think about these things. It is, after all, quite easy to realise in an elementary way that spiritual forces must be working in the world, in the whole international course of events, in the whole racial life of man, and that the missions of each particular people must be understood in the light of spiritual knowledge.

Now when the power of super-sensible cognition is brought to bear upon this connection between the tasks of the modern Norwegians and Swedes and the course of their historical evolution, remarkable things come to light. Norwegians have a definite gift — nor does this gift depend upon actual birth into a Norwegian milieu. What develops in the life of Norway can be seen even in the physical world; it can be described by

anthropologists, historians, or even journalists. Their statements will be more or less correct but will give no true account of the forces at work in the depths of the human soul. For man has a mission not only here on Earth; he has a mission also in the spiritual worlds after death. And this mission in the spiritual worlds after death takes shape here, on the Earth.

What we experience in the period immediately following death is a consequence of our Earth-evolution. What we experience on the Earth immediately after birth — this again is a consequence of our life in the world of soul-and-spirit, and it is of the highest importance to study the mission of the Norwegian people not only on the Earth but in the period after death, with the means at the disposal of spiritual investigation.

Because of their physical and racial character, because of the special constitution of their brains and the rest of their bodily make-up, it can — I repeat, it *can* — fall to the lot of those souls who pass through the gate of death from the soil of the Western part of the Scandinavian peninsula, to give a very definite stimulus to other souls after death. They can give to other souls after death something that only the Norwegian characteristics are able to impart. In this epoch especially, the Norwegian character is so constituted that subconsciously and inwardly it understands *certain secrets of Nature*.

I am not now referring to your external, intellectual knowledge but to the kind of knowledge which you develop in your spiritual body, without using the physical senses, between the time of falling asleep and waking, when you are outside your bodies. When during sleep you experience the spirit in the plant-world, in stone and rock, in the rustling trees and the roaring of the waves, you become aware of the reality of forces living in the plants, hidden in the rocks, operating in the waves of the sea as they break in upon the shores, in the sparsely flowering rock-plants. A great picture arises in your souls during sleep, in the form of an intimate knowledge of Nature of which the intellect and the life of the senses are unconscious. And when, as I described in the last lecture, you develop a real connection with the Angel-Being, then you can bear into the spiritual world this unconscious Nature-wisdom, this concrete knowledge of spirituality in the plants, the stones and the other phenomena. of Nature.

Those who in the true and real way have lived a Norwegian life become the stimulators and teachers of their fellow-souls after death in regard to the secrets of Nature here on the Earth. For in the spiritual world, souls must

be taught about the secrets of the Earth, just as here, on the Earth, they must be taught about the secrets of the spiritual world.

In the Eastern portion of this peninsula, where the heritage from olden times is as I have described it, a different mission is carried through the gate of death. What the souls there carry through death into the spiritual world is not so much what is experienced during sleep but during waking consciousness in connection with the external world, in contemplation and study of the sense-world and in a kind of understanding — permeated with feeling — of the external world.

But this after all, is something which fundamentally speaking, has significance only for the earthly life. Yet while man is developing just this element in earthly life, something very significant develops in the subconscious region of the soul. I have pointed out to you that even in waking life a certain part of our being sleeps and dreams. The life of feeling is really only another form of dream life. In our feelings we dream and in the operations of our will we are asleep. What we know of our will is only the illumination thrown upon it by our thinking. But the kind of will that is kindled in the Swedish soul is less capable of penetrating the secrets of Nature during sleep. What enters the Swedish soul more unconsciously in the life of will and of feeling during contemplation of the outer world and in the operations of intellect and reason — that is what is carried through death. So the mission of the souls belonging to the Eastern part of the Scandinavian peninsula who pass through death is to impart to other souls an element pertaining more to the *will* — exactly the opposite of what they were able to impart to their physical fellow-beings during the times of their old historical connection with them.

Let me put it like this — A special gift in connection with the element of will developed in the Eastern part of the Scandinavian peninsula as a primary and then as an inherited quality of the character of the people. The people of Europe have lived a long time without asking in this concrete way what they really have to do after death, for they have contented themselves with the egotistical answer: We shall be happy. But if the world is to be prevented from falling into complete decadence, this egotistical answer will not suffice. It will only be possible for men to lead a true and proper life when they are willing to accept the selfless answer, when they not only ask about the happiness in store for them after death but when they also ask: What am I called upon to do, in view of my particular situation in earthly

life? Only when people are willing to frame the question in this way will they put their situation in life to proper use and so prepare truly for their mission. And then the preparation will no longer be difficult.

The two lectures — indeed the three — which I have given you here, are all connected in this respect. In view of this special mission, it is essential that the *spirituality* in the anthroposophical attitude to the world should be understood here in Norway. For when you consider that it is a specific task to create out of the subconscious life a natural science for the next world — however paradoxical this may seem, it is indeed so — then you must deliberately and consciously prepare your life of feeling in such a way that your souls, while you sleep every night, are not unreceptive to the knowledge of Nature which should be infused into them during sleep. But the bodies of to-day are not always a help in this process of preparation. The souls of the Northern peoples are, through ancient heritage, fundamentally fitted for the spiritual world. Here above all, the bodies must be influenced by a *spiritual* form of culture.

And now a great question arises which can be illuminated by comparing the mission of the peoples of Middle Europe with that of the peoples of the North.

The state of the people of Middle Europe, if they will not accept the Spiritual, was not badly described by a man who gave no thought at all to the possibility of a spiritual regeneration of humanity. Oswald Spengler has written his book on the Decline of the West, that brilliant but thoroughly pessimistic book — although he has repudiated the pessimism in a subsequent pamphlet. Of course, it is pessimism to speak of the decline of the West. But Spengler is actually speaking of the decline of culture, of something that is of the soul. Without spiritual regeneration the people of Middle Europe will suffer injury to their *souls*. But in this corner of Northern Europe, human beings cannot be injured *only* in the life of soul; when they are injured in the soul, their very bodily nature is injured at the same time. In a way this is fortunate, for if the people of Middle Europe do not accept spirituality, they become barbarian, they degenerate in *soul*. The Northern people can only die out, in the *bodily sense*, for everything depends here upon the particular constitution of the body.

The influence of a new stream of spiritual culture is profoundly necessary. For Middle Europe will degenerate, will become barbarian will go to its decline if it does not allow itself to be influenced by the spirit. The

Northerner will die out, will suffer physical death if he does not allow himself to be influenced by the Spirit.

And so what is developed here, during physical life, is connected with the mission of Northern souls after death. They cannot fulfil their mission if they allow their bodies — which are so well-adapted for spirituality — to degenerate.

These earnest words must be uttered to-day for the evolution of our epoch demands that men shall speak together of such matters. And it is for this reason that I wanted to speak to you from the general, human standpoint, to say to you what a man says to his fellow-beings on this Earth if he has the destiny of Earth-evolution deeply at heart. For those human beings who do not prepare themselves selflessly for an eternal life, will not be leading their earthly life between birth and death aright.

That is the thought I should like to leave with you. Those who feel themselves Anthroposophists should realise that they are a tiny handful of people in the world who must apply all their energy to shaking a lazy humanity out of its lethargy and helping it onwards. Those who hate Anthroposophy to-day — this may be said, among ourselves — hate it because their love of comfort and ease prevents them from being willing to grapple with the great tasks of humanity. They are afraid of what they must overcome if they are to transform their easy-going thoughts and feelings and experience something much more profound. For this reason we see many a storm of opposition arising against what is taking place in Anthroposophy and developing out of it. You too will have to accustom yourselves to violent attacks being made against Anthroposophy or Spiritual Science by reactionaries of every kind, by all who love to saunter along their old beaten tracks. Those however who let this opposition deter them from developing their powers, are not firmly rooted in the real task of Anthroposophy. When people see how Anthroposophy is being attacked to-day from all sides, they may become timid and say: Would it not be better to go forward more quietly so that the opposition may be less violent? Or again they may ask, if they find praise being meted out to them by men who in a decadent age hold leading positions: What have I done wrong? This is a matter of great importance from the anthroposophical point of view. Attacks and abuse are usually explicable for the reasons given above. But if praise were to come from the same quarters, it would be a bad augury for anthroposophical world! It is just because the opponents of Anthroposophy to-day *do* attack it, that we can be reassured — but only, of

course, in the sense that we must apply all the more energy in order to introduce Anthroposophy into the world, not out of personal idiosyncrasies but out of a deep realisation of the needs and tasks of the world.

On this note, then, we will conclude. Let me express to you my heartfelt thanks for your active and energetic co-operation. I assure you that I mean it seriously when I say that separation in space is no separation to those who know the reality of the spiritual bond between souls. In taking my leave, I remain together with you, I do not really go away from you. I believe you can always realise this, if you wish it to be so. You may be quite sure that there are already numbers of people who feel this bond and who look with love in their hearts towards this region in the North West with its special task — the importance of which is so well known to Anthroposophy.

I take leave of you with this love in my heart for those who feel that they truly belong to us, to our Anthroposophical Movement. May our next meeting, too, be full of the inner strength that is necessary and right among Anthroposophists.



4

Father-consciousness and Christ-consciousness

7 December 1921, Berlin

What I have to say today will be somewhat related to the remarks I was allowed to present here last time, and will therefore also have to tie in with some of the ideas presented then. Today I would like to speak about the materialism of present-day religious creeds, but I would like to do so in connection with a certain aspect of the Christ problem. It is precisely with the Christ problem that a whole series of misunderstandings about anthroposophical research work begins. Although the dispelling of these misunderstandings is not to be expected from those who reveal them with a certain interest, a great deal may depend on it with others.

In the latest phases of the development of Western civilization, we have seen all sorts of inclinations towards distinctly atheistic views of the world. It cannot be my task today to point out the various nuances of the atheism that has emerged; but I would like to draw attention to something that is a common basis of every atheistic world view. This is the failure to look at the source of the content of the consciousness of God. The consciousness of God cannot come from the contemplation of external nature alone, but from the whole of man's coexistence with external nature, with the world of the senses. It may seem paradoxical that I say that the consciousness of God must come from man's coexistence with the world of the senses. But this God-consciousness must not be taken as the fulfillment of a moment, so to speak, but as the content of earthly life from birth to death. In this earthly life, we feel ourselves to belong to nature through heredity. We entered this earthly existence as physical human beings through purely natural processes. As we go through this earthly existence, we perceive a certain development of what we have received through our birth into this existence. Now it is a matter of whether we are careful enough - of course I do not mean this only intellectually, but also in terms of feeling and from the will impulses that we also have and must experience - whether we gain a certain awareness of our consciousness for living together with the outer world of the senses in the course of our earthly existence. If we summarize purely through popular experience what the world of the senses can give us, we will certainly never come to feel our full human nature if we do not

think spiritually about the world of the senses and what it can be with us. No matter how carefully we examine all the secrets that the external sense world can give us through sensory perception, we can never come to understand that the human being is also placed in this sense world. But since we, as physical beings on earth, have nevertheless emerged from this sense world, but can never find ourselves as human beings in its ingredients, it simply follows that for a healthy consciousness, this consciousness is filled with the divine being, or rather, with the contemplation of the divine being.

This is precisely what modern natural science, despite its great and comprehensive achievements, has brought to humanity: that because it refuses to recognize a spiritual element within the world of sense-perception, it effectively excludes the human being from the totality of existence that it seeks to embrace. I have already expressed this before you by saying: If we consider, for example, the in many respects tremendous theory of evolution of modern times, we do not actually find it treated of man as 'man', but as the conclusion, as it were, the crowning of the animal world. If we ask natural science, as it is constituted today, about the essence of man, it does not actually answer us, if we understand it correctly. It only answers the question: What is the highest of the animals? That is, it only considers man in relation to his animality. In many respects she is right in what she has to say about this, but in so doing she places man, as it were, outside the sphere of her consideration. She cannot answer the question about the essence of man with her means; indeed, she can only understand herself correctly if she declares this question about the essence of man as being outside her realm.

This is, of course, only an indication of the feeling that arises from the wholeness of a healthy person, that precisely in so far as he regards himself in connection with the whole of nature, he must actually come to the consciousness of God, but only to the consciousness of God, not to the consciousness of Christ.

Thus, by applying his healthy understanding and healthy intuitive perception, man can by no means be an atheist. I have already expressed this here by saying that even if, of course, not every slight illness can be diagnosed by ordinary means, it is nevertheless clear to anyone who can distinguish the healthy person from the sick person that, first of all, atheism can only find its place in a morbid disposition of human nature as a whole. Therefore, one could say that denying God is actually the result of being sick. But now the following applies: We arrive at this awareness of

God in the present epoch of human development, I would say, only in a wavering, doubting way when we survey everything; for here attention must be drawn to a significant defect in our present pedagogy, the defect that the Waldorf school movement, for example, seeks to correct. When one speaks of the decline of present-day civilization, one cannot actually ignore the present youth movement. This youth movement means much more than is usually thought, and I consider it to be something extraordinarily significant that, at a number of events of our anthroposophical movement in recent times, including the last Stuttgart congress, a impressive number of members of the youth movement had actually come and made the very positive decision, from the point of view of the youth movement, to join forces with what is intended by the anthroposophical spiritual movement. Whatever one may think of the details of this youth movement, one must recognize that in a large part of our youth the authority of the older generation has faded, and that someone must guide the young. No matter how much one may criticize today's youth, one cannot ignore the fact that when young people say that they can no longer recognize any authority, then it is not only the youth who can be blamed for it, but also the older generation, who should be the guides of the youth. Recently, during a lecture I gave in Aarau, Switzerland, the very question of the lack of authority among today's youth was discussed. After the lecture, a religious representative appeared who thoroughly scolded the current youth. But scolding does not really achieve much when dealing with something that is so elementary. You have to understand things. It was interesting when a very young lad from the cantonal school stood up afterwards — the cantonal school there is definitely a secondary modern school — who, in my opinion, actually gave the best speech in the discussion. He spoke with great fire and said: We want authority, we actually crave authority, but when we look to the old people, do we see anything other than that no authority can come from these old people? We see how they quarrel with each other at every opportunity, how they fight. — And then he listed all sorts of things that today's youth notice about their elders, and in the end he said: We do crave authority, but we cannot have it!

But if you look at what it is about, you find that today's civilization has become highly intellectualistic, that actually everything that considers itself to be leading and authoritative today has become intellectualistic, purely intellectual. Basically, natural science and intellectual culture belong together. Natural science is the objective, intellectual culture is the subjective. But intellectualism only occurs naturally at a certain age. You

cannot be an intellectual as a child. Children are not intellectuals. Intellectualism can only occur after sexual maturity. And since humanity has now fully grown into intellectualism, everything is dominated by it today. Those aspirations that often reject intellectualism today and grumble about it do so only out of a different intellectualism. Today, all those who claim intellectualism are abstract beings. But one only grows into intellectualism at a later age, and because we are overwhelmed by it, children no longer understand us and cannot have anything left for the forms of thought that we adopt under the influence of intellectualism. We ourselves no longer feel what we took in when we were children. Childhood is no longer fully alive in us. We have become so terribly intellectually clever that childhood no longer plays any role in us. But we cannot be educators or teachers if we have been thoroughly abandoned by what we ourselves experienced as children. So we no longer have anything to say to children, and they grow up without any special care for their being. We declaim that we have to be vivid, but the vivid is only the objective side of intellectualism. Thus we create an abyss between us and the youth, and this is what we encounter in the youth movement. But again, nothing is done by just scolding intellectualism. For it has now entered Western civilization as a necessary phenomenon since the last three to five centuries, actually since the 13th to 15th century. It had to arise so that humanity could truly live into the impulse of freedom. So it is not a matter of merely criticizing the intellectual impulse, but of understanding it in the right way, in order to be able to strive for further development through understanding in a way other than the intellectualistic one.

And now we must say: What is the essence of this intellectualism? It is actually already indicated by the fact that one points to the connection of this intellectualism with the feeling of freedom. And the feeling of freedom is in turn inconceivable without the full development of the human ego. It is actually the development of the ego that has emerged in a certain way in modern times in humanity and takes hold of the ego from the consciousness soul. This is the essential factor that provides the impulse for modern Western civilization. However, this I, of which human beings have become fully aware over the past three, four, five hundred years, can initially only come from the human body. The experience of the I between birth and death can only come from the human body; this can be examined in particular through anthroposophical spiritual research.

One of the most significant moments for the whole of life after death is the moment of dying itself. This moment of dying is, of course, only known to the earthly human being on the outside. It must be recognized from the inside out of the consciousness that the dead person has between death and a new birth. Whether this occurs more or less later after death is not our concern now. Today we want to consider in general the consciousness that a person has between death and a new birth. This consciousness depends entirely on whether the person has an extraordinarily significant impression at the moment of dying. Consider, for a moment, that during the whole of life between birth and death, the human being only comes out of his physical and etheric body with his ego and his astral body, and that is in a state of sleep; so that during life between birth and death there is a constant, uninterrupted connection between the physical body and the etheric body. At death, the human being leaves his physical body with his etheric body – you know that he remains with his etheric body for days – so that he only has this experience of his full physical body at the moment of dying. If you want to have knowledge of something, you cannot have it otherwise than by having what you want to know outside of you. What they have in mind, you do not see, you only see what is outside the eye. So you also do not see spiritually-mentally anything that you have within you. You must first go out of yourself with the spiritual-mental part of your being, then you see the outside of your body. This happens in the moment of dying in relation to the separation of the etheric body and the physical body. When falling asleep, the human being never has a conscious, complete view of his physical and etheric bodies. These two remain behind when falling asleep. This is why, when one attains the conscious view during sleep, one can only see the human head and part of the trunk, and that one cannot actually see the limb-human being in ordinary sleep. Only in death, in dying, is the moment when man, in relation to his physical body, has himself completely as an object before him, and the whole time from death to the new birth, this impression remains, I might say, as the end of perspective, to which one looks back after death. One sees this moment of dying, for one would not recognize an ego for oneself if one were no longer, if one did not have the ego as an object in that one has before one, as the object of knowledge at the moment of dying, that which one brings to consciousness here in the physical world, namely the full physical body. This tremendous impression, that one can say to oneself: What your ego-consciousness has given you, your whole, your total physical body, you have seen that at the moment of dying! — that remains and forms the content of the ego-consciousness between death and the new birth, where everything becomes temporal, where the spatial, in a

certain respect, is no longer there. After death, one looks back from that point and sees, as an important point, the direction then continues, but the rays cross at the moment of the final death, that moment of dying. This is what, as a "time element", I would like to say, has the same effect after death as the spatial physical organism gives the sense of self between birth and death. So that we can say: The sense of self here in earthly life actually comes from the physical body.

Now the following is present. You look out through your senses into the external nature. You see the three kingdoms of external nature, the mineral, the vegetable, the animal, and in addition the physical human kingdom. You see clouds, rivers, mountains, stars and so on. Everything you can see can be considered 'nature', and what you cannot see is continually supplying the elements that also penetrate the human organism, both in the physical and in the etheric. With food, you take in substances from the physical and sensory world. These substances unfold their physical and chemical forces and activities even when they are in the human organism. In terms of his physical organism, the human being is, so to speak, what he takes in from the outside world. The minerals, plants and animals are, if I may put it this way, allowed to be "nature". They have the right to be nature. But when what is present in them enters the human organism with food, breathing and so on, it becomes something other than nature. Then, in the human organism, it can be said that What lives in nature must not, if man is to remain 'human', allow itself to remain nature. Nature beings have the right to be only outside of man; within man, nature becomes a destructive element. It seeks to continually dissolve the human being and to bring about a state in which the soul can also acquire powers that work towards destruction.

In this respect, the older instinctive consciousnesses of men saw much more correctly than today's intellectualism. Today's intellectualism starts from concepts, not from facts, and when the facts do not agree with the concepts, it reinterprets the phenomena according to its concepts. Today, people do not talk about the fact that plants, animals and humans come to an end, but they say that death should be examined. The fact that the end of plants, the end of animals, the end of humans could be something completely different, that cannot be grasped under the common concept of the "dead", is not considered by anyone today. You become grotesque for today's world, you become paradoxical when you draw attention to such things. But it is absolutely the case in this regard. Today someone says: a knife is a knife – and then he gets a razor and wants to carve his meat with it, because – a knife is a knife! Today, when we believe that we have both

feet firmly planted in reality, it is important to realize that reality cannot be grasped through abstract concepts. Intellectualism does not take this into account, starting only from concepts instead of from facts. It therefore also fails to recognize how justified it was from older levels of consciousness to speak of the fact that nature, in its effects and processes, by continuing its existence in man, no longer has the right to remain nature, but that it should be transformed, and that in man, if it is to retain its validity as nature, it becomes "sin". The concept of sin in connection with natural phenomena is no longer understood at all. The connection between the natural and that which is rooted in the human being as spiritual-soul is not considered. The animals, plants and minerals have the right to be outside in nature; that which moves from them into the human being must be transformed by the human being, because if it remains nature, it would be transformed into destruction. That is to say, if it is mere nature and man has not the strength to transform it, it becomes illness, and in imparting itself to the soul, sin.

If now man, who looks at his relationship to the world of the senses without prejudice, consults with himself and takes into account everything that can be taken into account, he must say the following to himself: When I look out into nature and first consider my origin from it, I cannot be an atheist. But on the other hand, precisely as a man of the present, as a man of the newer epoch, I cannot but attribute my ego-consciousness to the mere physical body, to the natural existence in me. What I express here in thought is present in feeling and emotion in every healthy person who is not afraid of coming to self-knowledge today. He comes, if only he does not avoid it out of fear or comfort, to look into his own soul, to this conflict, that he says to himself: If I consider myself as a being of nature, emerging from nature, then a divine being must underlie the whole world, which also contains me. But this healthy sense is actually contradicted by the modern development of the ego, because this can only come from the natural existence of the physical body and - as I have even shown you - through the impression that dying makes on a person. Thus nothing less follows from this than that modern man must instinctively come into doubt about God-consciousness, not because something in the observation of nature leads away from God-consciousness, but because in the present epoch, when one considers his entire being in terms of body, soul and spirit, man cannot be completely healthy because of his ego-consciousness. Because: nature in man, if it remains as it is and has an influence on the soul, means something that causes illness, and on the soul it has the influence of aberration, of sinning.

Of course, this should not be viewed in a philistine way, but rather, one must keep in mind the facts as they speak from existence. In other words, if we go back to ancient times, when the sense of self did not yet exist, the divine being — regardless of whether it was imagined as modified in one way or another — was always conceived under the concept of the Father. One could not imagine the divine essence other than as a unified divine essence, which more or less embraced the world, which one sought to grasp from the concept of the Father; and since the sense of self was not yet there, since it can only arise from the natural, nothing disturbed this Father-consciousness. Modern man can only have this father consciousness if he perhaps through moral reinforcement, but nevertheless dampens his ego and withdraws somewhat, but which must arise through the development of freedom, with the development of modern humanity. Therefore, man as he lives today cannot be satisfied with the one consciousness, the father consciousness. He must say: I would have this father-consciousness if I could still be instinctive like that humanity that existed before the heightened sense of self developed. But as a person of the present, this sense of self prevents me from fully confronting myself in dependence on the father-consciousness.

This is where what the modern human being can very well experience by reflecting on his ego comes into play, when he is clear that the ego, if it does not have the body, extinguishes itself. It extinguishes itself when falling asleep; in death, it only maintains itself by having the contemplation of the dying body. The human being knows that it is precisely through his consciousness of self that he is turned away from the divine consciousness of the Father. But he must feel this as a sickness, and when he feels this in the right way as a sickness, the impulse arises for him that leads him to the Christ present today. The consciousness of the Son must arise out of the inner soul experience to the consciousness of the Father. This son-consciousness can only come into us through an act of freedom. And we must always bear this in mind: if atheism is actually a manifestation of illness, then what can be called agnosticism in the face of the mystery of Golgotha, agnosticism in the face of the present Christ in particular, is a misfortune, a stroke of fate! You don't have to be completely healthy if you are abandoned by the Father-consciousness — but in this respect, modern humanity is not completely healthy —; but you need an act of freely finding the Christ-spirit if you want to come to the Christ.

Two experiences are absolutely necessary: First, the consciousness of the Father, but I would like to say that in the present development of humanity, there is a clouded consciousness of the Father. If I had not acquired the

consciousness of the I in the course of the development of humanity, the divine consciousness of the Father would be there; but because the consciousness of the I actually wells up and must well up from that which, is left to itself, is ill in the human being, therefore the divine Father-consciousness is clouded for the present, and one must come to the consciousness of the Christ through a free deed that is different from finding the Father.

These two experiences are not distinguished from each other in Western civilization, as I have already indicated here. Solowjow, in particular, strictly distinguishes the Father-consciousness from the Son-consciousness, which arises from a different kind of consciousness. In the West, the two are so little distinguished that a presentation of the essence of Christianity, which is decisive for many, could even say: The gospels do not belong to the Son, but only to the Father, the Son actually only as the teacher of the Father. - So there is no awareness that one can have two acts of experience: one in relation to the experience of the Father, which is clouded today, and the other in relation to the Son. Now, if one has this experience in relation to the son, one would initially only come to a present encounter with the Christ, and to this present encounter with the Christ, so to speak to the eternal Christ, everyone can come from the subjective relationship of the present. But anyone who rejects the present encounter with the Christ and lives dull, as in the earlier times of humanity, will not gain that inner constitution that leads him to the encounter with the Christ. But he who truly feels what the newer time can give him, comes to this inner deed of the meeting with the Christ and thereby proves that the Christ is there.

But the historical Christ still remains to be investigated. There one must also have the possibility of looking at history from a different point of view than is possible today in the age of materialism for outer consciousness. I must draw your attention to something here that should be strictly observed. This upward shining into higher worlds is usually taken too much for granted. People still do not listen enough to how the one who speaks of the higher worlds must actually speak in a different style than one speaks of the physical world, and not just in a different external style, but in a different inner style. When we live here in the physical world and let this world have its effect on us, we distinguish, for today's consciousness, what is logical, I might say, right and wrong; we also call it true and false. And we test whether something is right or wrong, true or false, according to logical or external principles of reality. But in doing so, we enter into abstraction, into an intellectualistic life. For all logical distinguishing of whether something is true or false moves precisely in abstract concepts, if

one only takes external sense perception, in observation or in experiment, as a basis. Nevertheless, with our cognition we still move in abstract concepts. We cannot retain the same abstractness of concepts when we go up into the higher worlds. There everything becomes much more alive and is perceived as something living, not merely as something thought. Therefore, he who beholds the higher worlds must not speak merely of true or false, right or wrong — of course one must do that too! But one must speak, for example, of something that is right here in its reflection in the physical world as something healthy, and of something that is wrong here in its reflection as something unhealthy. One is not quite right when speaking of true and false for the next higher world; one has to deal everywhere with healthy and unhealthy, wholesome or unwholesome. Therefore, anyone who speaks of the higher worlds with reference to abstract logic as if they were the physical world shows that he does not have a real conception of the higher worlds.

Now, however, something very peculiar occurs in relation to the historical development of mankind. If we look at it impartially, it shows us ancient epochs full of wisdom, and if we have a healthy feeling, we will feel deep reverence for the ancient wisdom of these older epochs. If, for example, we consider the reflection of this in the Vedas and Vedanta philosophy, we find that the reasons for which this wisdom was revealed are so profound that one must have the deepest reverence for them. We approach this primal wisdom of humanity differently than the abstract scholarship of today is able to. But this primal wisdom is, as it were, increasingly dulled the further humanity advances in its development, and we see that the greatest dulling of this most original human consciousness, so full of wisdom, comes in the age in which the Mystery of Golgotha takes place. There is no need to take into account the external records, insofar as these records, such as the Gospels, speak literally of the Mystery of Golgotha. One need only look impartially, but now with a higher gaze, at the historical development of humanity to find this primal wisdom becoming darker and darker in the human soul the further back one looks. What was fully expressed in the 15th century is already hinted at in the Greek, in the Latin-Roman epoch. Humanity basically only still has traditions of primordial wisdom; it no longer experiences them, and what is slowly emerging is the full consciousness of the self. In this respect, our external science has actually come up against little of what is to be studied in this epoch, which on the other hand includes the mystery of Golgotha. Enormous problems arise when, for example, we look at the Greek alphabet today, where the letters still have names, alpha, beta, gamma,

and follow the path to the later Latin alphabet, where they no longer have names. These transitions, which point deeply to historical developmental states, are not at all taken into account. For example, no attention is paid to what our word "alphabet", which is still taken from Greek, actually means. If we look into this, and a real linguist will be able to follow up these things, it will turn out that the Greek alpha basically expresses the same thing as is expressed in the Old Testament with the words: "The living breath was breathed into man" - so that in the breath, in the breathing, one will see that which first makes man. When the word Alpha, which is a word, is properly examined, it will be found that That is man! The first letter of the alphabet is nothing other than the expression of the human being. And the Beta is the "house", and the beginning of the alphabet means: man in his house. — This view of the alphabet was completely lost in later times, when intellectualism developed more and more. Letters came to be used merely as a means of distinguishing external objects. What lay in the revelation of Primordial Wisdom was lost sight of; the "Word" of the Primordial Revelation was externalized, and people no longer understand what was revealed to humanity in the letters — and specifically in the words. In the traditional lodges and orders of today, people do talk about the "hidden word"; but little do people know of what this hidden word had as a reality, how the alphabet itself spoke of the hidden word, and how it has been atomized, divided.

I could, of course, also start from something else to show what a deeply incisive developmental impulse was present at the time of Greek and Latin culture. How Greek culture tried to help itself through a special art to overcome this, I would say, illness that occurred in humanity, is palpable for those who want to see. I would just like to draw attention to one thing.

Today, when people hear about drama, for example, they think: it is something to watch, something that belongs to the luxuries of life. You watch it and then call it beautiful. But the Greeks had the idea of catharsis for the most important thing that takes place in drama, the purification, the cleansing. This was something that not only meant an external, fantastic process, but also clearly pointed to its medical origin. Catharsis is the crisis that one overcomes, and through the tragedy of the Greeks, the soul was brought to the crisis, so that it underwent a purification in the experience of fear and compassion, in that it was surrendered to the effects of these opposing forces through the course of the drama. The Greeks did not think of their art in a banal sense, but rather as something healing. For they still perceived the rule of an ancient wisdom in it. For them, a healthy ancient wisdom still existed, but it was paralyzed in the course of time, and a kind

of disease process then occurred. With his art, the Greek wanted to express something, and Nietzsche sensed this. You can read about it in his book *The Birth of Tragedy out of the Spirit of Music*. He said something like the following: There is something in humanity that can be healed. And the therapists, the Essenes, assumed everywhere that there was something in humanity that could be healed. And if the Mystery of Golgotha had not occurred in humanity, we would live today in such a way that I would have to speak as if the Mystery of Golgotha had never occurred, so we could only point to a process of illness in humanity. So that in view of the Mystery of Golgotha, something dawns on us when we apply the concepts of healthy and sick in relation to human history. That is the significant thing: you can apply all concepts in relation to right and wrong, but you come to a point in the course of development where you have to look at things differently. For when you enter the Greek epoch, you enter a time when humanity has become ill, and from which health emanates from the Mystery of Golgotha. Therapists have pointed this out and said: "There arises the great therapist, the savior, who in the literal sense has to heal humanity." — It is only a matter of delving deeply enough into the course of human development and not stopping at the usual abstract concepts, but grasping historical life with medical concepts, according to the categories of healthy and sick. Then one will understand the necessity of a healing process and will also understand how the "Savior" - it is no other word than the "therapist" - intervenes in humanity. One will then understand how something must intervene in the development of humanity on earth that could not intervene through the forces that were present in humanity earlier. A new impulse from outside had to come to heal humanity.

This is how one can and must look at historical development if one looks only at the configuration of how humanity has developed, without getting involved in the content of the historical documents. Then one comes to the concept of the extraterrestrial Christ, who connected with the evolution of the earth from extraterrestrial regions through the Mystery of Golgotha. This perspective must be adopted if we want to understand history. Those who do not want to apply this perspective to the development of history, according to the concepts of healthy and sick, should simply admit that history remains incomprehensible to them. They cannot understand how that which once lived in the Orient came to Africa and then became Greco-Roman. We see the Greek development, and rightly so, as an extraordinarily healthy one. And why? Because the Greek had the feeling that one has to fight disease and that he wanted to shape his life

accordingly. And there is a particularly remarkable harmony between the individual Greek personalities in that they felt: here there is something to fight. And this feeling of no longer feeling and the ever-increasing descent into the abstract, which even makes the gods abstract, is the peculiarity of Romanism and remains its peculiarity. Europe was educated by Romanism until the 15th century, when it came to accepting the cosmic Christ into consciousness; before that, Christ was carried into the Occident through Romanism.

I just wanted to contribute a few things today so that we can gradually come to understand what is written in the Mystery of Golgotha: how we cannot actually stop at something that has developed from ancient times to the Mystery of Golgotha. One then finds that, if one proceeds in this way, there is actually no longer any difference between what certain theologians have in their Jesus-logia and what a secular historian, such as Ranke, has. What certain theologians have in terms of the story of Jesus can no longer be distinguished from what a man like Ranke, for example, presents about it. But everything depends on our being able to see how the Christ, as an extra-terrestrial being, united with Jesus of Nazareth, who was born as a human being in the course of time. It is precisely here that something occurs which has led to the greatest misunderstandings with regard to this necessary path of anthroposophy to the Mystery of Golgotha. It was characteristic of all ancient instinctive wisdom that it did not separate the spiritual and the physical. For if one separates the two, one arrives at an impossible concept of matter in the physical and, in the spiritual, that is, in the spiritual experience of man, one arrives at abstraction, at the lifeless system of concepts. It has only become characteristic of more recent humanity to separate the material and the spiritual in this way. And so anthroposophy leads us back to an understanding of how we have to look at the whole of nature, I would even say, how we look at a physiognomy. We look at a physiognomy in such a way that we think of it as ensouled. We read from it the soul-imbued quality. This was once the case in ancient wisdom, and in the same way, today, the newer, light-imbued wisdom also leads us to a physiognomic view of the world of the stars, for example. This leads to something that allows us to speak of Christ as the being of the sun, although this means just as little that Christ is the physical being of the sun as man is the physical being of the body. But only in this way can it be recognized how something extraterrestrial was able to live in Jesus of Nazareth, who lived in Palestine. But this is shrouded in the greatest misunderstanding, especially among theologians. They even find it 'offensive' that anthroposophy connects the Christ with the sun and with

the outer cosmic world in general. Why do they find this offensive? It is extremely characteristic. Anthroposophy says that it leads from the Christ back to the sun. But for these people, the sun is only the burning ball of fog out there; so it is offensive to associate this burning solar nebula with the Christ. But we know that theology has become materialistic, and therefore it can only see the material world in the cosmos. But anthroposophy shows how this material world is spiritualized everywhere. However, theology is unable to detach itself from the material, and therefore it feels offended when anthroposophy speaks of Christ as a being of the sun. From materialism, from the deepest materialism about the world building, precisely this point about Christology is found offensive. Here you can see how materialism permeates everything. It has now taken hold of theology, and because theology has become materialistic, it leads to misunderstandings about anthroposophy. Coming from the ordinary world, we can only be materialists, and when someone from this world talks about Christ in a materialistic way, it is bound to be taken in that way, and that is offensive. At this point, one must point out the materialization of the whole culture, which is only afraid of admitting its underpinnings. But we will not emerge from decline to a new ascent if we do not face these underpinnings quite impartially, fearlessly, without fear. We must get out of what European and Western humanity has brought into this movement of decline in the first place, what has led to these terrible catastrophes. For this, only fearless knowledge of everything that man can learn from the world is suitable. For this it is also necessary to approach the subject in an unprejudiced way, and to discard whatever is really useless from the sphere of intellectualism when entering into the higher worlds.

Many people still say today: Yes, what is communicated from the higher worlds is strange; one must enter into these worlds oneself, otherwise one cannot understand it. — But it is not like that. People believe that it is so only because they absolutely want to abandon those concepts that only apply to the physical world, which we have between birth and death. For example, the belief prevails today, precisely because people everywhere develop everything out of concepts, despite believing that they are being inductive and empirical, that they think they can express themselves absolutely at all. Of course, we have to say: when a person falls asleep, the I and the astral body emerge from the physical and etheric bodies, and the person remains unconscious until awakening occurs. This is a very healthy message for present-day humanity, but it does not apply to the entire development of humanity. If we look back, for example, to the times from

which Indian and ancient Persian culture emerged, we find that a different idea was prevalent everywhere, namely that when a person falls asleep, his ego and astral body descend deeper into his physical and etheric bodies than is the case when he is awake during the day. The old Indian did not say: Man goes out of his physical and etheric body with his ego and astral body when he falls asleep. Only the Theosophists try to make people believe that the Indian spoke in this way. He said: When people fall asleep, they go deeper into their physical and etheric bodies. And that is basically quite correct, because the situation is actually the same as if one were to say in an absolute sense that for the earth the sun rises in the east and sets in the west. But that is not the case, because for the other half of the earth the process takes place in reverse. You can also call it east and west, but the directions are different. Therefore, it is quite possible that for a certain period of time the I and the astral body plunged deeper into the physical body and ether body, and that therefore the impression was quite different. That is why the Indian speaks quite differently, because the person was in a different state of consciousness, namely in that of which the modern person also has no full consciousness, in his rhythmic and metabolic functions. He has no consciousness of these, because it is quite the case, in terms of consciousness, for the modern person that he dreams his rhythmic functions, but sleeps through his metabolic functions.

Therefore, one can say: It must be understandable that people at different times had to experience different things about something that people today believe they can speak about absolutely; and one only understands the development of history if one also lets the facts speak about these things, not the concepts that one has constructed for oneself. Today, when East and West, Occident and Orient, are confronting each other in such a burning way that a balance must be found, today humanity must be able to go back to these backgrounds; otherwise you can experience as many Washington conferences as you like, they will all end in failure if the fundamental impulses of human development are not taken into account. People today do not yet believe this, but it is true that if one wants to move from decline to ascent, one must address the issues that are most deeply moving humanity. What is demanded here seems impractical today. But people do not realize how impractical that is, which has proven itself as such, which has developed in its extreme, has become impractical from 1914 to 1918 and continues to be impractical. But in addition to all this, one must familiarize oneself with how religious consciousness can be illuminated and deepened by what anthroposophical insight is.

Today I could only sketch one of the paths to the cosmic, extraterrestrial Christ. But you will see how a deeper understanding of history can develop from it later on, but one that regards humanity as a living being. And just as one otherwise speaks of a healthy and a sick being in the case of a living being, so one must also speak of a healthy and a sick humanity if one does not want to stop at materialism. One cannot say that it is difficult to come to the Christ when one sees how the corresponding paths have not been followed. A concrete, realistic view of history will try to approach the Mystery of Golgotha from the most diverse sides. Today, however, since one cannot come up with reasons against spiritual science, everything possible is used to denigrate its bearers: they become personal. And it is indeed - and I say this without rancor - a terrible indictment of those who today oppose anthroposophical spiritual science that they actually refrain from addressing the spiritual science, that they always approach it only from the outside, for example, portray the Christ event and the Christ experience as if anthroposophy rationalized the mysterious, as if it were to approach it in shy awe, in the sphere of ordinary rationalist knowledge. But just think: when you are face to face with another person and look at him, the mystery that every person is to us does not have to be lost just because you not only hear about him but are also able to look at him. The individual human being cannot be measured with rationalistic concepts, so how much less can we do so with that which confronts us as the highest meaning of earthly development: the Mystery of Golgotha! But the mysterious is not lost by being brought to view; and anthroposophy aims to lead from that which is only communicated or believed to that which makes itself understood in contemplation. Nothing is taken away from what constitutes the mystery. The mystery remains, but it is not merely to be 'spoken' of, but is to be presented to contemplative humanity.

Thus today's criticism is rambling, instead of going into what is so literally contained in the anthroposophical literature itself. It is not necessary to get involved in every issue that comes from such quarters, but within anthroposophical circles there should be a strong awareness that the hatred for the anthroposophical movement will increase all the more the more it asserts itself. What they have done so far is quite a feat in terms of opposition; but you can be assured that it will be surpassed. And even if there is as much grumbling as there has been in recent days about eurythmy, then it seems to me that the only thing necessary is to say to yourself: It would only be worrying if there were praise from this quarter. I

would then begin to ask myself: What needs to be done differently now? That is something those who want to be in the right way in the Anthroposophical Movement should acquire as a healthy feeling.

What I wanted to present today is something that, in a certain respect, appears to be a supplement to what I was allowed to speak about during my last visit. Of course, that does not mean that it is finished. What I have hinted at today will also help you to make some progress in Christology.



5

The Human Being as an Earthly and Heavenly Being

15 December 1921, Dornach

If we first take a look at the historical development of humanity, we see what we have been talking about: a descending line from the original wisdom that was instinctively adopted by man, which at the same time had something invigorating for humanity, and then became paralyzed . at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha. And then follows the ascending current of development, in which we are immersed, which begins in the manner already described several times from the Mystery of Golgotha. Now it is a matter of properly considering what initially emerges as a certain inner characteristic of historical development, for our time, in which we are immersed and which we must understand.

In our time there are the most diverse phenomena that live in the feelings and perceptions of human beings, which can even be said to make people healthy and sick in a certain way, but which are not brought to consciousness, which are not properly connected with the great principles of development. We must turn our attention to these phenomena of the present, for it is on this alone that the recovery of much within human development into the future depends.

There are many things we could mention. Today, we want to highlight one in particular: the difficulty we have today in establishing a true understanding with the youth of today. This difficulty in communicating with young people as an adult today is also the basis of our anthroposophical educational endeavors. We see a distinct youth movement emerging today. As soon as children reach the age of sexual maturity and then a little beyond, they develop a life of feelings and emotions that is extremely difficult for adults to understand today, but which is even more difficult to deal with. We see how agitation movements are emerging among young people, how revolting feelings are asserting themselves against all parental or educational authority. And when we look at all this with an unbiased mind, we cannot deny the justification for much of it. We have to admit that something is alive in today's young people that has lost touch with the outer life and also with the revelations of the inner

life in adults. — In this respect, many things appear to the philistine today in such a way that when he notices them, he simply begins to rant in a peculiar way. He may not always mean it, but he starts ranting. He says: Today's youth have lost all sense of authority, they have almost become Bolsheviks; they rebel against everything that older people find reasonable, they disobey. These are all things that make life today hopeless. And especially among teachers, among those teachers who would like to preserve the old ways, such statements are very, very common. Again, such a thing can only be understood from an awareness of the developmental impulses of humanity.

Since the 15th century, we have seen a development of humanity towards intellectualism, towards an intellectual understanding of the world. We are not always aware of how strongly we actually live in this intellectualism today, in this purely intellectual, increasingly abstract form of world view. Although people always believe that they start from experience, from reality, from practical life, in reality they actually only start from conceptual life, from definitions, instead of from facts. People believe they have understood something when they have formed a concept of it. We often speak of how we understand death. Now, although it sometimes happens in a rather complicated way, death is understood as the end of a being, of a form. When this form dissolves into itself, when it can no longer hold together, then we say it dies, and we form a concept that is supposed to answer the question: What actually is death? And then we apply this concept, which we have grasped and also defined very precisely, to plants, to animals, to human beings. We say: plants die, animals die, human beings die. But the fact that this coming to an end of the inner cohesion can be something quite different in plants, in animals, in humans, is not taken into account because one gets stuck on the external side of the matter. It is just as I have often said: someone says that a knife is for cutting meat, and then he gets a razor and uses it to cut meat; a knife is a knife. This is more or less how we deal with the concept of death, life and so on today. We live in abstractions, in intellectualism. This is particularly noticeable in scientific life, where one does not start from facts, but from the comprehension of concepts, from defining.

Now, the abilities that a person needs to lead such a life in concepts do not actually come into play until the age of fourteen or fifteen, when sexual maturity really sets in. It is virtually impossible, when looking at life impartially, to speak of a child having an inclination towards an intellectualistic view of the world. The child is simply not able to think about the world in such a way that it can grasp the abstract. The child

develops a completely different life in the soul. The child brings with it developmental forces, inner formative forces from its prenatal life, from the life between death and a new birth. These shape the physical organism, especially in the first seven years of life, but then to a somewhat lesser extent, and also significantly, even up to sexual maturity. And as long as the physical organism is being shaped in this way, it is quite impossible for the human being to develop into pure intellectualism. Now, in its development, humanity has increasingly come to a point where everything one gets from the world, everything one is educated in, are intellectual concepts. We receive the soul's garments, so to speak, in such a way that we can only grow into them in our fourteenth or fifteenth year. It is only an appearance when, for example, we say that we mainly want to look at things with children. What we allow to develop for them in this observation is what they only really grow into in the fourteenth or fifteenth year. The consequence of this is that in today's adults there is no living connection between what actually occurs as soul life after sexual maturity and what was there before. They only remember superficially what they experienced as children. They do not delve into their childhood experiences. They do not delve into these childhood experiences to such an extent that they exult inwardly at the joys they experienced as children or become intensely sad at what went against them. They actually forget childhood, not for the intellect but for the feelings and will, so that they do not look back on childhood in a living way.

But the child itself does not yet have the disposition for intellectualism; it has within itself the forces that are still working on the organism. This actually makes it a completely different breed of human being, and hence the impossibility of understanding adults and children. Teachers talk to children in such a way that they are terribly clever, these teachers – but children are wise. The teachers are clever and the children are wise, and cleverness cannot understand wisdom, cannot build a bridge from one to the other. If we had to do with our cleverness all that children do with their inner organism, yes, we would of course not be able to cope at all.

Jean Paul was right when he said that we learn far more in the first three years of our lives than in the three academic years. Anyone who has gone through their academic years with an open mind and can look back on their childhood years in a corresponding way knows that this is absolutely true; for the three academic years are concerned only with cleverness – let us say it is so – but in any case they are not concerned with wisdom. But the three childish years, the first even most, really move in wisdom. There wisdom works on the human being, even if it remains in the subconscious,

wisdom works on the human being. Then, of course, it subsides later, but it is still present and we then experience what we are experiencing today: the revolting feelings of youth towards adults. One really only understands this when one looks back at the ages of humanity when it was different. And it was different in the developmental period of humanity that extends into the fourth post-Atlantic period. And I will describe how it was different.

Take an ancient Egyptian from an earlier period or a member of the Chaldean tribe of humanity: they did not perceive mineral nature in the same way as we do. He perceived it quite differently. He perceived it in such a way that when he saw ordinary ground, he perceived it relatively neutrally; but he perceived it quite differently, vividly, when he saw mountains or a flowing river. Then all life stirred within him. He received insights into what he actually needed in terms of insights from the outside world. He felt, let us say, when he saw a crystal, that the crystal told him something, that it revealed a secret of nature to him. Today, however, we are driven to mineralogy, to crystallography, in an intellectualistic way. There we are to learn all kinds of things about edges and angles and the like. That is all well and good, but it cannot be compared to what people once felt when they looked at a crystal. Then they really spoke to him of elemental beings; then he felt that he is not alone in the world, that there is something in nature that speaks to him. And even more so when a person approached plants. Certainly, one approached the grass that surrounds us more or less neutrally. But if, let us say, one saw a bilsenkraut plant on the wayside and walked past it, then one had a certain experience. The henbane has a certain shape; today the teacher, the botanist, introduces a child to this shape: it is described. This is an intellectualistic way of approaching the subject, and when this intellectualistic approach is adopted, one actually remains more or less neutral towards almost all plants. You like them, an aesthetic element comes into it, but the very living thing that was there once does not come into it. Because if you go back in time, if you were an ancient Egyptian or an ancient Chaldean, if you passed a henbane plant, you would go pale. If you passed a foxglove plant, you would blush. If you passed a colchicum, you would feel your skin stiffen. So you didn't walk through the world indifferently. You felt how you participated in the blood circulation and - in today's language we can call it that - in the nervous experience, which expressed itself externally in form. It was a living participation with nature.

And when people saw animals, they experienced the form of the animal very intensely in their own inner overall perception. They therefore understood nature quite differently. They understood it directly with the

whole human being. When someone saw a snake, they felt something like an urge to writhe in their whole organism and to escape with their soul from all kinds of things that were unpleasant to them. The whole thing that is expressed in the Bible: the snake was the most cunning of all animals – that was an inner experience when looking at the snake. The mineral kingdom spoke to the human being from the outside. The animal kingdom spoke in such a way that this speaking was equivalent to experiencing the form of the animal.

All this has been lost to humanity, and in its place has come a kind of feeling of being cast away from nature, a feeling that nature has closed its windows. You can no longer see into it. You stand there alone. This is part of the natural development of humanity. What an older humanity experienced in nature is now present to a high degree in the needs of the child. And we should just pay attention to how the child actually asks. It does not ask in such a way that our present-day intellectualized answers really fit the child's questions. They do not fit at all. The child usually feels unsatisfied. And when we come across children who ask questions and feel satisfied with intellectual answers, this is something that occurs today, especially in a distorted and false education, to the detriment of developing humanity. When a child claims to be satisfied with our intellectualized answers, this actually corresponds to a certain coquetry that develops in the child. In reality, the child does not feel satisfied at all when given the answers we are accustomed to today, and we only train it to feel satisfied often, thereby making it actually untrue inwardly, inwardly coquettish. It then coquettishes with the satisfaction. This indicates that something lives in the child that is similar to what all of humanity had in ancient times as co-experience with the cosmos, and which has been dulled by the intellectualized soul life of more recent times. If this were to continue as it is today, the gap between adults and children would become ever deeper and deeper.

A well-known socialist agitator once wrote an essay that was much resented, about revolutionizing children. That was long before the war – it was downright demanded that children should be revolutionized. Well, yes, today they want to revolutionize everything, so why not children too? But if all this happens without an understanding of human nature, it can only lead to the greatest disaster, and it does lead to the greatest disaster. We must realize that, however necessary intellectual development, development towards the abstract, was for humanity, it has nevertheless thrown man out of nature, and today we grow up satisfying our head with the development of the intellect, while leaving the rest of the human being,

especially the rest of the soul life, which works very strongly in the subconscious, unsatisfied. This becomes apparent to anyone who can observe the whole human being with the means of spiritual research, especially today in the sleeping human being.

This sleeping human being of today, so to speak, has nothing of what he actually needs. He has the great disadvantage that from falling asleep to waking up, he not only sleeps physically, as he should, but also sleeps spiritually in a certain way. In the case of the elderly person, it was the case that he awakened spiritually when he fell asleep. Of course, this did not merge into ordinary consciousness, but he awakened spiritually in such a way that he absorbed certain forces through consciousness that he could not absorb in ordinary consciousness. Today, human beings have lost these powers. Man is in the outer world, and yet, with his soul, he is not in it. He can no longer blush when he looks at the purple foxglove, he can no longer turn pale when he looks at the henbane. He can no longer feel so vividly that it is a blessing to be born near oak forests, because the oak pours courageous strength into people, as was the case with the ancient Germans. These things cannot be grasped merely in the abstract, as we do today, when we retell, correctly philistine retell, how the ancient Germans loved the oaks. It is philistine how we tell it today, because we have no idea what effect the oak had on older people, how the seventeen- to eighteen-year-old lad, when he awoke to certain forces, could not help but feel stiff in the knees, in the loins, how he tightened his neck, how that was a matter of course.

Please do not misunderstand me; I do not think that we should broach this subject today. It is out of the question, because it would be unnatural if we wanted to broach it. It is something that has disappeared from humanity, that no longer exists. But we must recognize that the need for it has nevertheless remained in the subconscious soul life, that this need is there.

So what did the ancient man say to nature? He said: I was born - he did not express it in words, of course, but it was in his feeling - I was born; what lives in me is rooted out there in the stones that tell me something, in the plants that make me blush and turn pale, make me taut and so on, in the animals that fill me with inner strength or make me limp; I am rooted in there. There I will be received again with my soul when my body falls away from me. And it was a feeling, as they, let us say, could have the plants when they bloom. If the plant could develop a soul life when it blooms, it would say: I must now develop the germ into the fruit; there it is over with me, there it does not go further, there I must let my leaves

wither and finally fall off. But then, if it were developing its soul life, the plant would turn gratefully to the earth and say: Yes, but there is the earth, which takes in my germs, which develops my germs. There I live on. — This is roughly how the ancient human being felt about all of nature. He did not merely derive his soul existence from his physical inheritance, but he knew himself rooted in all of nature. And in that he knew himself rooted in all nature, he also knew how he is received into all nature when his body has fallen away from him. He regarded all nature as the blossoming plant regards the earth that receives its germ. This world, which the old man felt around him, is actually no longer there, it is dead, it is dead. And this is a basic feeling of modern man, even if it is not understood, that he feels thrown out of nature.

And now we want to put something completely different before our soul. We want to imagine an initiate in the fourth post-Atlantic period, who is initiated into the beginning of intellectual life. What is generally understood by intellectual life today was, in a sense, the result of a certain initiation for the fourth post-Atlantic period. Certain initiations were aimed at bringing people to an understanding of intellectualism. You see, such an initiate was, of course, brought to the consequences of intellectualism, whereas today, people get stuck in the fear of intellectualism – they do not go to the consequences. But such an initiate was led to understand this. In ancient times, it was simply the case that man felt that there was a soul in all of nature. He lived with his soul life in such a way that he knew that in death he would be taken up again by the soul in the cosmos. A tragic mood already prevailed over many initiations of the fourth post-Atlantean period, and the initiates of this kind of mystery had actually lost all hope in nature. They expected nothing of what nature could say to man. They said that nature had ceased to speak to man, that nature had ceased to receive man in death. A completely different world must come, so that man with his soul life can again have hope. And it was made clear to these initiates: He who looks into nature finds nothing in nature that could give him such hope. He had to see in nature that there is nothing that saves man spiritually, not only physically, where he has descendants, but that saves man spiritually. That wisdom takes on an intellectual form was something these initiates came to know. It is already a commonplace for us, but these initiates came to know how wisdom is transformed into an intellectual form. And that created in them a tragic mood, that was what made them hopeless. For the old initiates experienced one thing with full consciousness: they knew that wisdom is not merely something that lives abstractly in man; wisdom is light in man, in that man thinks, makes

images within himself. For the same thing that is inwardly images within man is outwardly the light that quickens. Our concepts cannot create light – so these initiates said to themselves – that is why they themselves have taken on the form of death, that is why our concepts are dead. And that was the tragic wisdom of a large part of the mysteries of the fourth post-Atlantean period, that the sentence was felt: Man's wisdom can no longer be light, it becomes dark in man; for light is creating. The abstract thought is uncreative, is dead.

And now imagine such an initiate, educated entirely in this view: there can only be consolation for man again when, from some corner, comes the conviction: wisdom can shine again, wisdom can become light again, it is not dead, it is something that can be seen outside. It can become light. You see, this comfort came to Paul when he experienced the event of Damascus. Only then did he grasp the mystery of Golgotha. Only then did he understand: through Christ, something has come into the world that cannot only be thought, that shines, that in turn has the power of light, and thus has creative power. And from that moment on he knew: although nature is dead to man, Christ is on earth with his power. He has penetrated it. And in Christ mankind can now find what it used to find in nature. That was Paul's great experience before Damascus. And then he understood: people have lost nature as a consolation, nature has become aesthetic to them. But the Christ enters. The Christ, properly understood, gives that which lived there in the whole complex of the speaking minerals, the plants that make one blush and pale, the animal nature that looks and searches within the human being. A spiritual cosmos has connected with the earth. The power of the sun, which previously appeared to man in minerals, plants and animals, is now there in a moral way. It is there for inner experience. The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.

What are people talking about when they discuss the interpretation of what the Christ proclaimed: the end of the earth is here, a new kingdom is arising. Yes, those who have understood that the ears of grain will henceforth be five times as rich in the fields, that the grapes will be five times as large on the vines – we know that this is how it was understood – do not understand what was meant; that in fact a saturation of purely natural existence had come with what lies in the descent of the Christ to earth. This was revealed to Paul with the event of Damascus. And so we must see this second world, a second, completely new world has come with the Christ. It is not just this abstract concept, as it is often viewed, but it is a completely new world, a world that, when properly understood, gives what nature used to give. Intellectualism laughs when one speaks of

gnomes in minerals, but this is supposed to express nothing other than what I said earlier: the minerals spoke to you – or that there are undines in plants. People who can no longer turn pale or blush at the sight of plants cannot, of course, know about the Undines either, for the concepts of reason, the definitions, say nothing about the Undines. But the blush and the pallor, that which lies in the blood, speaks of it, spoke of it once. Today it speaks of it only unconsciously. But all this can be revived when the Christ enters humanity as a real experience. And in the Christ, old age will be able to communicate with youth again. For the Christ cannot be grasped by the intellect. You see, today we judge the world intellectually, we speak of right and wrong, of true and false. But this is only significant for the physical world in which we live between birth and death. People to whom one must speak about the higher worlds do not want to enter into what is essential. Certainly, one must carry the concepts of true and false, of logically right and wrong, up into the higher worlds as well. But that is not the essential. The essential is that something living must be added, that the concepts of 'healthy' and 'ill', for example, must be introduced. Here in the physical world, something is either right or wrong; for the higher worlds, what is right is also healthy. We experience it as vividly as we experience health in the physical world as something that encompasses the whole person. And what is wrong, what is incorrect, is what is sick there. We would actually be better off speaking of health and sickness in the ordinary world if we want to describe things accurately than if we speak of right and wrong. We also need to develop some sense of how to look at what is healthy and what is sick. Here we judge logically according to right or wrong; in the higher worlds we sense: something is growing there, it is developing. We do not speak of mere rightness, we sense that as healthy. And when we grasp a concept about it, we also feel this concept as something healthy, not just as something right. And in the same way, we sense what is wrong in the spiritual world as being sick. Now, in the physical world we are content with right or wrong — we are predisposed that way. This is not the case for history. For history, we cannot make do with the concepts that newer historians have developed based on the model of pure physics. We have to speak of a health at the starting point of humanity. In the Greco-Latin period, we have to speak of a disease of culture. And we have to speak of the therapy of history by developing the effectiveness of the mystery of Golgotha. We must therefore speak as we speak of the healthy and the sick person, we must present history according to the model of an illness and a cure.

Ranke's history, for example, is infinitely abstract compared to reality. And this kind of history, as it is written today, is more or less like a doctor approaching a sickbed or a healthy person and simply wanting to reason with them. We must approach history with an eye for health, illness and healing. And that happens when we look at history in such a way that we start from health in primeval times, gradually see a real cultural illness, and feel the great therapist who, through the mystery of Golgotha, has really brought healing from outside the earth. In this way, the study of history is brought to life. But in this way, too, the Christ is placed in the historical evolution. Only the historical evolution has a possibility of approaching the Christ, which proceeds as physiology and pathology must proceed in relation to the material. It must be possible to bring into spiritual life those concepts that today can only be used in the physical life, and even there only poorly, because, for example, one examines the person after he has died and deduces the most important laws for his life from the corpse. So one handles it poorly, but at least one handles it. But when considering history, this has been completely forgotten. At most when people see very special states of emergency, such as, let us say, when a sect appears that whips itself, then one speaks of something pathological, or when things come to it, as it has already happened during the last years, for example, that someone once started shooting at Venus with machine guns because he believed that it was an enemy balloon approaching. This is called a war psychosis. So in special cases one speaks of the healthy or the sick taking effect. But one does not consider the healthy and the sick in the great process. Therefore one cannot come to a real understanding of the principle of healing, of the great historical therapy that appeared with the Mystery of Golgotha. Of course, one can say that people today are still actually quite ill. Well, but that does not apply, because one should have an idea of what it would be like if the Mystery of Golgotha had not occurred. And if people believe that it only depends on faith, then they are also mistaken, because it depends on the objective that has occurred in the evolution of humanity through the Mystery of Golgotha. Of course, faith also helps the sick person, but the doctor's skill is also essential. Therefore, it was a mistake to look for the actual phenomenon of Christian piety merely in faith. That would be like saying: the medicine can stay where it wants, you just need to teach the patient to believe that he can get well through this medicine.

We have come to abstractions everywhere, to an inability to see how what a person experiences within is connected to what is happening objectively outside. And so it will be necessary for our ideas to become more and

more alive. For with the dead ideas with which we have gradually become accustomed to looking at the outer world, the Mystery of Golgotha will not arise. In the face of these, Christianity would fade more and more. The Christ would become more and more the mere man Jesus, as He has already become for many theologians. Christianity would disappear. A real revival of Christianity presupposes that the whole development of humanity and of human views will be permeated with more living concepts than is possible through intellectualism. We had to have intellectualism for the sake of human freedom. But we must bring intellectualism out again for the sake of the human being, so that this human being can come to life again. For freedom, a dying was necessary, because freedom can only come from the activity of the will in the dead, that is, from the highest application of the will. When the life in us overpowers us, consciousness fades, in which only freedom can flourish. But once intellectualism is there, life must come to intellectualism, that is, the concrete concepts of healthy and sick must come to the abstract concepts of true and false.

And we need the application of these concrete concepts to history first of all. Then we will be able to find the Mystery of Golgotha as the most important component of the historical development of the earth.



6

The Alphabet: An Expression of the Mystery of Man

18 December 1921, Dornach

For some time we have been occupied with gaining a more accurate knowledge of Man's relation to the universe, and today we would like to supplement our past studies. If we consider how Man lives in the present period of his evolution — taking this period so widely that it encompasses not only what is historical but also in part the pre-historical — we must conclude that speech is a preeminent characteristic at this moment of the cosmic evolution of mankind. It is speech that elevates Man above the other kingdoms of nature.

In the lectures last week, I mentioned that in the course of mankind's evolution, language, speech as a whole, has also undergone a development. I alluded to how, in very ancient times, speech was something that Man formed out of himself as his most primal ability; how, with the help of his organs of speech he was able to manifest the divine spiritual forces living within him. I also referred to how, in the transition from the Greek culture to the Roman-Latin culture, that is to say in the fourth Post-Atlantean period, the single sounds in language lose their names and, as in contemporary usage, merely have value as sounds. In Greek culture we still have a name for the first letter of the alphabet but in Latin it is just 'A'. In passing from the Greek to the Latin culture something living in speech, something eminently concrete changes into abstraction. It might be said: as long as Man called the first letter of the alphabet 'Alpha', he experienced a certain amount of inspiration in it, but the moment he called it just 'A', the letters conformed to outer convention, to the prosaic aspects of life, replacing inspiration and inner experience. This constituted the actual transition from everything belonging to Greece to what is Roman-Latin — men of culture became estranged from the spiritual world of poetry and entered into the prose of life.

The people of Rome were a sober, prosaic race, a race of jurists, who brought prose and jurisprudence into the culture of later years. What lived in the people of Greece developed within mankind more or less like a cultural dream which men approach through their own revelations when

they have inner experiences and wish to give expression to them. It might be said that all poetry has in it something which makes it appear to Europeans as a daughter of Greece, whereas all jurisprudence, all outer compartmentalization, all the prose of life, suggest descent from the Roman-Latin people.

I have previously called your attention to how a real understanding of the Alpha — Aleph in Hebrew — leads us to recognize in it the desire to express Man in a symbol. If one seeks the nearest modern words to convey the meaning of Alpha, these would be: 'The one who experiences his own breathing'. In this name we have a direct reference to the Old Testament words: 'And God formed Man ... and breathed into nostrils the breath of life'. What at that time was done with the breath, to make Man a Man of Earth, the being who had his Manhood imprinted on him by becoming the experienter, the feeler of his own breathing, by receiving into himself consciousness of his breathing, is meant to be expressed in the first letter of the alphabet.

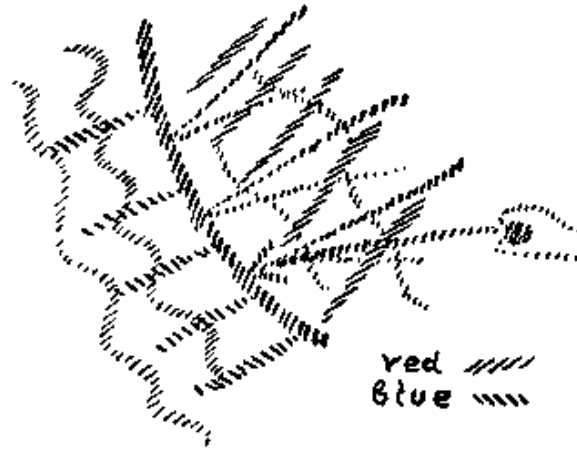
And the name 'Beta' considered with an open mind, turning here to the Hebrew equivalent, represents something of the nature of a wrapping, a covering, a house. Thus, if we were to put our experience on uttering 'Alpha, Beta,' into modern language we could say: 'Man in his house'. And we could go through the whole alphabet in this way, giving expression to a concept, a meaning, a truth about Man simply by saying the names of the letters of the alphabet one after another. A comprehensive sentence would be uttered giving expression to the Mystery of Man. This sentence would begin by our being shown Man in his building, in his temple. The following parts of the sentence would go on to express how Man conducts himself in his temple and how he relates to the cosmos. In short, what would be expressed by speaking the names of the alphabet consecutively, would not be the abstraction we have today when we say **A, B, C**, without any accompanying thoughts, but it would be the expression of the Mystery of Man and of how his roots are in the universe.

When today, in various societies 'the lost archetypal word' is talked about, there is no recognition that it is actually contained in the sentence that comprises the names of the alphabet. Thus we can look back on a time in the evolution of humanity when Man, in repeating his alphabet, did not express what was related to external events, external needs, but what the divine spiritual mystery of his being brought to expression through his larynx and his speech organs.

It might be said that what belongs to the alphabet was applied later to external objects, and forgotten was all that can be revealed to Man through his speech about the mystery of his soul and spirit. Man's original word of truth, his word of wisdom, was lost. Speech was poured out over the matter-of-factness of life. In speaking today, Man is no longer conscious that the original primordial sentence has been forgotten; the sentence through which the divine revealed its own being to him. He is no longer aware that the single words, the single sentences uttered today, represent the mere shreds of that primordial sentence.

The poet, by avoiding the prose element in speech, and going back to the inner experience, the inner feeling, the inner formation of speech, attempts to return to its inspired archetypal element. One could perhaps say that every true poem, the humblest as well as the greatest, is an attempt to return to the word that has been lost, to retrace the steps from a life arranged in accordance with utility to times when cosmic being still revealed itself in the inner organism of speech.

Today we distinguish the consonant from the vowel element in speech. I have spoken of how it would appear to Man if he were to dive beneath the threshold of his consciousness. In ordinary consciousness memories are reflected upwards or, in other words, thoughts are reflections of what is experienced between birth and death. Normally we do not penetrate Man's actual being beyond this recollection, this thought left behind in memory. From another point of view I have indicated how, beneath the threshold of consciousness, there lives what may be called a universal tragedy of mankind. This can also be described in the following way: When Man wakes up in the morning and his ego and astral body dive down into his etheric body and his physical body, he does not perceive these bodies from within outwards, what he perceives is something quite different. We can get an idea of this by means of a diagram.

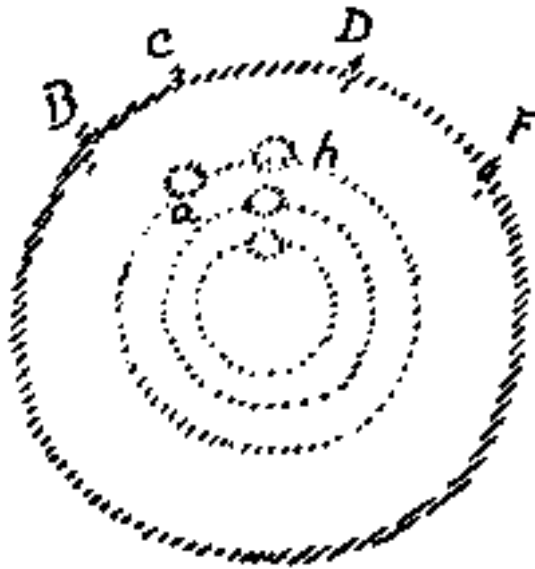


Let us say that here we have the boundary between the conscious and the unconscious, red representing the conscious, blue the unconscious. If a person sees something belonging to the outer world or to himself, for instance, if with his own eye he sees another Man's eye, then the visible rays which go out of his eye into the other Man are thrown back, and he experiences it in his consciousness. What he also bears of his own being beneath the threshold of consciousness he experiences in his astral body and his ego, but not in the ordinary waking state. It remains unconscious and essentially forms the actual content of the etheric and the physical bodies. The etheric body is never recognized at all by ordinary consciousness; it recognizes only the external aspect of the physical body. As I have mentioned in the past, we must plunge beneath memory to perceive the primal source of evil in human beings, but then something else can also be perceived, namely, an aspect of Man's connection with the cosmos.

We may, through appropriate meditation, succeed in penetrating the memory representations, as it were, to put aside what separates us inwardly from our etheric and physical bodies; if we then look down into the etheric body and the physical body so that we perceive what normally lies beneath the threshold of consciousness, we will hear something sounding within these bodies. And what sounds is the echo of the music of the spheres, which Man absorbed between death and new birth, during his descent out of the divine spiritual world into what is given to him through physical inheritance by parents and ancestors. In the etheric body and in the physical body there echoes the music of the spheres. In so far as it is of a vowel nature it echoes in the etheric body, and in the physical body in so far as it is of a consonant nature.

It is indeed true that Man, as he goes forward in the life between death and a new birth, raises himself to the world of the higher hierarchies. We have learned how Man in the world of the Angels, the Archangels, the Archai, joins in with their life and lives within the realm of the hierarchies, as here we live among the beings of the mineral, plant and animal kingdoms. After this life between death and a new birth he descends once more to earthly life. And we have also learned how on his way down he first gathers to him the influences of the firmament of the fixed stars, represented in the signs of the Zodiac; then, as he descends further, he takes with him the influence of the moving planets.

Now just picture to yourselves the Zodiac, the representation of the fixed stars. Man is exposed to their influence on descending from the life of soul and spirit into earthly life. If their effects are to be designated in accordance with their actual being we must say that they are cosmic music, they are consonants. And the forming of consonants in the physical body is the echo of what resounds from the single formations of the Zodiac, whereas the formation of vowels within the music of the spheres occurs through the movements of the planets in the cosmos. This is imprinted into the etheric body. Thus, in our physical body we unconsciously bear a reflection of the cosmic consonants, whereas in our etheric body we bear a reflection of the cosmic vowels. This remains, one might say, in the silence of the subconscious. But as the child develops, forces press upwards within the body and strengthen the speech organs; these are forces that, as reflections of the formative forces of the cosmos, build up the speech organs. The more interior speech organs are so formed out of Man's essential being that they can produce vowels, and the organs nearer to the periphery, the palate, the tongue, the lips and everything that contributes to the form of the physical body, are built up in such a way that consonants can be produced. While the child is learning to speak, something takes place in the upper part of his being, as a result of the activity of his lower part, which is a consequence of the formative forces taken up into the physical body, and also into the etheric body. (This is naturally not a material process but has to do with formative activity.) Thus when we speak, we bring to Manifestation what we might call an echo of the experience Man goes through with the cosmos in the life between death and a new birth during his descent out of the divine spiritual world. All the single letters of the alphabet are actually formed as images of what lives in the cosmos.



We can get an approximate idea of the signs of the Zodiac if we relate them to modern speech by setting up B, C, D, F, and so forth, as constellations of the Zodiac. You can follow them by feeling the revolution of the planets in H (ed.: 'H' like in him, her) — H is not actually a letter like the others, H imitates the rotational movement, the circling around. And the single planets in their revolutions are always the individual vowels which are placed in various ways in front of the consonants. If you imagine the vowel A to be placed in here (see diagram) you have the A in harmony with B and C, but in each vowel there is the H. You can trace it in speaking — AH, IH, EH. H is in each vowel. What does it signify that H is in each vowel? It signifies that the vowel is revolving in the cosmos. The vowel is not at rest, it circles around in the cosmos. And the circling, the moving, is expressed in the H hidden in each of the vowels. Consider, therefore, a vowel harmony expressed somewhere in speech: let us say I, O, U, A. (ed.: IH, OH, UH, AH in German) What is expressed by this? Something is expressed that is the cosmic working of four planets. Let us add one of the consonants to something like this — IOSUA — let us add this S in the middle of it, and this would mean that not only the forming of vowels within the planetary spheres is expressed, but also the effect that the planets connected with I, O, U, A, experience in their movement through the connection with the star sign S. Thus if a Man in the days of ancient civilization uttered the name of a God in vowels, a planetary mystery was expressed. The deed of a divine being within the planetary world was

expressed in the name. Were a divine name expressed with a consonant in it, the deed of the divine being concerned reached in thought to the representative of the fixed star firmament — the Zodiac.

When there was still an instinctive understanding of these things, in the time of atavistic clairvoyance, clairaudience, and so on, a connection with the cosmos was experienced in human speech. When speaking, Man felt himself within the cosmos. When the child learned to speak it was felt how what was experienced in the divine spiritual world before birth, or before conception, gradually evolved out of the being of the child.

It may be said that if a Man could look through himself inwardly he would have to admit: I am an etheric body, in other words, I am the echo of cosmic vowels; I am a physical body, in other words, the echo of cosmic consonants. Because I stand here on the earth, there sounds through my being an echo of all that is said by the signs of the Zodiac; and the life of this echo is my physical body. An echo is formed of all that is said by the planetary spheres and this echo is my etheric body.

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- 1. Physical body = Echo of the Zodiac*
 - 2. Etheric body = Echo of the planetary movements*
 - 3. Astral body = Experience of the planetary movements*
 - 4. Ego = perception of the echo of the Zodiac*
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Nothing is said, my dear friends, by repeating that Man consists of physical body and etheric body. Those are no more than vague, indefinite words. If we want to speak in a real language, which can be learned from the mysteries of the cosmos, we would have to say: Man is constituted out of the echo of the heavens, of the fixed stars, of the echo of the planetary movements, of what is experienced of the echo of the planetary movements, and of what knowingly experiences the echo of the fixed star heavens. Then we would have expressed in real cosmic speech what is abstractly expressed by the words: Man is made up of physical body, etheric body, astral body and ego. We remain entirely in the abstract by saying: Man is composed first of physical body, secondly of etheric body, thirdly of astral body, fourthly of ego. But we pass into concrete cosmic speech if we say: Man consists of the echo of the Zodiac, of the echo of

the planetary movements, of the experience of the impression of the planetary movements in thinking, feeling and willing, and in the perception of the echo of the Zodiac. The first is abstraction, the second reality.

When you say 'I', what is that exactly? Now just imagine someone had planted trees in a beautifully artistic order. Each individual tree can be seen. However at a distance all the trees resolve into a single point. Take all the individual things — all that resounds from the Zodiac in the way of world consonants, then go far enough away: Everything that is formed as inward sound, in the most manifold way, is compressed within you to the single point 'I'.

It is an actual fact that this name which Man gives himself is really only an expression for what we perceive in the measureless spaces of the universe. Everywhere it is necessary to go back to what, as reflection, as echo, appears here upon earth. Thus, when the matter is seen in its reality, before Man's higher and inward experience, everything out of which Man builds himself up as a phenomenon, as pure experience, melts away. If we look upon Man and gradually learn to know his true nature, then his physical body actually ceases to be in the way it normally confronts us and otherwise stands before us, our vision widens and Man grows into the heavens of the fixed stars. The etheric body, too, ceases to be before us. Vision is extended, experience is extended, and we arrive at a perception of planetary life, for this human etheric body is a mere reflection of planetary life.

Man standing before you is nothing but the phenomenon, the appearance, the image, of what goes on in the life of the planets. We think we have an individual human being in front of us, but this individual is a picture, on a certain spot, of the whole world. What then is the reason for the difference between an Asiatic and an American? The reason is that the starry heavens are portrayed at two different earthly points, just as we have various pictures of one and the same external fact. It is indeed true that when we observe Man the world begins to dawn upon us, and by such observation we are faced by the great mystery of the extent to which Man is an actual pictured microcosm of the reality of the macrocosm.

Now of what does modern life consist? When we look back from these modern times upon mankind's life in primeval times, we still find an experience of Man's connection with the spiritual world in the instinctive consciousness of those ancient days. In the alphabet we can have a concrete experience of this. When, in primeval words, Man had to express

the rich store of the divine in all its fullness, he uttered the letters of the alphabet. When he expressed the mystery of his own nature, in the way he learned about it in the Mysteries, then he voiced how he had descended through Saturn or Jupiter in their stellar relation to the Lion or the Virgin, in other words, how he had descended through the A or the I in their relation to the M or the L. He gave utterance to what he had then experienced of the music of the spheres, and that was his cosmic name. And in those ancient days men were instinctively aware that they brought a name down with them from the cosmos to the Earth.

Since then Christian consciousness still preserves this primeval consciousness in an abstract way by consecrating individual days to the memory of saints, who, rightly understood, should give new life to the spiritual cosmos. By being born on a particular day of the year we should receive the name of the saint whose day it is on the calendar. What is meant to be expressed here in a more abstract way, was more concretely expressed in primeval times, when in the Mysteries the cosmic name of a person was found in accordance with what he experienced as he descended to earth, when with his being he created vowels with the planets and added them to the consonants of the Zodiac. The various groups of the human race had many names then, but these names were conceived in such a way that they harmonized with the universal all-embracing name.

Considered from this point of view, what was the alphabet? It was what the heavens revealed through their fixed stars and through the planets moving across them. When the alphabet was spoken out of the original, instinctive, human wisdom it was astronomy that was expressed. What was spoken through the alphabet and what was taught in astronomy in those olden days was one and the same thing. The wisdom in the astronomy of those times was not presented in the same way as the learning contained in any branch of knowledge today, which is built up from single perceptions and concepts. It was conceived as a revelation that made itself felt on the surface of human experience, either in the form of an axiomatic truth or as part of an axiomatic truth. Thus a concrete experience was represented with a part of the primal wisdom. And there was something of quite a dim consciousness connected with the fact that, in the Middle Ages, those who were highly educated still had to learn grammar, rhetoric, dialectics, arithmetic, geometry, music and astronomy. In this ascent through the various spheres of learning lies a half conscious recognition of something, which in earlier days, existed in instinctive clarity. Today grammar has become very abstract. Going back into times of which history tells us

nothing, but which, nevertheless, are still historical times, we find that grammar was not the abstract subject it is today but that men were led through grammar into the mystery of the individual letters. They learned that the secrets of the cosmos found expression in the letters. The single vowel was brought into connection with its planet, the single consonant with the single sign of the Zodiac; thus, through the letters of the alphabet, Man gained knowledge of the stars.

Passing from grammar to rhetoric entailed the application of what lived in Man as active astronomy. And by rising to dialectics one came in thought to comprehending and working on what lived in Man out of astronomy. Arithmetic was not taught as the abstraction of today, but as the entity expressed in the mystery of numbers. Number itself was looked upon differently from how it is done today. I will give you a trifling instance of this.

How does one picture 1, 2, 3 to oneself today? It is done by thinking of a pea, then of another pea, and this makes two; then another is added and there are three. It is a matter of adding one to another — piling them up. In olden days one did not count in this way. A start was made with a unit. And by splitting the unit into two parts one had 2. Thus 2 was not arrived at by adding one unit to another. It was not a putting together of units, but the two were contained in the one. Three was contained in the one in a different way — four again in a different way. The unit embraced all numbers and was the greatest. Today the unit is the smallest. Everything today is atomistically conceived. The unit is one member and the two is added to it, this is all imagined atomistically. The original idea was organic. There the unit is the greatest and the following numbers always appear as being smaller and are all contained in the unit. Here we come to quite different mysteries in the world of numbers.

These mysteries in the world of numbers give the merest intimation that here we are not concerned with what merely lives in the hollow of Man's head. (I say the hollow of his head because I have often shown it really to be hollow from the spiritual point of view.) In the relations of number we can come to perceive the relations of the objectivity of the world. If we always just add one to one naturally this is something that has nothing to do with the facts. I have a piece of chalk. If beside it I place a second piece of chalk this has nothing to do with the first. The one is not concerned with the other. If, however, I presuppose that everything is a

unit and now pass to the numbers contained in this unit, I get a two in a way that is a matter of some consequence. I have to break up the piece. I then get right into reality.

Thus after being borne up in dialectics to grasping the thought of the astronomical, one reached still further into the cosmos with arithmetic and in a similar way with geometry. From geometry one got the feeling that the geometrical, thought concretely, was the music of the spheres. This is the difference between what holds good today and what once existed in the instinctive wisdom of primeval times. Take music today — the mathematical physicist reckons the pitch of a note, for example, reckons which pitch is at work in a melody. Then anyone who is musical is obliged to forget his music and enter the sphere of the abstract if, being a keen musician, he has not already run away from the mathematician. Man is led away from immediate experience into abstraction and this has very little to do with experience.

In itself it is really interesting — if one has a mathematical bent — to press on from the musical into the sphere of acoustics, but one does not gain much in the way of musical experience. That someone today learns geometry and as he proceeds begins to experience forms as musical notes, that is to say, if he rises from the 5th to the 6th grade, and makes geometry sound musically, all this, as far as I know, does not enter the curriculum. But that was once the meaning of rising to the sixth part of what was to be learned — from geometry to music. And only then did the archetypal, underlying reality become an experience. The astronomy in the subconscious then became something that one consciously mastered as astronomy, as the highest and 7th member of the so-called Trivium and Quadrivium.

The history of Man should be studied in accordance with the development of his consciousness for then we can gain a feeling that consciousness must return to these matters. That is just what is attempted in anthroposophical Spiritual Science. There is no need to marvel that those who are accustomed to accept the recognized science of the day find nothing right in what I have written, for example, in *Occult Science*. It is necessary, however, that Man should go back, in a fully conscious way, to the true reality which for a time had to recede into the background to enable Man to develop his freedom. Man would have been able ever more strongly to develop the consciousness of how necessary it is for him to stand within a divine cosmic world, had he not been cast out of this

cosmos into the merely phenomenal, into pure appearance, so strongly indeed that the whole manifold splendor and majesty of the starry sky was condensed into the abstract ego.

This was a necessary step in the struggle for freedom. For Man could develop his freedom only by pressing together quite indistinguishably into the single point of the ego something that, filled out by the whole of cosmic space, streamed through all time. But he would lose his being, he would no longer know or possess himself, no longer be active and act on his own initiative, were he not to reconquer the whole world from this single point of his ego, were he not to rise again from the abstract to the concrete. It is indeed important to understand how, in passing from the Greek to the Latin culture, abstraction took hold of European culture and thus resulted in the loss of the primeval word. It must be remembered that the Latin language was for a long time the language of the cultural elite. What persisted however, was a kind of desperate holding on to what this Latin language had actually already discarded. And what had been spoken in the Greek world then remained behind only in thought. Of the logos there remained logic — abstract thought.

In the longing that a Man such as Goethe had for knowledge of the Greek culture, there lies something that may be expressed as follows: he longed for liberation from the abstraction of modern times, from the dry prose of Romanism. He wanted to reach the other daughter of the primeval wisdom of the world, what remained of all that stood for Greece. — We too must experience something of this kind if we wish to understand Goethe's intense yearning for the South. In modern school biographies we find nothing of all this. Only when in every individual thing there echoes a consciousness of Man being an expression of the whole cosmos, will the way be cleared for the forces needed for Man's progress, if civilization is not to decline into utter barbarism.



7

Imaginative Cognition and Inspired Cognition

23 December 1921, Dornach

In the course of these lectures I have often explained how a man is not in a sleeping state only during ordinary sleep but that this state also plays into his everyday conscious life. This obliges us indeed to describe the state of complete wakefulness as existing, even in everyday consciousness, for our conceptual life alone. Compared to the conceptual life, what we bear within us as our life of feeling is not so closely connected with our waking state. To the unprejudiced observer our feeling life shows affinity to dream-life; though dream-life runs on in pictures and the life of feeling in the way we all know. Yet we soon realise that, on the one hand, dream-life — which as we know conjures up in pictures, into everyday life, facts unknown to ordinary consciousness — can be judged only by our conceptual faculty of discrimination. It is by means of this same faculty alone that the whole range and significance of our feeling life can be estimated. And what goes on in a will-impulse, in the expression, the working, of the will, is just as hidden from ordinary consciousness as what in dreamless sleep happens to man, as a being of soul and spirit, from the moment of falling asleep to that of waking.

What actually takes place when we perform the simplest act of will, when, let us say, by merely having an impulse to do so we raise an arm or a leg, is in fact just as great a mystery to us as what goes on in sleep. It is only because we can see the result of an act of will that the act itself enters our consciousness.

Having thought of raising our arm — but that is merely a thought — we see when this has taken place how the arm has indeed been raised. It is by means of our conceptual life that we learn the result of an act of will. But the actual carrying out of the deed remains hidden from ordinary consciousness, so that, even during our waking hours, what arises in us as an impulse of will we have to attribute to a sleeping state. And the whole of our life of feeling runs its course just like a dream.

Now what concerns us here is that, when taken as a whole, the facts I have just mentioned can be quite clear to our ordinary consciousness, although perhaps, when given an abstract interpretation certain points may not seem so at once. But by carefully following up the facts in question we shall find what has been said to be correct.

Consciousness when developed is able to follow up these facts. In particular it can observe in detail the conceptual life and the life of the will. We know how through exercises described in several of my works ordinary objective knowledge can be raised to Imaginative knowledge. On being observed this Imaginative knowledge or cognition shows, to begin with, its true relation to the human being as a whole. It will be useful for us, however, to recall certain facts about ordinary consciousness, before going on to what this Imaginative knowledge has chiefly to say about a man's conceptual power and his will.

Let us then look at the actual life of thought — the conceptual life. You will have to admit; If this conceptual life is experienced without prejudice, we shall not feel it to be a reality. Conceptions arise in our life of soul and there is no doubt the inner course of a man's conceptions is something added to the outer course taken by the facts. The outer course of events does not directly demand the accompaniment of an inwardly experienced conception. The fact of which we form an idea could take place without our experiencing it as an idea. Sinking ourselves in these conceptions, however, teaches us too that in them we live in what, compared with the external world, is something unreal. On the other hand, precisely in what concerns the life of will — which seems to ordinary consciousness as if experience in sleep — we become aware of our own reality and of the truth about our relation to the world.

As we form conceptions we find more and more that these conceptions live in us just as the images of objects are there in a mirror. And just as little as, in the case of what is usually called the real world, we feel the mirror-images to be a reality, do we — if our reason is sound — look upon our conceptions as real.

But there is another thing which prevents our ascribing reality to our conceptions, and that is our feeling of freedom. Just imagine that while forming conceptions we lived in them so that they ran on in us in the way nature works. The conceptual life would be like something happening outside in nature, taking place as a necessity. We should be caught up in a chain of necessities from which our thinking would be unable to free itself.

We should never have the sense of freedom which, as such, is an actual fact. We experience ourselves as free human beings only when free impulses living in us spring out of pictures having no place in the chain of natural necessities. Only because we live with; our conceptions in pictures outside the necessary natural phenomena are we able, out of such conceptions, to experience free impulses of will.

When observing our conceptual life thus, we perceive it to be entirely unreal; whereas our life of will assures us of our own reality. When the will is in action it brings about changes in world outside — changes we are obliged to regard as real. Through our will we make actual contact with the external world. Therefore, it is only as beings of will that we can perceive ourselves as realities in the external world.

When from these facts — easily substantiated in ordinary consciousness — we go on to those of which Imagination can tell us, we find the following. When we have acquired Imaginative knowledge and, armed with this, try to arrive at a knowledge of man himself, then actually in two respects he appears a quite different being from what he is for ordinary consciousness. To ordinary consciousness our physical body is a self-contained entity at rest. We differentiate between its separate organs and observing an organ in our usual state of consciousness we have the impression of dealing with an independent member of the body which, as something complete in itself, can be drawn in definite outlines.

This ceases the moment we rise to Imaginative knowledge and study from that point of view the life of the body. Then this something at rest shows — if we don't want to be really theoretical, which of course it is always possible to be in a diagram — that it cannot be drawn in definite outline. This cannot be done in the case of lungs, heart, liver and so on, when we rise to Imaginative knowledge. For what this reveals about the body is its never-ending movement. Our body is in a state of continued motion — certainly not something at rest; it is a process, a becoming, a flux, which imaginative cognition brings to our notice. One might say that everything is seething, inwardly on the move, not only in space but, in an intensive way, one thing flows into another. We are no longer confronted by organs at rest and complete; there is active becoming, living, weaving. We cannot speak any more of lungs, heart, liver, but of processes — of the lung-process, heart-process, liver process. And these separate processes together make up the whole process — man. It is characteristic of our

study of the human being from the point of view of Imaginative knowledge, that he appears as something moving, something enduring, in a state of perpetual becoming.

Consider what it signifies to have this change in our view of a man; when, that is, we first see the human body with its definitely outlined members, and then direct the gaze of our soul to the inner soul-life, finding there nothing to be drawn thus definitely. In the life of soul, we see what is taking its course in time, something always becoming, never at rest. The soul-life shows itself indeed to be a process perceptible only inwardly, a process of soul and spirit, yet clearly visible. This process in the life of soul, which is there for ordinary consciousness when a man's inner being is viewed without prejudice, this state of becoming in the soul-life, has very little resemblance to the life of the body at rest. It is true that the life of the body also shows movement; breathing is a movement, circulation is a movement. In relation to how a man appears to Imaginative cognition, however, I would describe this as merely a stage on the way to movement. Compared with the delicate, subtle movements of the human physical body revealed to Imaginative cognition, the circulation of the blood, the breathing, and other bodily motions seem relatively static.

In short, the objective knowledge of the human body perceived in ordinary consciousness is very different from what is perceived as the life of soul, that is in a perpetual state of becoming — always setting itself in motion and never resting.

When, however, with Imagination we observe the human body, it becomes inwardly mobile and in appearance more like the soul life. Thus, Imaginative cognition enables us to raise the appearance of the physical body to a level with the soul. Soul and body come nearer to each other. For Imaginative cognition the body in its physical substance appears more like the soul.

But here I have brought two things to your notice which belong to quite different spheres. First, I showed how the physical body appears to Imaginative cognition as something always on the move, always in a state of becoming. Then I pointed out how indeed, for the, inner vision of our usual consciousness, the ordinary life of soul is also ceaselessly becoming, running its course — a life, in effect, to which it is impossible to ascribe definite outlines.

When, however, we rise to Imaginative cognition, this life of soul also changes for the inward vision, and changes over in an opposite direction to the life of the body. It is noticeable that when filled with Imaginative knowledge we no longer feel any freedom of movement in our thoughts, in the combining of them with one another. We also feel that by rising to Imaginative cognition our thoughts gain certain mastery over our life of soul. In ordinary consciousness we can add one thought to another, with inner freedom either combine or not combine a subject with a predicate — feel free in our combining of conceptions.

This is not so when we acquire imaginative knowledge. Then in the thought-world we feel as though in something which works through powers of its own. We feel as if caught up in a web of thought, in such a way that the thoughts combine themselves through their own forces, independently of us. We can no longer say I think — but are forced to change it to: It thinks. In fact, we are not free to do otherwise. We begin to perceive thinking as an actual process — feel it to be as real a process in us as in everyday life we experience the gripping of pain and then its passing off, or the coming and going of something pleasant. By arising to Imaginative cognition, we feel the reality of the thought-world — something in the thought-world resembling experience in the physical body.

From this it can be seen how, through Imaginative knowledge, the conceptual life of the soul becomes more like the life of the body, than is the soul-life — as seen through the inner vision of ordinary consciousness. In short, the body grows soul-like. And the soul becomes more like the body, particularly like those bodily processes which to Imaginative consciousness disclose themselves in their becoming.

Thus, for Imaginative cognition the qualities of the soul approach those of the body, and the qualities of the body those of the soul. And we see the soul and spirit interweaving with the bodily-physical the two becoming more alike. It is as though our experience of what is of the soul acquired a materialistic character while our view of the bodily life, physical life generally, were spiritualised

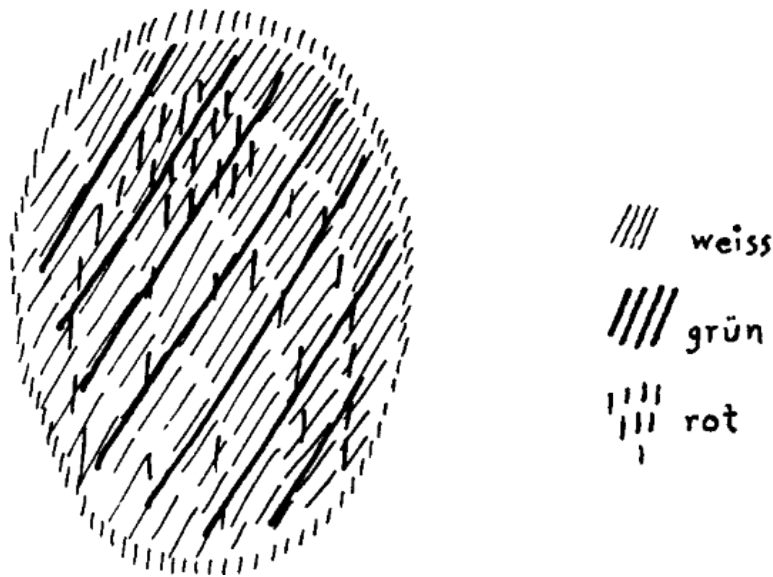
This is an important fact which reveals itself to Imaginative cognition. And when further progress is made to Inspired Cognition, we find another secret about the human being unveiled. Having acquired Inspired

knowledge we learn more of the material nature of thinking, of the conceptual faculty; we learn see more deeply into what actually happens when we think.

Now, as I have said, we no longer have freedom in our life of thought. "It thinks," and we are caught up in the web of this "It thinks." In certain circumstances the thoughts are the same as those which in ordinary consciousness we combine or separate in freedom, but which in Imaginative experience we perceive to take place as if from inner necessity.

From this we see that it is not in the thought-life, as such, that freedom and necessity are to be found, but in our own attitude, our own relation, to the thought-life of ordinary consciousness. We learn to recognise the actual situation with regard to our experience, in ordinary consciousness, of the unreality of thoughts. We gradually come to understand the reason for this experience, and then the following becomes clear.

By means of the organic process our organism both takes in and excretes substances. But it is not only a matter of these substances separating themselves from the organic process of the body and being thrown out by the excretory organs — certain of these substances become stored up in us. Having been thrown out of the life-process these remain, to some extent, in the nerve-tract, and in other places in the organism. In our life-process we are continuously engaged in detaching lifeless matter. People able to follow minutely the process of human life can observe this storing up of lifeless matter everywhere in the organism. A great part of this is excreted but there is a general storing up of a certain amount in a more tenuous form. The life of the human organism is such that it is always engaged on the organic process — like this (a drawing was made) But everywhere within the organic process we see inorganic, lifeless matter, not being excreted but stored up (which I indicated here with red chalk): I have drawn these red dots rather heavily because it is chiefly the unexcreted, lifeless matter which withdraws to the organ of the human head, where it remains.



white; green; red

Now the human organism is permeated throughout by the ego (I indicate this with green chalk). Within the organism the ego comes in contact with the lifeless substances which have been separated off and permeates them. So that our organism appears as having, on the one hand, its organic processes permeated by the ego, the process, that is, containing the living substance, and of having also what is lifeless — or shall we say mineralised — in the organism permeated by the ego.

This, then, is what is always going on when we think. Aroused by sense-perceptions outside, or inwardly by memory, the ego gets the upper hand over the lifeless substances, and — in accordance with the stimulation of the senses or of the memories — swings these lifeless substances to and fro in us, we might almost say makes drawings in us with them. For this is no figurative conception; this use of inorganic matter by the ego is absolute reality. It might be compared to reducing chalk to a powder and then with a chalky finger drawing all kinds of figures. It is an actual fact that the ego sets this lifeless matter oscillating, masters it, and with it draws figures in us, though the figures are certainly unlike those usually drawn outside. Yet the ego with the help of this lifeless substance does really make drawings and form crystals in us — though not crystals like those found in the mineral kingdom (see red in drawing).

What goes on in this way between the ego and the mineralized substance in us that has detached itself as in a fine but solid state — it is this which provides the material basis of our thinking. In fact, to Inspired cognition

the thinking process, the conceptual process, shows itself to be the use them ego makes of the mineralised substance in the human organism.

This, I would point out, gives a more accurate picture of what I have frequently described in the abstract when saying: In that we think we are always dying, — What within us is in a constant state of decay, detaching itself from the living and becoming mineralised, with this the ego makes drawings, actual drawings, of all our thoughts. It is the working and weaving of the ego in mineral kingdom, in that kingdom which alone makes it possible for us to possess the faculty of thinking.

You see it is what I have been describing here which dawned on the materialists of the 19th century, though they misconstrued it. The best advocates of materialism — and one of the best was Czolbe — had a vague notion that while thoughts are flitting through us physical processes are at work. These materialists forget, however, — and this is where error crept in — that it is the purely spiritual ego making drawings in us inwardly with what in mineralized. And on this inward drawing depends what we know of the actual awakening of ordinary consciousness.

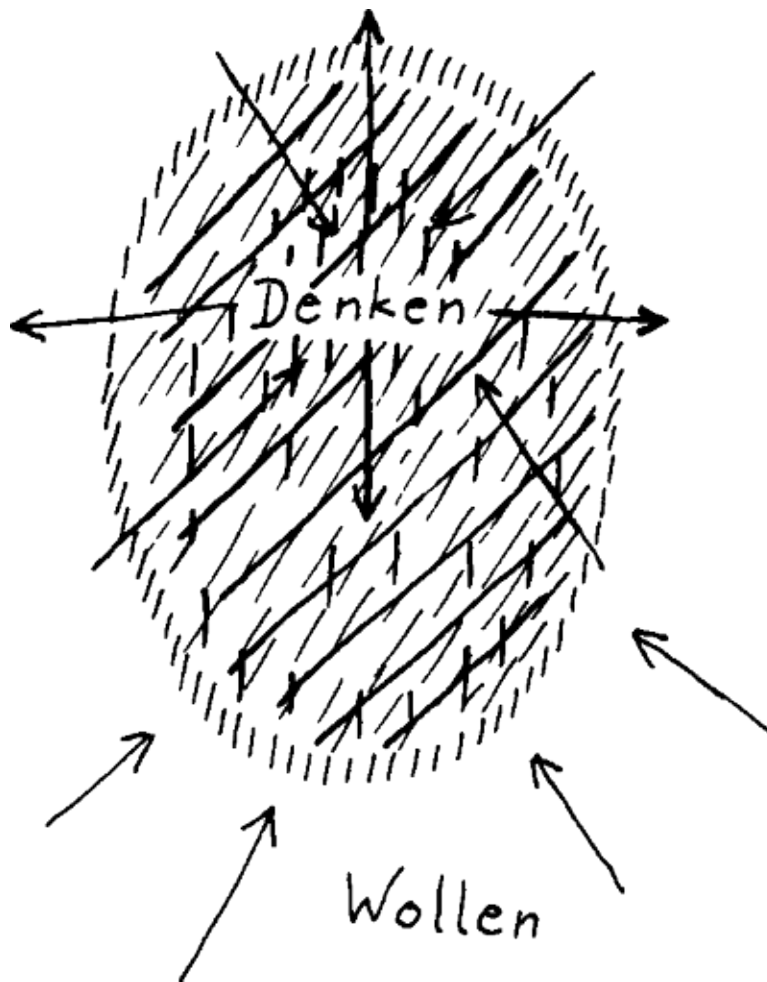
Let us now consider the opposite side at the human being, the side of the will-impulses. If you recall what I have been describing, you will perhaps perceive how the ego becomes imprisoned in what has been mineralized within us. But it is able to make use of this mineralised substance to draw with it inwardly. The ego is able to sink right down into what is thus mineralised.

If, on the other hand, we study the life-processes, where the non-mineralised substances are to be found, we come to the material basis of the will. In sleep the ego leaves the physical body, whereas in willing the ego is only driven out of certain parts of the organism. Because of this, at certain moments when this is so, there is nothing mineralised in that region, everything there is full of life. Out of these parts of the organism, where all is alive and from which at that moment nothing mineralised is being detached, the impulses will unfold. But the ego is then driven out; it withdraws into what is mineral. The ego can work on the mineralised substances but not on what is living, from which it is thrust out just us when we are asleep at night our ego is driven out of the whole physical body.

But then the ego is outside the body whereas on mineralisation taking place it is driven inside. It is the life-giving process which thrust the ego out of certain parts of the body; then the ego is as much outside those parts as in sleep it is driven out of the whole body. Hence, we can say that when the will is in action parts of the ego are outside the regions of the physical body to which they are assigned. And those parts of the ego — where are they then? They are outside in the surrounding space and become one with the forces weaving there. By setting our will in action we go outside ourselves with part of our ego, and we take into us forces which have their place in the world outside. When I move an arm, this is not done by anything coming from within the organism but through a force outside, into which the ego enters only by being partly driven out of the arm. In willing go out of my body and move myself by means of outside forces. We do not lift our leg by means of forces within us, but through those actually working from outside. It is the same when an arm is moved. Whereas in thinking, through the relation of the ego to the mineralised part of the organism, we are driven within, in willing just as in sleep we are driven outside. No one understands the will who has not a conception of man as a cosmic being; no one understands the will who is bounded by the human body and does not realise that in willing he takes into him forces lying beyond it.

In willing we sink ourselves into the world, surrender ourselves to it. So that we can say: The material phenomenon that accompanies thinking is a mineral process in us, something drawn by the ego in the mineralised parts of the human organism. The will represents in us a vitalising, a widening of the ego, which then becomes a member of the spiritual world outside, and from there works back upon the body.

If we want to make a diagram of the relation between think and willing, it must be done in this way (a drawing was made). You see it is quite possible to pass over from an inward view of the soul-life to its physical counterpart, without being tempted to fall one-sidedly into materialism. We learn to recognise what takes place in a material way in thinking and in willing. But once we know how in thinking the ego plays an actual part with the inorganic, and how, on the other hand, through the organic life-giving process in the body it is driven out into the spirit, then we never lose the ego.



denken = "think"; wollen = "want"

In that the ego is driven out of the body it is united with forces of the cosmos; and working in from outside, from the spiritual regions of the cosmos, the ego unfolds the will.

Materialism is therefore justified on the one hand, whereas on the other it no longer holds good. Simply to attack materialism betrays a superficial attitude. For what in a positive sense the materialist has to say is warranted. He is at fault only when he would approach man's whole wide conception of the world from one side.

In general, when the world and all that happens in it is followed inwardly, spiritually, it is found more and more that the positive standpoints of individual men are warranted, but not those that are negative. And in this connection spiritualism is often just as narrow as materialism. In what he affirms positively the materialist has right on his side, as the spiritualist has on his, when positive. It is only on becoming negative that they stray from

the path and fall into error. And it is indeed no trifling error when, in an amateurish fashion, people imagine they have succeeded in their striving for a spiritual world-conception without having any understanding of material processes, and then look down on materialism. The material world is indeed permeated by spirit. But we must not be one-sided; we must learn about its material characteristics as well, recognising that reality has to be approached from various sides if we are to arrive at its full significance.

And that is a lesson best taught by a world-conception such as that offered by Anthroposophy.



8

East and West in the Light of the Christmas Idea

24 December 1921, Dornach

From the aspect of modern thinking it may perhaps sound strange that we are arranging a study course for the Christmas holidays (Christmas Course for Teachers, 23rd December to 7th of January), because people generally think that during the great festivals of the year work should stop and that Christmas in particular should only be dedicated to religious exercises. Nevertheless a deeper insight into present conditions should not conceal the fact that this Christmas above all calls for other things than those which held good for such a long time. We live in another age and today it must seem frivolous to maintain old customs and traditions, without considering the difficult, distressing times in which we live, and untouched by what is taking place particularly in the present day both in the visible and in the invisible world. We see people making presents to each other at Christmas, they adorn the tree and do other things out of tradition, things which people have been accustomed to do for many centuries. But today in particular we should bear in mind that to keep up such old traditions and customs in almost ... a crime.

Those who had a deeper share in the events of the past years feel as if they had lived for centuries, and they can only look with a certain feeling of sorrow upon that part of mankind which is still led by habit and has the same thoughts today which were to some extent justified until the beginning or the middle of the second decade of our century. To an unprejudiced mind everything coming from the events of the time must appear full of problems which touch the very elements of the whole life of man.

We frequently hear the reproach that many people more and more believe that Christianity consists in their calling out "Lord, Lord," or in uttering the name of Christ as often as possible. But something quite different is needed today: A Christianization of our whole life, in which it does not suffice to utter the name of Christ, but entails that we should deeply and intimately unite ourselves with the Spirit of Christ. We see that almost in the whole world great problems of life are being advanced today. And we

can already perceive that the region, the European region which has for many centuries been the stage of human civilization cannot remain so in future. We perceive that the world problems now extend to larger territories and in the present time we perceive above all through symptomatic phenomena that the great conflict between the West and the East announced itself in every sphere of life.

The West kindled the flame of a young spiritual life based upon a mechanical-naturalistic foundation. This spiritual life is only viewed in the right way by those who hold that it is in the beginning of its development. But from this young spiritual life in the West we should look across to the East; we become more and more connected with it, also geographically and historically, and the West must reckon with the East.

In the East there exists an ancient life of the spirit, a spiritual life that can be traced back thousands of years. Immense respect can be felt for what lives in the East; although it is already decadent; the greatest reverence can be felt for it when looking back from its present state of decadence to the primeval wisdom of humanity from which it sprang.

When we envisage the more spiritual aspects of life a word re-echoes from the East which always awakens a peculiar echo in our hearts, particularly when we adopt the standpoint of the West. It is a word which is meant to express in the language of the East the characteristic of the physical world which we perceive round about us through our senses. The East, beginning with India, has been accustomed to designate this physical-sensory world as MAYA, the great illusion – apart from the fact of it being expressed more or less clearly.

The East (but, as stated, this exists only in a decadent form) thus faces the external world perceived through the eyes and ears as a great illusion that confronts man, as Maya.

Those who learn to know the characteristics of the life conceptions of the East, must experience that this conception of Maya was not originally contained in the primeval wisdom of the Orient. The spiritual science of Anthroposophy above all enables us to gain insight into a development of the Oriental civilization stretching over thousands of years. We then look back into a time which lies 3000 years before Christ, and by going back still further into a remote antiquity, we find this conception of Maya less and less, this idea of the great illusion connected with the physical-sensory reality of the external world.

If we wish to indicate an approximate epoch, we may say: Only at the turn of the 3rd and 4th millennium B.C. this concept rises up in the East; the conviction rises up that the physical-sensory world which surrounds man is not a reality, but a great illusion, a Maya.

What is the cause of this immense change in the life attitude of the East? The cause lies deeply rooted in the soul development of humanity. If we consider the primeval wisdom of the East, the poetical form which it assumed later on in the Vedas, the philosophical form of the Vedanta philosophy and the Yoga doctrine into which it developed, if we notice, for example, the greatness and loftiness in which this eastern teaching is contained in the Bhagavad Gita, we find that once upon a time the essence of this Eastern teaching was that man perceived not only the external sensory world, but that in this physical world, in everything he saw through his eyes, heard through his ears or touched with his hands, he perceived a divine-spiritual essence.

For these primeval men the trees did not exist as prosaically as they do for us: In every tree, in every bush, in every cloud, in every fountain there was something which announced itself as a soul-spiritual, cosmic content of the world. Wherever they looked, they saw the physical permeated by the spiritual. The fountain did not only murmur in inarticulate sounds, but the murmuring fountain conveyed a soul-spiritual content. The forest did not only rustle in an inarticulate way; the rustling forest spoke to them the language of the everlasting Cosmic Word, of a soul-spiritual Being. Modern people can only have a very pale idea of the immensely living way in which man experienced the world in this remote, primeval time.

But this alert, spiritual way in which man lived in his surroundings gradually became paralyzed towards the 3rd millennium B.C. And if we transfer ourselves into the development of the times, we perceive that humanity, now taken as a whole, as it were, as humanity of the Orient, began to perceive the phenomena of the world with a certain feeling of longing and of sorrow, as if the gods had withdrawn from them. This feeling was voiced by many more profound souls almost in the form of a prayer by saying: the old gods have vanished and are now behind the surface of the external physical objects. The world has grown empty, it has lost the gods, and because of this emptiness, because it is without the gods, it is Maya, the great illusion. They did not speak of the world as a great illusion from the very beginning; but because it no longer contained the gods, they experienced it as a great illusion, as Maya.

If we wish to go back to the truly living essence of this conception we should go back even behind the Atlantean catastrophe, as far as the Atlantean race. For immediately after the Atlantean catastrophe civilization in general shows a faint trace of looking upon the external physical phenomena of the world as something not real.

Yet until the end of the 4th millennium B.C. there still existed in a strong measure the capacity to perceive the gods in the physical world. This faculty existed in so strong a measure that until that time people needed no consolation for what had up to that time been considered as unreality in the world. But such a consolation was needed after 4000 B.C. It was sought in initiation by the teachers and priests of the Mysteries. It was sought in the language of the stars. Here on earth – people said – there is no reality. But if we investigate the stars, they tell us in their language that reality is poured down to the earth from world-distant heavenly regions. If we listen to the language spoken by the stars Maya seems to obtain a true meaning. The great impression made upon mankind by the star wisdom of the ancient Egyptians consisted in the fact that people felt in this star wisdom something which gave Maya a foundation of reality. People said that here on earth only unreal things are to be found. But one had to look up to the eternal Cosmic Word that speaks to receptive souls in the movements and positions of the stars. Reality will then manifest itself in Maya. If anyone wished to know something important and significant in life, it was investigated in the stars and in their language. This was the human soul constitution until the time in which the Mystery of Golgotha took place.

What was real was announced to humanity by the sages of the mysteries, for people did not think that this reality could be found on earth. Those who understand the true essence of life in ancient Greece will perceive that something tragic weighs on it (although a certain superficial way of looking at things makes people say that in Greece life consisted in a childlike joy over the nature of reality); the Greeks yearned for a kind of redemption in human life. This is nothing but the echo of that Oriental feeling, which I have described to you just now. We modern people have reached the point where thought develops, as it were, in modern civilization as highest inner treasure; thought unfolds on every side. But we have not reached the point of recognizing thought as a reality. When submitting to the life of thought we feel as if we lived in something not real. Indeed, many people say that thought life is nothing but an ideology. This word "ideology" indicates in regard to the inner life of the soul, the same thing which was experienced

in the Orient in regard to the external physical-sensory reality, which was designated as Maya. In the same way in which we speak of ideology, we may speak of Maya, but we must apply this to our inner soul life.

The soul-spiritual which was such an intense reality in the Orient for a certain epoch, became Maya for the Occident, and the Maya of the Orient, the external, physical-sensory world, became our naturalistic reality. We live by calling that which permeates us inwardly, maturing to the stage of thought, an ideology, or Maya. The Orientals once perceived gods in the external physical world of nature. But these gods vanished from their sight. The Orientals did not have thought in the form in which we have it now. The characteristic of the Occident is that it gained the faculty of thought, the purest, most light-filled form of soul life. But the divine element in thought has not yet dawned for us. We are waiting for the divine essence in thought which must rise up for us. The Orientals lost the divine essence in the external physical world, so that it became a Maya, but this divine essence does not as yet exist in our world of ideas, in our thoughts, in our inner world filled with thought. In the course of historical development the Orientals little by little saw that the external physical world no longer contained the gods. And our thought life does not yet contain the divine; it is without God. We can only grasp this by looking upon it as a kind of prophecy that one day the Maya of our thoughts will be filled by an inner reality.

The history of human evolution is thus divided into two important parts. One part develops from a life filled with the divine essence to a life deprived of this divine essence, of the gods; the other part – and we are now living in the beginning of this development – unfolds from a life deprived of the divine towards the hoped-for life filled with the divine. And in the middle - in between these two streams of development, the Cross is set up on Golgotha. How does it stand within the consciousness of humanity?

From the time of the Mystery of Golgotha we look back six centuries and come to Buddha, who gradually became an object of veneration on the part of a large community. We see Buddha abandoning his home and going out into the world, and among the manifold things which he perceives he sees a corpse. The sight of this corpse stirs up his soul, so that he turns away from the Maya of the external world. The corpse has a discouraging, frightening effect on Buddha. And because he had to look upon death, the corpse, he felt that he had to turn his gaze away from the physical world to

another sphere, to the divine-spiritual which cannot be found on earth. The sight of the lifeless body was the true reason why Buddha left the world and fled into a sphere of reality outside the physical world.

Let us now turn to a historical moment about 600 years after the Mystery of Golgotha. Many people look towards that great symbol: the cross with the corpse hanging upon it. They look upon the lifeless human being. Yet they do not look upon him in such a way as to flee from him and seek another reality, but in this lifeless human being they see something which is a real refuge to them. Mankind went through a great change in the course of twelve centuries: It learned to love death upon the cross, that death from which Buddha fled.

Nothing can indicate more deeply the great change which took place through the Mystery of Golgotha, which lies in the middle, in between these two historical moments. And by turning our thoughts to the Mystery of Golgotha we should remember what was really the object of reverence in accordance with early Christianity.

St. Paul, an initiate in the mysteries of his time, could not believe in the living Jesus; he opposed the living Jesus. But when he perceived the living Christ on his way to Damascus, the Christ that can even manifest Himself out of the world's darkness, then Paul believed in the risen Christ, not in the living Jesus, and he began to love the living Jesus because he was the bearer of the risen Christ. Out of this special insight into the connections of the world St. Paul gained certainty in regard to the divine-spiritual life, and this certainty sprang out of death.

What had taken place in the development of humanity was that people once found comfort when they looked up from the earth to the stars, whence the everlasting Word resounded, whereas later on they turned their gaze to the historical event upon Golgotha; they beheld a human sheath that contained the mystery of life.

The apostle St. John expressed this Mystery of Life in the words: "In the beginning was the Word." Yes, in the beginning the Word spoke out of the path and position of the stars! This Word resounded from the cosmos. This Word could no longer be found upon the earth, but it came down to the earth from heavenly spaces, from the Home of the Father. The writer of the Gospel of St. John ventured to pronounce the words: "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us." That is to say, what once lived outside in the stars took up its abode in the body which hung upon the cross. What

was formerly sought outside in the cosmic spaces became visible in a human being. What formerly streamed down to the earth in the shining light, came down to man! The whole way of looking upon life was inspired by a world-wide cosmology which led to a conception of the central human being filled by that which came down to man! The whole way of looking upon life was inspired by a world-wide cosmology which led to a conception of the central human being filled by that which once shone down from the stars and was permeated by the living Cosmic Word.

The sense, the deeper meaning which is to be revealed by the Mystery of Golgotha is that it is also possible to look towards the origin of the world by looking into Jesus' inner being and by establishing an intimate connection between one's own inner being and the inner human being of Jesus, even as in the past a connection was established between the human being living on earth and the everlasting Cosmic Word speaking out of the stars. The Mystery of Golgotha is indeed the most important and incisive influence in the evolution of the earth and this is indicated in the New Testament.

It is immensely stirring and profound how the Gospels – now it is related by this one, now by the other – speak of the coming of Christ Jesus. On the one hand there are the three sages, the Magi from the Orient, the bearers of an ancient starry lore, who investigated the Cosmic Word in the star writing of the cosmos. They were endowed with the highest wisdom then accessible to man. And the Gospels indicate that the highest wisdom could at that time only state that Christ Jesus had appeared, for the stars had revealed it. It is the eternal Cosmic Word that lives in the stars which revealed to man that Christ Jesus would appear. The schools of wisdom proclaimed: Since the beginning of the present earthly existence of mankind, Jupiter completed his planetary orbit 354 times. A Jupiter year, a great Jupiter year, reached its close since the time which the ancient Hebrews, for example, fixed for the beginning of man's existence on earth. In accordance with the world conception of that time, an ordinary year only had 354 days. 354 Jupiter days elapsed, and these 354 Jupiter days are like a sentence speaking out of the cosmic wisdom, a sublime sentence, in which the single words indicate the revolutions of Mercury. There is a Mercury day $7 \times 7 = 49$ times, and this in the same length of time of a Jupiter day.

These were the connections sought by the ancient sages in the writing of the stars. And the inspirations which their souls received by deciphering the starry writing was interpreted in such a way that they were able to say:

Christ Jesus is coming, for the times are fulfilled. The Jupiter time, the Mercury time are both fulfilled. This is what the Gospels relate on the one side. On the other side they tell of the revelation which was given to the poor shepherds on the field; without any wisdom, from the dream streaming out of their simple hearts, merely by listening to the simple, pious voice of the human soul, a revelation came to these poor shepherds out of the depths of the human heart. And it is the same message: Christ is coming. Highest wisdom and greatest soul simplicity unite in the words: Christ is coming. At that time the highest wisdom was already decadent, it was setting. Instead, there rises up something which comes from man's own inner being. Ever since, thought has risen out of man's inner being. We cannot yet raise it to the stage of reality; it is still a Maya, but it is necessary in an ever-growing measure to bear in mind that thought can become a reality. In pre-Christian times man looked up to the stars in order to experience reality. We must look towards Christ in order to have reality in regard to our inner being. Not I, Christ in me – this is the Word which will confer weight and inner reality to thought.

The theologians of the 19th Century gradually changed Christ Jesus into a merely human character which can also be recognized with the aid of history, ordinary history; Jesus, the simple, though highly developed man of Nazareth. The Christ has been lost. He will appear in His true shape when a world conception based on the super-sensible will rise up again, a life conception that turns from the physical-sensory to the super-sensible. In the same measure in which mankind has lost the spiritual from the physical, it must gain inner reality in the life of thought, which has to be sure advanced to the stage of being filled with light, but in an abstract way.

This inner reality will be gained by perceiving on the earth itself, in the things taking place in connection with the Mystery of Golgotha, something which the human soul can only face through super-sensible conceptions. Christ will be born anew in the development of human civilization in the same measure in which we decide to gain an understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha, with the aid of super-sensible knowledge. By absorbing super-sensible knowledge man may hope for a perennial Bethlehem. A profound meaning lies in the words of Angelus Silesius: "Though Christ be born a thousand times in Bethlehem, but not in you, then you are lost for evermore."

Christ must be born not only in empty words, but in every form of wisdom and knowledge. We must reach the point of envisaging what may be gained by looking at the world, as Paul did before he approached the event

of Damascus, before he perceived that the earth is permeated by the forces of the living Christ. These forces of the living Christ should be brought into every form of knowledge. The cold abstract knowledge which led us into the misery of the present time must be filled with warmth. This is an important and significant task of the present times. We should feel that first of all we must reach Christ. A profound intimate deepening of the Christ idea must be gained. We should realize that the present misery is too great for the maintenance of old Christmas customs. We must rise to the conviction that it is a farce to keep them up in the face of the other conceptions which prevail in the present time. The great conflict between East and West must also take place in the spiritual sphere and the harmonization of the Maya of the East with the Maya of the West – the Maya of the external world and the Maya of thought. These must reach a harmonious agreement.

Let us not think that in the present time we already have Christ. We should feel like the poor shepherds who were conscious of their misery. Christ should be sought in the innermost depths of man's being, even as the shepherds sought him in the stable of Bethlehem. Sacrifices should be offered to Christ, who transforms the Maya of our thoughts into realities. We should be humble enough to realize that we must first rise to an understanding of Christ's birth. We should remember that we first have to gain an understanding of the Christmas idea before we are really able to appreciate Christmas in the right way. Every sphere of life should be permeated with the living forces of Christ. We must work. And the festivals will be celebrated best of all if in the present misery we strive to transform into a spiritual reality the symbol – but it is a symbol of reality – which faces us historically from Golgotha's place of skulls.

Let us grasp that the most significant thought which we can have at Christmas is the following: A real understanding of Christianity must bring about a Cosmic Christmas. This inner voice, this inner longing, can lead us over into a Christmas which is in keeping with the misery of the present time. For the consecrated holy nights, the Christmas festival at the end of the year, can only acquire life if we are filled with the longing to see in Christmas an inducement to gain insight into the needs of human development. The festive feeling which we have at Christmas will then ray out something of the truth that tells us that through the power of an inner understanding of that reality which is still a Maya for us, we can come to the resurrection of that divine-spiritual reality which came to an end in more remote ages and led to the conception of Maya. Mankind reached Maya, the external Maya. The true soul-spiritual reality must unfold out of

the inner Maya. If we understand this, then the individual Christmas idea which we have during this festive season will be permeated by a true cosmic feeling, and this is needed today, if we are to experience the true value and dignity of man. The feelings which we have in connection with the different festivals of the year will then ray out something which will induce us to say: In these times of misery and distress, Christmas should be celebrated in such a way that we can see the NEW CHRISTMAS LIGHTS OF A NEW SPIRITUAL LIFE. We must learn to celebrate not only an individual Christmas, but a COSMIC, UNIVERSAL CHRISTMAS.



9 The Feast of the Epiphany of Christ

25 December 1921, Dornach

Those who look at the historical development of humanity only in terms of the sequence of cause and effect, as is customary today, will not be able to gain from history itself that which it can be in terms of forces, of impulses for the individual human being, if one tries to penetrate into the true essence of this historical becoming. Historical development can only reveal itself to someone who is able to perceive a wise working through the succession of facts. Today it is almost the case that one is of the opinion that anyone who sees a wise event in the context of the world and especially in the historical development of humanity is indulging in superstition and attributing to things something that only he himself has thought up. However, one must not impose one's own ideas onto things. One must not force one's way of thinking onto things, but one must try to let things speak for themselves. If one is open enough, one will perceive something like an active wisdom everywhere in historical development, especially at significant turning points in human evolution.

Now, one of the things that has emerged from history is, above all, the establishment of the individual festive days of the year, especially the great festive days. It is striking when we realize that Christmas is a so-called fixed feast, falling every year near the winter solstice, on December 24 and 25. In contrast to this, Easter is a so-called movable feast, which appears to be arranged according to the constellation of the sun and moon, the observation of which is thus, to a certain extent, brought in from the extra-terrestrial cosmos. It is the case that if a person takes these festive days of the year seriously, they have a meaning for their life, they are significant in their life. That is what they should be. Meaningful, penetrating thoughts should arise on these festive days. Profound feelings and emotions should well up from the heart and soul. It is precisely through what we experience inwardly during such festive seasons that we should feel connected to the passage of time and to that which is effective in the course of time.

Now, these festive seasons have been fixed for certain historical reasons, and one has to reflect on such a fact that Christmas is an immovable festival and Easter is a movable one, that Christmas falls at a time when

the earth is, so to speak, most closed off from the influences of the extraterrestrial cosmos. When the sun has the least effect on the earth, when the earth, out of its own forces, which it has retained from the summer and autumn season, produces its own covering for the shortest days, when the earth, out of itself, makes what it can with its own forces with the least influence from the cosmos, we celebrate Christmas. |

When the time begins again when the earth experiences the most significant influences from the extraterrestrial cosmos, when the warmth of the sun, the light of the sun, causes vegetation to grow out of the ground, when heaven, so to speak, works together with the earth to weave the earth's garment, then we celebrate Easter. And in that such conceptions have emerged from the thoughts of humanity, not in an abstract way conceived by the one or the other arbitrarily, but from thoughts that have, as it were, permeated humanity through long epochs, that have developed themselves, into the historical evolution something has flowed that, when recognized, at the same time evokes the possibility of deeply venerating it, the possibility of looking back to the times of our ancestors with reverence, devotion, and love. And by drawing attention to something like this, one can indeed say: Contemplation of the active wisdom in historical becoming allows those forces and impulses to emerge from this history that can then, in the right way, become rooted in the human soul and work in the human soul in the right way.

Christmas, as we celebrate it today at the shortest time of the year, on December 24th and 25th, has only been celebrated in the Christian Church since the year 354. It is not usually thought about in a forceful way that even in Christian-Catholic Rome in the year 353, Christmas, the celebration of the birth of Christ, was not celebrated on that day. It is one of the most interesting aspects of historical reflection to see how this Christmas celebration has become established, out of a historical instinct and from deeper sources of wisdom, which may have worked largely unconsciously.

Something similar, but fundamentally different, was celebrated before: January 6, which was the Feast of the Epiphany of Christ. And this Feast of the Epiphany of Christ meant the remembrance of the baptism of John in the Jordan. This Feast of the Baptism of John in the Jordan was celebrated in the first centuries of Christianity as the most important. And only from the time I have indicated does the Feast of the Epiphany of Christ, the Feast of the Baptism of John in the Jordan, so to speak, wander through

the twelve holy nights back to December 25 and is replaced by the Feast of the Birthday of Christ Jesus. This is connected with deep, meaningful inner processes of the historical development of Christianity.

What does the fact that in the first centuries of the Christian worldview the memory of the baptism of John in the Jordan was celebrated indicate? What does this baptism of John in the Jordan mean? This baptism of John in the Jordan signifies that from the heights of heaven, for extraterrestrial, cosmic reasons, the entity of the Christ descends and unites with the entity of the man Jesus of Nazareth. This baptism of St. John in the Jordan therefore signifies a fertilization of the earth from cosmic expanses. This baptism of St. John in the Jordan signifies an interpenetration of heaven and earth. And in celebrating the Feast of the Epiphany, we celebrated a supersensible birth, the birth of the Christ in the thirty-year-old man Jesus.

In the first centuries of Christian development, attention was focused primarily on the appearance of Christ on earth, and of less importance, alongside this view of the appearance of an extraterrestrial Christ-being in the earthly realm, was the earthly birth of the man Jesus of Nazareth, who only received the Christ in his own body when he was thirty years old. This was the conception in the early centuries of Christianity. In these centuries, therefore, the descent of the supermundane Christ was celebrated. And an attempt was made to understand what had actually happened in the course of his incarnation.

If we allow the historical development up to the Mystery of Golgotha to take effect on us, it presents itself in such a way that in primeval times humanity was endowed with an original wisdom of a supersensible kind, an original wisdom that one must have the deepest reverence for if one is able to contemplate it in its entire inwardness, in its entire essence. In the first, only externally childlike appearing wisdom of mankind, an infinite amount is revealed not only about the earthly, but above all about the extra-earthly, and how the extra-earthly affects the earth. Then one sees how, in the course of the development of mankind, this light of primeval wisdom shines less and less in human minds, how people increasingly lose touch with this primeval wisdom. And this primeval wisdom has faded and disappeared from the human mind precisely in the time when the Mystery of Golgotha was approaching. All phenomena of historical development in Greek and especially in Roman life show in the most diverse ways that precisely the best of humanity were aware that a new heavenly element must enter into earthly life so that the earth and humanity could continue to develop.

For the unprejudiced observer, the entire evolution of mankind on earth falls into two parts: the time that waited for the Mystery of Golgotha, waited not only in the simple, childlike minds of men, but waited with the highest wisdom — and in the part that then follows on from the Mystery of Golgotha, in which we are immersed and for which we hope for an ever broader and broader fulfillment, again in the supersensible world, again in the influence of the extraterrestrial cosmic reality on earthly events within the evolution of the earth. Thus the Mystery of Golgotha stands at the very center of earthly evolution, giving it its true meaning.

I have often tried to express this pictorially for my listeners by saying that one should look at something like the significant painting by Leonardo da Vinci, *The Last Supper in Milan*, which unfortunately no longer exists in its artistic perfection. How one sees the Redeemer within His Twelve, how one sees Him contrasted on one side with John and on the other with Judas, and how one then has the whole thing before one in its coloring. And here, precisely with regard to this most characteristic image, when contemplating the Mystery of Golgotha, one must say: If any being were to come down to Earth from a foreign heavenly body, it would in the outer reality, would be amazed, for we must assume that such a being from another planet would have a completely different environment around it, and it would be amazed at all the things that human beings have created on earth. But if he were to be led to this picture, in which this Mystery of Golgotha is shown in its most characteristic form, he would intuitively sense something of the meaning of earthly existence from this picture, simply through the way in which Christ Jesus is placed among his twelve disciples, who in turn represent the whole human race.

One can sense the way in which the Mystery of Golgotha actually gives meaning to the evolution of the earth from the most diverse backgrounds. But one only fully senses that this is the case when one can rise to the vision that with the baptism of John in the Jordan a supersensible being, the Christ, has entered into a human being. This is how the Gnostics saw it, not with the world view that we are again trying to gain today through anthroposophy, but with their world view, which was the last remnant of the ancient wisdom of mankind. One might say that so much of the instinctive wisdom of humanity remained that, in the first centuries after Christ's appearance, a number of people were still able to grasp what actually happened with the appearance of Christ on earth. The wisdom that the Gnostics had can no longer be ours. We must, because humanity must be in a state of continuous progress, advance to a much more conscious, less instinctive view of the supersensible as well. But we look

with reverence at the wisdom of the Gnostics, who had retained so much of the first instinctive primal wisdom of man that one could grasp the full significance of the Mystery of Golgotha.

From this comprehension of the full significance of the Mystery of Golgotha and of the central phenomenon of John's baptism in the Jordan, the first great festival was established. But it was already so arranged in the developmental history of mankind that the ancient wisdom was dying out and becoming paralyzed. And it was precisely in the fourth century A.D. that one could do nothing with this ancient wisdom. Yesterday I presented another point of view, showing how this ancient wisdom gradually darkened. In a certain sense, the fourth century is the one in which man made the first beginning of being completely dependent on himself, having nothing around him for his contemplation other than what the senses can perceive and what the combining mind can make of the sensory perception. In order to gain its freedom, which could never have been gained through dependence on unearthly things, if ancient wisdom had not been paralyzed, humanity had to lose ancient wisdom, had to be thrown into materialistic observation. This materialistic outlook first appeared at dawn in the fourth century A.D. and grew stronger and stronger until it reached its culmination in the nineteenth century.

Materialism also has its good side in the history of the development of mankind. The fact that man no longer had the supersensible light shining into his mind, the fact that he was dependent on what he saw with his senses in the world around him, gave rise to the independent power within him that tends towards freedom. It also appeared wise in the developmental history of humanity that materialism has emerged. But precisely at the time when materialism took hold of the earthly nature of man, it was no longer possible to understand how the influence of the extraterrestrial, the heavenly, in the symbol of John's baptism in the Jordan presented itself to humanity. As a result, people lost their understanding of the meaning of the Feast of Epiphany, January 6, and resorted to other explanations. All the feelings and emotions that were related to the Mystery of Golgotha were no longer associated with the supermundane Christ, but began to be associated with the earthly Jesus of Nazareth. And so the Feast of the Epiphany of Christ became the Feast of the Epiphany of the Child Jesus. Admittedly, the development has taken a course that has now reached a peripeteia, which must create new necessities in the striving of humanity for our present-day world view.

We see how, as early as the 4th century, human beings' full and wise comprehension of the impossibility of comprehending the appearance of Christ was already confronted with it. But human feeling, human perception, human emotion and will develop in the course of history at a slower pace than thoughts. While thoughts had long since ceased to be directed towards the appearance of Christ, hearts still turned to this appearance of Christ. Deeply intimate feelings lived on in Christendom. And these profound feelings now formed the content of historical development for many centuries. And these profound feelings expressed it - but as if from instinctive impulses - what a significant event the appearance of Christ was for the development of the earth. The festival of the birthday of Jesus of Nazareth was connected to the Adam and Eve Day, the festival of the beginning of the earth of mankind. Adam and Eve Day falls on December 24, and Jesus' birthday celebration on December 25. In Adam and Eve, people saw the beings with whom the evolution of the earth began, the beings who descended from spiritual heights, who became sinful on earth, who became entangled on earth in material events, who lost their connection with the supersensible worlds. The first Adam was spoken of in the Pauline sense; and the second Adam was spoken of as the Christ: that man can only be fully man in the post-Christian era if he unites within himself the forces that fell away from God through Adam and the forces that through Christ bring him back to God. This was expressed by bringing together the Adam and Eve festival and the Jesus birthday festival. The sense of this connection, which gives earthly life its true meaning, has been preserved in a heartfelt way over the centuries.

One example of this is the occurrence of the very heartfelt 'Paradeisspiele' (Paradise Plays) and 'Christi-Geburtsspiele' (Plays about the Nativity), of which we have brought samples to be performed here, which date from the last Middle Ages, from the beginning of the modern era, when German tribes living in the western regions took them with them to the east. In present-day Hungary, such tribes settled. We find such tribes north of the Danube in the Pressburg area, we find them south of the Carpathians in the so-called Spiš area, we see them in Transylvania. We find mainly Alemannic-Saxon tribes in these areas. We then find Swabian tribes in the Banat. All these German tribes took with them the one thing from their original homeland that had been imbued with the most heartfelt sentiments, which united humanity during these centuries with the most important experience on earth.

But human wisdom increasingly took a course that also intertwined the Christ event with the materialistic conception of the world. In the nineteenth century we see the rise of a materialistic theology. The criticism of the Gospels begins. The possibility of having an inkling — as must be the case with supersensible representations — that what appears as an imagination of the supersensible is different depending on whether it is viewed from one point of view or another, is lost. One has no conception of the fact that the sages of former centuries must also have recognized the so-called contradictions in the Gospels and that they did not criticize them in a critical way. One sinks philistinely into these contradictions in the Gospels. One resolves the contradictions, one removes everything supersensible from the Gospels. One loses the Christ out of the story of the Gospel. One tries to make something out of the story of the Gospels, something like an ordinary, profane story. Gradually, one can no longer distinguish what the theological historians say from what a secular historian like Ranke says about the Mystery of Golgotha.

When one looks for the figure of Jesus in the famous historian Ranke, as he presents him as the simple but most outstanding human being who ever walked the earth, when one reads all the lovingly described in Ranke's profane history, one can hardly tell the difference between this and what the materialistic theologians of the 19th century had to say about Jesus. Theology is becoming materialistic. Precisely for enlightened theology, the Christ disappears from the view of humanity. The "simple man from Nazareth" is gradually becoming that which only those who undertake to describe the essence of Christianity want to point to. And Adolf Harnack's description of the essence of Christianity has become famous.

In this book, "The Essence of Christianity" by Adolf Harnack, there are two passages that could be truly devastating for anyone who has a sense for the real essence of Christianity. The first is that this theologian, who wants to be a Christian, says that the Christ does not actually belong in the Gospels, that the Son does not belong in the Gospels; only the Father belongs in the Gospels. And so Christ Jesus, who walked the earth in Palestine at the beginning of our era, becomes simply the human proclaimer of the Father's teaching. The Father alone belongs in the Gospels, says Adolf Harnack, and yet he believes himself to be a Christian theologian! One must say: the essence of Christianity has completely disappeared from this "Essence of Christianity", I mean that which Adolf Harnack describes, and actually such a view should no longer call itself Christian.

The other thing that can have a devastating effect in this writing "The Essence of Christianity" occurred to me once when I was present at a lecture given in a society called the Giordano Bruno Society. In connection with the remarks of a speaker there, I had to say how the most important part of the essence of Christianity has disappeared from modern theology. I had to point to Harnack's remark in this book "The Essence of Christianity," where he says: Whatever may have happened in the Garden of Gethsemane, the idea of resurrection, the Easter faith, emerged from this event; and it is this faith that we want to hold on to. — So the resurrection itself has become unimportant to modern Christian theologians. They do not want to concern themselves with this resurrection as a fact. Whatever may have happened in the Garden of Gethsemane, people have begun to believe that the resurrection occurred there, and it is not the resurrection that we want to hold on to, but this belief.

I pointed out at the time that the essence of Christianity had been expressed by Paul, who said, based on his experiences outside Damascus: And if the Christ had not been resurrected, we would all be lost. Not the man Jesus is the essential thing in Christianity, but the supersensible entity, which through the baptism of John in the Jordan entered into the man Jesus, which arose from the tomb at Gethsemane, and which became visible to those who had the capacity for such visibility. Paul, as the latest of them, saw it, and Paul refers to the risen Christ. I therefore had to point out at the time how the remark of one of the most famous modern so-called Christian theologians fails to see the very essence of Christianity, its supersensible nature. The chairman of the society replied to me in a most peculiar way at the time. He said that such a thing could not be contained in Harnack's book, for Harnack was a Protestant theologian, and if Harnack asserted such a thing, it would be on a par with an assertion that could only come from the Catholic side, for example, about the Holy Robe of Trier. For the Catholic, it is not important whether it can be proven that this holy robe in Trier really comes from Jerusalem, but rather that faith is attached to this holy robe. The chairman of this society was so embarrassed that he did not even admit that this remark was in Harnack's book. I told him that since I did not have the book at hand, I would write him the page number on a postcard the next day. This is also characteristic of the modern thoroughness with which books are read that have an importance in the first place. You read a book and believe that it makes a significant impression on life, and you do not even notice one of the most important remarks, but you think it is impossible that it could be in it. It is in it! All this proves to us how the supersensible Christ has been thrown

out of the evolution of humanity by a theology that is becoming ever more materialistic, how people have clung only to the outward physical appearance of the man Jesus.

Now, the festive customs and dedications of the simple minds that resorted to Christmas plays were beautiful; they arose from sacred feelings. Even if people could no longer provide each other with more information about the full meaning of the Mystery of Golgotha, they also had it in their hearts where they outwardly adhered to the material appearance of the child Jesus. And in this form, the celebration of the birth of Christ is beautiful and heartfelt.

The thought that destroys the Christ in the man Jesus is not beautiful and, from the highest point of view, it is not true, even from the Christian world view. It is as if the wisdom-filled guidance of humanity had first taken into account what had to happen in order for the materialistic view and thus the development of humanity to freedom to begin and continue. Just as materialism had to come in order to liberate humanity, so the Feast of the Epiphany, which can only be understood through supersensible vision and falls on January 6, had to be moved back to the Feast of the Nativity, December 25.

The twelve holy nights lie in between. In a sense, humanity made its way back through the entire zodiac by going through a twelvefold number, at least in the symbol, when this festival was moved.

Today, by summarizing everything that is connected with the Christ through the man Jesus, we can certainly unfold all the intimacy and depth of feeling for Christmas. And in my Christmas meditation yesterday, I wanted to express in words what is beneficial in this respect for the present time. But we must, after materialism has celebrated its highest triumphs in theology, after Christ Jesus has become, precisely for enlightened theology, only the simple man Jesus, again find our way back to the intuition of the supersensible, extraterrestrial Christ-being.

If you come with this point of view, then you will make enemies of precisely the materialistic theology of today. Just as the sun materially sends down its light from extraterrestrial cosmic expanses, so the spiritual sun of Christ descended to men and united with Jesus of Nazareth. Just as one can see the revelation of the soul and spirit in the outer physiognomy of man, in his facial features and in his gestures, so one can see the outer physiognomy in that which takes place in the cosmos, in the gestures that

are into the cosmos through the course of the stars, in that which, as the inner warmth of the soul of the universe, manifests itself externally through the radiation of the sun, in that one can see the outer physiognomy of what permeates the whole world spiritually and soulfully. And in the concentrated spiritual descent of Christ upon the earth, one can see the inward aspect as the outward physiognomy of the concentrated rays of the sun streaming down upon the earth. And one will understand in the right way when it is said: The solar nature of Christ descended upon the earth.

We must come back to this supersensible understanding of Christ. We must learn to direct our thoughts back to the other birth, which took place as an extra-terrestrial birth through the baptism of St. John in the Jordan, despite the heartfelt devotion we wish to preserve for the birthday of Jesus, for which Christmas alone has become. We also want to learn to understand what takes place in the Jordan baptism of John in a meaningful historical symbol before our soul, as well as what happened in the stable of Bethlehem or in Nazareth. We want to learn to understand the words as they are communicated in the Gospel of Luke in the right way: This is my son, today he was born to me. — We want to learn to understand the Christmas mystery in such a way that it becomes for us again the source of understanding for the appearance of Christ on earth. We want to learn to understand the birth of the spirit in addition to the memory of our physical birth.

Such an understanding can only gradually arise from a general spiritual comprehension of the mysteries of the universe. We must gradually struggle towards a spiritual conception of the mystery of Golgotha. To do this, however, we need insight into the origin of such impulses within the earthly development of humanity, as there was in the 4th century AD, when the Feast of the Epiphany of Christ was moved from January 6 to the day of Jesus' birthday on December 25 out of the innermost need of developing humanity. One must learn to see how the wise guidance of human history works there. One must learn to devote oneself to this historical development with one's whole being. Then one will recognize the wise guidance in human history without superstition, and without bringing one's own fantasies into it. One must learn not only to immerse oneself in history with abstract ideas and to look at cause and effect, but one must learn to devote oneself to this historical development with one's whole being. Only then will we understand what makes our time a truly transitional time, a time in which a spiritual world view must again be wrested from the materialistic view, and a natural elevation to the

supersensible must again be wrested. And an expression for this elevation to the supersensible will be a new understanding of the appearance of Christ on earth, the mystery of Golgotha.

Thus for the modern man who is really able to delve into the spirit of the time, Christmas has a twofold significance: it is that which has been approaching through recent history since the 4th century AD, that which has produced such wonderful beauties precisely in the simple, unadorned folk tradition, and that which still arouses our heartfelt delight today when we see it again in the renewal of folk plays such as we are attempting through our anthroposophical science. It is all that human warmth and affection has poured into life through the centuries during which the idea of Christianity has taken on more and more materialistic forms, until in the 19th century it has come so far that it must turn around through its own absurdity and return to the spiritual. This gives us, as people of today, the second thing about Christmas: in addition to the feeling that we have for the traditional Christmas that has been handed down since the 4th century AD, for this heartfelt feeling that we want to feel with, a new Christmas should be born from our contemporary understanding, a second Christmas to the old Christmas.

The Christ shall be reborn anew through humanity. Christmas is traditionally a celebration of the birth of Jesus; in spirit it shall become a celebration of the birth of a new conception of Christ, not new in relation to the first centuries, but new in relation to the centuries since the 4th century AD. And so Christmas itself should not be just a celebration of the memory of the birth, but, as it is experienced from year to year in the near future, it should become a direct, contemporary birthday celebration, the celebration of a present-day event. This birth of the new Christ-idea must come to pass. And Christmas must become so intense that every year at this very time man will be able to reflect anew and with special intensity on the fact that a new Christ-idea must be born.

Christmas must become a festival not of remembrance but of the present, a consecration of that which the human being experiences as a birth in his immediate present. Then it will truly enter into our more recent historical becoming, then it will strengthen itself more and more in this historical becoming of humanity, also into the future, which will have such need of it. Then it will become a consecration of the world.



10

The Revelation of the Cosmic Christ

26 December 1921, Basle

THE Festival of the Holy Night has for centuries been a great festival of remembrance in the whole of Christendom. And when we think of it as such we must be mindful of all that has been associated with this festival in the feelings and hearts of men. It must be remembered that the festival of the 25th of December did not become an institution in Christianity until the fourth century A.D. It was in the fourth century, for the first time actually in the year 354, in Rome, that the Festival of the Birth of Jesus was placed as it were before the Christian world as a great and memorable contribution to the times. It was out of the very deepest instincts of Christian evolution that such a contribution to the times was made in the fourth century of our era.

The peoples from the North were swarming down towards the South of Europe. Many pagan customs were still widespread in the southern regions of Europe, in Roman districts and in Greece; pagan customs were also rife in North Africa, in Asia Minor — in short, wherever Christian thought and Christian feeling were gradually beginning to spread. But by its very nature Christianity was not intended to be a sectarian teaching, destined for this or that circle of human beings. However many factors, both internal and external, have mitigated against its original purpose, Christianity was, as a matter of course, intended to nourish the souls and hearts of *all* men upon the earth.

In the religious consciousness of antiquity, Divine Powers were associated with the stars, and the mightiest Power of all with the sun. This consciousness was still alive in the pagan peoples both of the North and South of Europe, and within this pagan mind there lived the thought that the time when the earth has her darkest days, at the winter solstice, is also the time when the victorious power of the sun, working in all earthly fertility, begins again to unfold.

The feeling that at this season the earth is resting in her own being, shut off from the Divine Powers of the cosmos and living in loneliness within the universe, was superseded at the time of the winter solstice by the feeling

of hope that once again the rays of light and love from the realm of the sun come to awaken the earth to fruitfulness. And a realisation of the nature of man's own soul-being was intimately associated with this other feeling.

In the life of the ancient pagan religions, man felt himself inwardly part of the earth, a limb or member of the earth. It was as though the very life of the earth were continued into his own body. And so in the days of summer when the earth receives the strongest forces of warmth and light from the heavenly sphere of the sun, man felt that his own being too was given over to that world whence the radiant, warmth-giving rays of the sun shine down upon the earth. During the time of midsummer he felt as if his whole being were given up to the wide cosmic spaces. At the time of the winter solstice man felt himself in intimate connection with the earth and with all the forces preserved in the earth from the warmth and radiance of the summer. Together with the earth he felt himself living in loneliness within the cosmos. And the return of the forces of the Divine-Spiritual cosmos to the earth at this time of the winter solstice was a deep and real experience in him.

And so into the thought of the Christmas Festival man laid all that his life of feeling, his life of soul and spirit brought home to him so intimately in connection with the universality of the cosmic Powers. This intimate experience at the festival of the winter solstice was closely connected with the Christian impulse and it was therefore quite natural that those who came into contact with Christianity should share in its most precious experience, namely, an experience connected with this festival of the winter solstice.

In line with the change that had taken place between the age described in the Old Testament and the age described in the New Testament, the most cherished experience of Christianity lay in the remembrance of the birth of Jesus. The peoples of the Old Testament expressed the great mystery of human life and death by saying: When the soul passes through the gate of death it enters upon the path which will unite it again with the Fathers. And what does this imply? It implies that in those times there was a longing to return to the Fathers, and this indeed was a cherished and intimate experience — an experience bound up with the conceptions expressed in the Old Testament.

In the course of the first four centuries of Christendom this longing for communion with the Fathers was replaced by something else. The souls of men were directed towards the birth of the Being Who is the centre around which Christendom coheres. The feeling that lived in the peoples of the Old Testament changed into a feeling connected with the events at Nazareth or Bethlehem, with the birth of the child Jesus.

And so, when it established the Christmas Festival in the fourth century, Christianity brought its contribution towards the union of men all over the earth. A cherished and intimate experience was bound up with the Christmas Festival. And if we think of the way in which this Christmas Festival was celebrated through the centuries, we find evidence everywhere that at the time of the approach of Christmas, the souls of men within Christianity were filled with loving devotion for the Jesus Child. And this loving devotion is the revelation of something of outstanding significance through the centuries which followed.

We must really have an inner understanding of what it signified when the Christmas Festival was instituted on the 25th of December, that is to say, more or less at the time of the winter solstice. For actually as late as the year A.D. 353, in Rome itself, this festival was not celebrated on the 25th of December, neither was it a commemoration of the birth of Jesus of Nazareth. The festival was celebrated on the 6th of January as a commemoration of the Baptism in the Jordan. It was a festival of remembrance associated with the Christ Being. And this festival of remembrance included the thought that through the Baptism in Jordan, the Christ, Who was a Being belonging to a world beyond the earth, had come down from the heavens and united himself with human nature in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.

It was the celebration of a birth that was not an ordinary birth. The festival was a celebration of *the descent of the Christ Being*, whereby new and quickening forces poured into earthly existence. The day was dedicated to the revelation of the Christ, to remembrance of the Mystery that a heavenly force had united with the earth, and that through this intervention of the heavens the evolution of humanity had received a new impulse. This Mystery of the descent of a heavenly Being into earthly existence was still understood in the age of the Event of Golgotha itself, and for some time afterwards. For at that time fragments were still present of an ancient wisdom that had been capable of understanding a truth only to be known in *super-sensible experience*. The old instinctive knowledge, the ancient wisdom which was poured into human beings born on earth as

a gift of the Gods — this wisdom was gradually lost. It faded away little by little as the centuries went by. But at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha, enough wisdom was still left to give man some insight into the mighty Event that had come to pass.

And so in the early centuries of Christendom the Mystery of Golgotha was understood by the light of wisdom. But by the time of the fourth century after Christ, this wisdom had almost completely disappeared. Men's minds were occupied with what was being brought to them on all sides by the pagan peoples, and understanding of the deep mystery connected with the union of the Christ with the man Jesus was no longer possible. The possibility of understanding the real nature of the Mystery of Golgotha was lost to the human soul. And so it remained, on through the subsequent centuries. The ancient wisdom was lost to humanity — and necessarily so, because out of this wisdom man could never have attained his freedom, his condition of self-dependence. It was necessary for man to enter for a while into the darkness in order, out of this darkness, to develop, in freedom, the primal forces of his being. But a true Christian instinct substituted another quality in place of the wisdom which the world of Christendom had brought to the Mystery of Golgotha — a wisdom which illumined the discussions that were held on the nature of this Mystery. Something else was substituted for the quality of wisdom.

Modern Christianity has very little knowledge or understanding of the profundity of the discussions that were carried on among the wise Church Fathers in the first centuries of Christendom as to the manner in which the two natures — the Divine and the Human — had been united in the personality of Jesus of Nazareth. In the early Christian centuries this was a Mystery which addressed itself to a living wisdom — a wisdom which then faded away into empty abstraction. Very little has remained in Western Christianity of the holy zeal with which men tried to understand how the Divine and the Human had been united in the Mystery of Golgotha.

But the Christian impulse is mighty and powerful. And it was the power of *love* which came to replace the wisdom with which the Mystery of Golgotha was greeted at the time when its radiance shone over the earth. In marvellous abundance, love has been poured out through the centuries from the minds and hearts of men to the Jesus Child in the manger. And it is really wonderful to find how strongly this power of love is reflected in the Christmas Plays which have come down to us from earlier centuries of Christendom. If we let these things work upon us, we shall realise how deeply the Christmas Festival is a festival of remembrance. We shall realise

too that, just as the peoples of the Old Testament strove in wisdom to be gathered to the Fathers, so the peoples of the New Testament have striven in devotion and love to gather together at Christmas around the sinless Child in the manger.

But who will deny that the love poured out to the wellspring of Christendom by so many hearts has little by little become more or less a habit? Who will deny that in our age the Christmas Festival has lost the living power it once possessed? The men of the Old Testament longed to return to their origin, to be gathered to their Fathers, to return to their ancestors. The Christian turns his mind and heart to human nature in its primal purity when he celebrates the Festival of the birth of Jesus. And it was out of this same Christian instinct — an instinct which caused man to associate the Christmas Festival with his earthly origin — that the day before Christmas, the 24th of December, was dedicated to Adam and Eve. The day of Adam and Eve preceded the day of the birth of Jesus. And so it was out of a deep instinct that the Tree of Paradise came to be associated as a symbol with the Christmas Festival.

We turn our eyes first to the manger in Bethlehem, to the Child lying there among the animals who stand round the blessed Mother. It is a heavenly symbol of the primal origin of humanity. Our feelings and minds are carried back to the earthly origin of the human being, to the Tree of Paradise, and with this Tree of Paradise there is associated the crib, just as in the Holy Legend the origin of man on earth is associated with the Mystery of Golgotha. The Holy Legend tells that the wood of the Tree of Paradise was handed down in a miraculous way from generation to generation until the age of the Mystery of Golgotha, and that the Cross erected on Golgotha, the place of the skull — the Cross on which Christ Jesus hung — was made of the very wood of the Tree of Paradise. In other words, the heavenly origin of man is associated with his earthly origin.

In another sense too, the fundamental conception of Christendom tended to obliterate understanding of these things. Nobody in our days can fail to realise that men have very little insight into the truth that the Godhead may be venerated as the Father Principle but that the Godhead can also be conceived as the *Son*. Humanity in general, as well as our so-called enlightened theology, has more or less lost sight of the difference in nature between the Father God and the Son God. And because this insight had been lost, we find the most modern school of orthodox theology

proclaiming the view that in reality the Gospels treat of God the Father, not of God the Son, that Jesus of Nazareth is simply to be regarded as a great Teacher, the messenger of the Father God.

When people of to-day speak of Christ, they still associate with His name certain memories of the Holy Story, but they have no clearly defined feeling of the difference in the nature of the Son God on the one hand and of the Father God on the other. But at the time when the Mystery of Golgotha was fulfilled in the realm of earthly existence, this feeling was still quite living. Over in Asia, in a place of no great importance to Rome at the time, the Christ had appeared in Jesus of Nazareth. According to the early Christians, Christ was that Divine Nature Who had ensouled a human being in a way that had never before occurred on the earth, nor would occur thereafter. And so this one Event of Golgotha, this one ensouling of a human being by a Divine Nature, by the Christ, imparts meaning and purpose to the whole of earthly evolution. All previous evolution is to be thought of as preparatory to this Event of Golgotha, and all subsequent evolution as the fulfilment, the consequence of the Mystery of Golgotha.

The scene of this Event lay over yonder in Asia, and on the throne of Rome sat Augustus Caesar. People of to-day no longer realise that Caesar Augustus on the throne of Rome was regarded as a Divine Incarnation. The Roman Caesars were actually regarded as Gods in human form.

And so we have two different conceptions of a God. The one God upon the throne of Rome and the other on Golgotha — the place of a skull. There could be no greater contrast!

Think of the figure of Caesar Augustus, who, according to his subjects and according to Roman decree, was a God incarnate in a man. He was thought to be a Divine Being who had descended to the earth; the Divine forces had united with the birth-forces, with the blood; the Divine power, having come down into earthly existence, was pulsing in and through the blood. Such was the universal conception, although it took different forms, of the dwelling of the Godhead on earth. The people thought of the Godhead as bound up with the forces of the blood. They said: *Ex Deo nascimur*. — Out of God we are born. And even on lower levels of existence they felt themselves related to what lived, as the crown of humanity, in a personality like Caesar Augustus.

All that was thus honoured and revered was a Divine Father Principle. For it was a Principle living in the blood that is part of a human being when he is born into the world. But in the Mystery of Golgotha the Divine Christ Being had united Himself with the man Jesus of Nazareth — united Himself not, in this case, with the blood, but with the highest forces of the human soul. A God had here united with a human being, in such a way that mankind was saved from falling victim to the earthly forces of matter. The Father God lives in the blood. The Son lives in the soul and spirit of man. The Father God leads man into material life: *Ex Deo nascimur*. — Out of God we are born. But God the Son leads man again out of material existence. The Father God leads man out of the super-sensible into the material. God the Son leads man out of the material into the super-sensible. *In Christo morimur*. — In Christ we die.

Two distinctly different feelings were there. The feeling and perception of God the Son was added to the feeling associated with God the Father. Certain impulses underlying the process of evolution caused the loss of the faculty to differentiate between the Father God and God the Son. And to this day these impulses have remained in mankind in general and in Christianity too. Men who were possessed of the ancient, primordial wisdom knew from their own inner experiences that they had come down from Divine-Spiritual worlds into physical and material life. Pre-existence was a certain and universally accepted fact. Men looked back through birth and through conception, up into the Divine-Spiritual worlds, whence the soul descends at birth into physical existence.

In our language we have only the word 'Immortality.' We have no expression for the other side of Eternity, because our language does not include the word 'Unborn-ness.' But if the conception of Eternity is to be complete, the word 'Unborn-ness' must be there as well as the word 'Immortality.' Indeed all that the word 'Unborn-ness' can mean to us is of greater significance than what is implied by the word 'Immortality.'

It is true that the human being passes through the gate of death into a life in the spiritual world, but it is no less true that an exceedingly egotistical conception of this life in the spiritual world is presented to man to-day. Human beings live here on the earth. They long for Immortality, for they do not want to sink into nothingness at death. And so, in speaking of Immortality, all that is necessary is to appeal to the instincts of egotism.

If you listen carefully to sermons you will realise how many of them count upon the egotistical impulses in human beings when they want to convey an idea of Immortality to the soul. But when it comes to the conception of Unborn-ness it is not possible to rely upon such impulses. Human beings are not so egotistical in their desire for existence in the spiritual world before birth and conception as they are in their desire for a life after death in the spiritual-world. If a life hereafter is assured them, then they are satisfied. Why, they say, should we trouble about whence we have come? Out of their egotism men want to know about a Hereafter. But when once again they unfold a wisdom untinged with egotism, Unborn-ness will be as important to them as Immortality is important to-day.

In olden times men knew that they had lived in Divine-Spiritual worlds, had descended through birth into material existence. They felt that the forces around them in a purely spiritual environment were united with the blood, were living on in the blood. And from this insight there arose the conception: Out of God we are born. The God Who lives in the blood, the God whom the man of flesh represents here on earth — he is the Father God.

The other pole of life — namely, death — demands a different impulse of the life of soul. There must be something in the human being that is not exhausted with death. The conception corresponding to this is of that God Who leads over the earthly and physical to the super-sensible and superphysical. It is the God connected with the Mystery of Golgotha. The Divine Father Principle has always been associated, and rightly so, with the transition from the super-sensible to the material, and through the Divine Son the transition is brought about from the sensible and material to the super-sensible. And that is why the Resurrection thought is essentially bound up with the Mystery of Golgotha. The words of St. Paul that Christ is what He is for humanity because He is the Risen One — these words are an integral part of Christianity.

In the course of the centuries, understanding of the Risen One, of the Conqueror of Death, has gradually been lost and modern theology concerns itself wholly with the man Jesus of Nazareth. But Jesus of Nazareth, the man, cannot be placed at the same level as the Father Principle. Jesus of Nazareth might be regarded as the messenger of the Father but he could not, according to the arguments of early Christianity, be placed beside the Father God. Co-equal and co-existent are the Divine Father and the Divine Son: the Father Who brings about the transition from the super-sensible to the material — 'Out of God we are born' — and the

Son Who brings about the transition from the material to the super-sensible — 'In Christ we die.' And transcending both birth and death there is a third Principle proceeding from and co-equal both with the Divine Father and the Divine Son — namely, the Spirit — the Holy Spirit. Within the being of man, therefore, we are to see the transition from the super-sensible to the material and from the material to the super-sensible. And the Principle which knows neither birth nor death is the Spirit into which and through which we are awakened: 'Through the Holy Spirit we shall be re-awakened.'

For many centuries Christmas was a festival of remembrance. How much of the substance of this festival has been lost is proved by the fact that all that is left of the Being Christ Jesus is the man Jesus of Nazareth. But for us to-day Christmas must become a call and a summons to something *new*. A new reality must be born. Christianity needs an impulse of renewal, for inasmuch as Christianity no longer understands the Christ Being in Jesus of Nazareth, it has lost its meaning and purpose. The meaning and essence of Christianity must be found again. Humanity must learn again to realise that the Mystery of Golgotha can be comprehended only in the light of super-sensible knowledge.

Another factor, too, contributes to this lack of understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha. We can look with love to the Babe in the manger, but we have no wisdom-filled understanding of the union of the Christ Being with the man Jesus of Nazareth. Nor can we look up into the heavenly heights with the same intensity of feeling which was there in men who lived at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha. In those days men looked up to the starry worlds and saw in the courses and constellations of the stars something like a countenance of the Divine soul and spirit of the cosmos. And in the Christ Being they could see the spiritual Principle of the universe visibly manifested in the glories of the starry worlds. But for modern man the starry worlds and all the worlds of cosmic space have become little more than a product of calculation — a cosmic mechanism.

The world has become empty of the Gods. Out of this world which is void of the Gods, the world that is investigated to-day by astronomy and physics, the Christ Being could never have descended. In the light of the primeval wisdom possessed by humanity, this world was altogether different. It was the body of the Divine World-Soul and of the Divine World-Spirit. And out of this spiritual cosmos the Christ came down to earth and united Himself with a human being in Jesus of Nazareth. This truth is expressed in history itself in a profound way. All over the earth before the

Mystery of Golgotha there were Mysteries, holy sanctuaries that were schools of learning and at the same time schools for the cultivation of the religious life. In these Mysteries, indications were given of what must come to pass in the future. It was revealed in the Mysteries that man bears within his being a power that is the conqueror of death, and this victory over death was an actual experience of the Initiates in the Mysteries. In deep and profound experience the candidate for Initiation knew with sure conviction: Thou has awakened within thyself the power that conquers death. The Initiate experienced in a picture the process that would operate fully in times still to come, in accordance with the great plan of world-history. In the Mysteries of all peoples, this sacred truth was proclaimed: *Man can be victorious over death*. But it was also indicated that what could be presented in the Mysteries in pictures only would one day become an actual and single event in world-history. The Mystery of Golgotha was proclaimed in advance by the Pagan Mysteries of antiquity; it was the fulfilment of what had everywhere been heralded in the sanctuaries and holy places of the Mysteries.

When the candidate had been prepared in the Mysteries, when he had performed the difficult training which brought him to the point of Initiation, when he had made his soul so free of the body that the soul could be united with and perceive the spiritual worlds, when he was convinced by his own knowledge that life is always victorious over death in human nature — then he confronted the very deepest experience that was associated with these ancient Mysteries. And this deepest experience was that the obstacle presented by the earth, the obstacle of matter, must be removed if that which is at the same time both spiritual and material, is to become visible — namely, the *sun*. It was to a mysterious phenomenon — although it was a phenomenon well-known to every Initiate — that the candidate was led. He beheld the sun at the midnight hour, saw the sun *through* the earth, at the other side of the earth.

Instinctive feeling of the most holy and most sacred things have, after all, remained through the course of history. Many of these feelings and perceptions have weakened, but to those who are willing to look with unprejudiced eyes, the old meaning is still discernible. And so we can read some thing from the fact that at midnight leading from the 24th to the 25th of December, the midnight Mass is supposed to be said in every Christian Church. We can read something from this fact when we know that the Mass is nothing more nor less than a synthesis of the rites and rituals of the Mysteries which led to initiation, to the beholding of the sun at midnight. This institution of the midnight Mass at Christmas is an echo

of the Initiation which enabled the candidate, at the midnight hour, to see the sun at the other side of the earth and therewith to behold the universe as a spiritual universe. And at the same time the Cosmic Word resounded through the cosmos — the Cosmic Word which from the courses and constellations of the stars sounded forth the mysteries of World Being.

Blood sets human beings at variance with one another. Blood fetters to the earthly and material that element in man which descends from heavenly heights. In our century, especially, men have gravely sinned against the essence of Christianity, inasmuch as they have turned again to the principle of blood. But they must find the way to the Being Who was Christ Jesus, Who does not address Himself to the blood but Who poured out his blood and gave it to the earth. Christ Jesus is the Being Who speaks to the soul and to the spirit, Who *unites* and does not separate — so that Peace may arise among men on earth out of their understanding of the Cosmic Word.

By a new understanding of the Christmas Festival, super-sensible knowledge can transform the material universe into spirit before the eye of the soul, transform it in such a way that the sun at midnight becomes visible and is known in its spiritual nature. Such knowledge brings understanding of the super-earthly Christ Being, the Sun Being Who was united with the man Jesus of Nazareth. It can bring understanding, too, of the unifying peace that should hover over the peoples of the earth. The Divine Beings are revealed in the heights, and through this revelation peace rings forth from the hearts of men who are of good will.

Such is the word of Christmas. Peace on earth flows into unison with the Divine Light that is streaming upon the earth. We need something more than the mere remembrance of the day of the birth of Jesus. We need to understand and realise that a new Christmas Festival must arise, that a new Festival of Birth must lead on from the present into the immediate future. A new Christ Impulse must be born and a new knowledge of the nature of Christ. We need a new understanding of the truth that the Divine-Spiritual heavens and the physical world of earth are linked to one another and that the Mystery of Golgotha is the most significant token of this union. We must understand once again why it is that at the midnight hour of Christmas a warning resounds to us, bidding us be mindful of the Divine-Spiritual origin of man and of the fact that the revelation of the heavens is inseparable from peace on earth.

The Holy Night must become a reality. It is not enough to give each other presents at Christmas in accordance with ancient custom and habit. The warm feelings which for centuries inspired Christian men at the Christmas Festival have been lost. We need a new Christmas, a new Holy Night, reminding us not only of the Birth of Jesus of Nazareth, but bringing a new birth, the birth of a new Christ Impulse. Out of full consciousness we must learn to understand that in the Mystery of Golgotha a super-sensible Power was made manifest, was revealed in the material earth. We must understand with full consciousness what resounded instinctively in the Mysteries of old. We must receive this impulse *consciously*. Again we must learn to understand that when the Holy Night of Christmas becomes a reality to man he can experience the wonderful midnight union between the revelation of the heavens and the peace of earth.

This is the meaning of the words which will now be given and which are dedicated to Christmas. They synthesize what I wanted to bring to your souls and hearts to-night. They try to express, out of consciousness of the anthroposophical understanding of Christ, how we can come again to the wisdom that once lived in men instinctively and remained to this extent, that at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha there were still some who knew how to celebrate the revelation of the Christ Being. We, in our day, must achieve understanding of the Christ as a Cosmic Being — a Cosmic Being Who united Himself with the earth. The time at which this understanding is accessible, to the greater part of men on earth, is the time of the cosmic Holy Night whose approach we await. If we understand these things, then we can make alive within us the feelings which I have tried to express in the following verse:

*Behold the Sun
At the midnight hour;
Build with stones in the lifeless ground,
Thus in decay and in the night of Death
Find the Creation's new beginning,
Young morning's strength;
Glory in the heights the eternal Word of Gods;
Shelter in the depths the Powers of Peace.
In darkness dwelling, create a Sun.
In matter weaving, know the joy of Spirit!*



11

New Year's Eve Lecture

31 December 1921, Berlin

I think that on a day marking the turn of the year, it is appropriate to speak about a turning point in the developmental history of humanity. Today, I will speak about the transformation of human knowledge in general in the time between the oldest period that humanity can look back on historically and our time. In the most ancient times, people were well aware that knowledge of the actual deeper essence of man can only be attained when hidden powers of knowledge in man are brought to the surface. People have always spoken of the fact that outer experience of the world can only bring the outer aspects of the human being to realization. Within the special processes of the mysteries, those people who sought such were offered the opportunity to attain such higher knowledge about the actual human being through powers otherwise hidden in the depths of the human being. It was perfectly clear, especially in those times when a certain instinctive primeval wisdom prevailed, that man's true nature is different from that which can be found within the sphere experienced by man in ordinary everyday life. Therefore, one has always spoken of an initiation or an initiation through which the deeper secrets of life, with which the human being is connected, can only become accessible to man.

Today, too, anthroposophical spiritual science shows that one must speak of such an initiation or initiation. But one can say: Today's human consciousness, which has been formed under very specific, strongly egoistic conditions, resists the fact that real human and world knowledge can only be found through such special preparations and developments within the human soul. Modern man wants to decide the highest questions of existence without applying such developmental principles, through what is given to him in ordinary life. And when he gets the feeling that he cannot decide such highest questions of existence with the ordinary powers of knowledge, then he asserts that human cognitive ability is limited in general, and that it would be absurd to go beyond the ordinary human limits of knowledge. There is also the prejudice against the principle of initiation or initiation that one says: Does what is to be said from the

science of initiation have any value for those who cannot yet achieve such initiation in their present incarnation? How can such people be convinced of the truth of what comes from a specially prepared knowledge?

But this is not the case. And this last objection is as unjustified as possible. For how does that which approaches man through the science of initiation or initiation actually behave?

Imagine that the human being first goes into a dark room. He distinguishes, walking around, the objects by their forms through his feeling. Now suppose that this room is suddenly illuminated by a lamp, which is placed somewhere so that it is not noticeable in the room itself. All objects will appear different to the ordinary faculties of the person who has previously walked around in the dark room, touching everything, and thus gaining an insight into the forms of the objects in the dark room. All objects are now, under the influence of the light, without anything having been added, without anything now being inaccessible to the person standing in the illuminated room, different, will reveal their essence and at the same time the essence of light. When the science of initiation approaches man, he needs nothing more than to accept in a critical spirit what this science gives, and to consider it in such a way that he allows the science to throw light on what he knows, on the world that is accessible to him. This initiatory science does not want to bring anything other than what this world already is. But just as one cannot recognize what is in a dark room in the darkness, but can immediately recognize it in the light, so what is spread around man for the ordinary consciousness cannot reveal its own nature if it is not illuminated by what comes from the science of initiation. Man himself stands before man in the ordinary world. Man carries an immortal soul within him, just as the picture hanging on the wall in the dark room perhaps represents something that cannot be seen in the dark room. If the room is illuminated, it can be seen immediately. The initiate does not add the immortal soul to the human being; when the human being is illuminated by the science of initiation, it becomes visible to everyone. And only a prejudiced science can deny that the world in which man is continually in the earth-consciousness between birth and death, that this world itself, which can be reached by the ordinary healthy human understanding, verifies everything that the science of initiation says.

But the Science of Initiation itself has undergone a transformation. It was different in the early days of humanity, and now it appears before man in a transformed form. Between these two periods, however, there is a world development for man that begins around the 15th century, which is now

coming to an end, and which, in relation to the spiritual light that the science of initiation seeks to be, was dark, was gloomy, but whose darkness is also deeply rooted in the nature of the whole evolution of the earth and of mankind. When we look back into ancient times, of which traditions still survived into the post-Christian era, but which also faded away in the 15th century, having become incomprehensible in this period, when we look back back into ancient times, we find that when man looked out into the world with his instinctive powers of knowledge, he saw not only what can be seen today by man with his senses and with his mind. Man saw spiritual things everywhere in the things of sense, and not abstract spiritual things, he saw concrete spiritual things, he saw real spiritual beings. Even in ancient Greece, man saw such concrete spiritual entities. And one can follow it right up to the transformation of sensory perception itself, how it was that man could see such spiritual entities. Today one thinks that the tapestry of the senses that spreads out before us has always been as it is today. But external science can show man that this is not the case.

The Greeks, for example, did not see the blue sky as blue as we see it today. They had no concept of the blueness of the sky. For them, it was shaded. Instead, they saw the so-called bright colors even more vividly, even more brightly, than we see them. This can already be gathered from literature. But for a sensory perception, for which it is so, the spiritual is spread out directly over the sensory carpet itself. First, I would like to say, the blue coloration of the world, the blue tinge, makes the outer spiritual recede. And at the same time that the instinctive consciousness of people outside perceived something elementary everywhere, man also perceived something elementary in his inner soul.

Today we speak of conscience, which tells us this or that. The Greeks spoke of the Furies. It was only in a particularly blatant case that the Greeks became aware that something like spiritual elemental powers approached them as something objective. But in ancient times, everything that we today assume simply comes from the human being was felt to be caused by an alien spiritual power approaching man. What is quite normal in one period of human development may not occur in the same way in another period. If a person today became aware of the moral voice in the same way as it was in the older days of Greek development, in the time when Aeschylus was still writing poetry, it would mean a mental illness today, and one would say, perhaps with an expression that is no longer felt to be quite right today: This person is possessed by an alien power. In

ancient Greece, this kind of possession was quite normal. Today, we must feel that what was then perceived as coming from an alien power comes from within ourselves, from our conscience.

When the person who, from his instinctive consciousness, had the intuition that spiritual-elemental beings were at work in the outer world, and who also had the intuition that spiritual-elemental beings were at work within him, was accepted as a disciple in the mysteries, then these elemental spiritual beings were, as it were, illuminated by higher spiritual beings through a new insight. With instinctive awareness, one perceived nature spirits and certain demonic powers at work in human nature. Through initiation, one descended deeper into nature, one descended deeper into one's own human being. And the particularly significant, the highly important thing about someone who underwent the first stage of initiation in ancient times was that it was precisely through initiation that he ceased to perceive the elemental spirits within external nature and the demonic within his own being. We can say that what is ordinary for us today, what we carry around with us as our natural view of the outer and inner world, was something that the ancient mystery school student first had to acquire. This is how humanity advances: certain things that are natural later had to be acquired in earlier times through the science of initiation. And then, when through initiation man had come to an outlook on nature and man, which at that time was only there for the mystery school student, then in his own way he penetrated to the spiritual beings that direct both the inner being of man and the nature of outer nature. That is why the older principle of initiation was expressed in such a way that one said: one ascended from the ordinary view of life to the elements of earth, water, fire, air. In the ordinary view, one actually had elemental-air-spiritual, elemental-fire-spiritual, elemental-water-spiritual, elemental-earth-spiritual. Earth, water, fire and air were only perceived in their pure form through the first step of the science of initiation.

What is essential now is that in the progress of humanity, what we can call the soulless nature today, what we can call, if I may use the expression, the human being who is transparent to introspection, has taken the place of this vision of spiritual-soul elemental beings in the external world and also within the human being. When we look within today, we see only reminiscences of the outer world in the form of memory images. Everything else remains as invisible to man as a completely transparent body remains invisible. When the ancient man looked within, it was not so spiritually transparent to him. He saw spiritual and soul entities within himself.

If it had remained so, man would never have been able to gain full consciousness of freedom. For it is only since the old instinctive view of the spirit began to recede that full consciousness of freedom has begun to penetrate the sum of human spiritual and soul forces. Necessity rules in the world of the spirits. There is the activity of the spiritual beings, and that which arises from the activity of these spiritual beings determines the course of events. When one is in this world of spiritual beings, one's soul is interwoven in a realm of necessity. One only has the longing to explore the intentions and thoughts of the spiritual beings in whose realm one is interwoven, and to carry out that which is in line with the intentions and impulses of these spiritual beings. One has no intention of realizing one's own impulses. There is no cause for freedom at all. Only when one encounters inanimate nature, when one does not find the traces of spiritual entities in nature, then one comes to a realization about the outside world that no longer contains any reality, that only contains thought images. And thought images is everything that has been handed down to us since the 15th century by newer knowledge.

And just as mirror images have no compelling power over us, just as, for example, the mirror image of a person standing behind me, whom I then do not see, cannot get me into a fight, so too can thoughts show no real activity, no real forces. The thoughts that we carry within us – and humanity has only just begun to grasp such pure image-thoughts, which are reality-free, in the course of its development, and only from the 15th century onwards – these thought-images cannot therefore exert any compulsion or determination on a person. Even though they permeate human knowledge, people are not obliged to act in accordance with them. Just as a mirror image cannot offend me, so a thought cannot determine me. But just as I can determine myself through the sight of a mirror image, so too can pure mental images determine me. Therefore, thinking, which only since the 15th century has become a good of humanity, is the basis for the human experience of freedom. This is what I wanted to discuss in my "Philosophy of Freedom" in the early 1990s: that thinking is the basis of freedom. And spiritual science shows the position of this pure thinking in the overall development, in the overall being of the human being, how this pure thinking has entered into the historical becoming of humanity. This impulse of freedom entered humanity for the first time in the mid-15th century. It is here now. It had to be won through the contemplation of a soulless nature, of a human inwardness that is free of spirit. It had to be won at a time when the supersensible worlds were spoken of only in the traditional religious creeds and in the traditional philosophical world views,

which no longer offered anything that could be directly experienced. If man had remained longer in this view of dead nature, of the spirit-free human self, he would have had to lose his connection with his own origin.

The time has been fulfilled and the days must come when people will again turn their attention to their spiritual and soul origin, that is to say that they will again become aware that in the world in which they find themselves there is not only soulless nature, and that man not only participates in soulless nature, but that man lives in a world that is filled with concrete spiritual beings. With the attained consciousness of freedom, man can again immerse himself in the world of necessity. For he will then be precisely the being within this world that is called to freedom, having once gone through the state in his physical embodiments in which he was left to himself with his physical body. But we can go back to exploring the divine origin of the voice of conscience after we have learned the sense of responsibility under the influence of the consciousness of freedom through that time when conscience appeared to man only as an inner voice, that is, in the image. The development of humanity was not intended, as many a haughty modern mind believes, for people to remain in a state of childlike comprehension of the external world for the longest time, and now they have finally come so far that all the knowledge that exists, even with its limitations, must remain as it is. No, it is not like that. The person who looks into the development of mankind with an unbiased mind finds that this development of mankind has progressed from stage to stage, that the kind of knowledge we have at present also represents a stage, and that in the future, man will face nature differently than he does today.

Just as we look back today to Thales, and if we are arrogant, say: Thales childishly sought the origin of everything in water; we know better today - and some people believe, precisely in this arrogance, that we know today from our results in the chemical laboratory, as one always must — if one stands on this haughty point of view, then one could actually be aware that one day people in future centuries, if they have the same attitudes, would look back on us and say: What childish ideas did these people of the 20th century still have from their laboratories, from their physics cabinets! But it is not so. These ideas, which seem so childish to today's arrogant man, and which he believes he has at most to take into account historically, represent important developmental impulses that humanity had to go through just as it had to go through the developmental impulse of today. And just as humanity has progressed beyond Thales, it will progress beyond Lavoisier, it will progress beyond Newton, it will progress beyond what is regarded as authoritative today, even beyond Einstein. The world

must be thought of as a flowing entity in its spiritual and soul aspects as well, and the human being must be thought of as existing within this living river.

But it remains the case that in the outer world we do not find that which leads man to his own origin, but that at all times the awakening of hidden forces in man is necessary in order to find the way to the world of man's origin. If we simply look out into the external world with our ordinary consciousness and faculties, we do not automatically find elemental beings, and by looking into our own inner being, we do not automatically find demonic beings. Outside we find the laws of nature, and within we find something like conscience and the like. But if we really develop that which we can develop in our ability to comprehend and think in relation to the outside world, if we bring our thinking power to the point where it seems alive, as otherwise only sensory perceptions seem alive, then we find the possibility of perceiving spiritual essence in external nature again.

What was present in a kind of ancient, instinctive consciousness, which we can no longer use, becomes visible to us again, supersensibly visible, as we condense our thinking. With our thinking, which has become thin and pictorial, we no longer penetrate to the spirit of nature. But when we concentrate our thinking, when we make it strong, as the senses are otherwise, then we penetrate through the outer sensory carpet to what underlies the outer world as spirituality, and we go beyond the limits of knowledge rightly assumed for ordinary consciousness. And we must carry self-education so far that we learn, as it were, to look at ourselves in our will impulses as we look at another person. And if we not only learn to look at ourselves, but if we can shape will impulses out of consciousness in the way that these will impulses are otherwise only passively shaped in life, if we, in other words, not only out of an inner necessity, but out of insight into the world, which condenses into love, to love for this or that impulse, which is not only given to us by our freedom, but by the world order, the wisdom-filled world order, when we make ourselves the executors of the impulses necessary in the world for the orientation of the world. We attain a loving devotion to purely spiritual impulses. And when this has received the necessary training, then we also find the spiritual within, then we find harmony between the spiritual in outer nature and the spiritual within. For wherever the search for the spirit has been pursued far enough, the same results have been found. When the initiates of the ancient mysteries sought outwards and, as they said, found the upper gods, they then turned their gaze back into the human interior and there they found, as they said, the lower gods. But finally they arrived at a stage of development where

the world of the upper gods and the world of the lower gods were one, where the above became the below and the below became the above, where it no longer mattered to them, since they only came from the spatial.

This is also the case for the newer initiation, for the newer initiation. We penetrate into the spiritual and soul life of nature. It is not a world of atoms with their pushing that reveals itself to us, but the spiritual powers of spiritual beings behind sense perception reveal themselves to us, and with introspection, beyond the limits of memory, the spiritual and soul beings within the human being reveal themselves to us. But the two worlds, the outer world of spirituality and the inner world of spirituality, ultimately flow into one another. We can already look pictorially at this one spiritual world. Take a person with his ordinary consciousness. He looks out into the outer nature. He perceives color, light, and directs the other senses out into the outer nature. He perceives sounds, differences in warmth, and other sensory qualities in external nature. He then looks at his own body. He perceives his own body in its sensory qualities. He looks at nature; it reveals itself to him in sensory qualities. He looks at his own body; it reveals itself in sense qualities. If the human being begins to set his will in motion, he walks through the world, then he becomes aware that this willpower influences the movements of his eye, that the same thing that guides the movements of his legs already flows into the being of his eye for sense perception. When a person immerses himself deeply enough in the sensory world, he becomes aware of the same thing that he relates to the external world through the expressions of his will. The world of the senses already flows together into a unified world for him. This unified confluence of the sensory world is superficial, but it is nevertheless a reflection of the confluence of the world of external spirituality and internal spirituality. By discovering these two worlds, which are one world, man becomes aware again of his spiritual and soul origin. And so today we stand as if at the end of an old era, which shows us for earlier epochs a looking into spiritual worlds by humanity, a looking in which man looks outwards into nature, a looking in when man looks within himself. Then came a period of time when it became dark, when the greatest triumphs were celebrated in the realm of darkness without the science of initiation.

But the world year is complete, the world's New Year has arrived. A new world year must begin. We could say that at Christmas, we would also like to feel such a symbolic festival, as it approaches us at this moment, in the same way, we would like to feel symbolized by such a festival, the turn of an era, which we must already feel today as a world turning point. Times

have become serious, so serious that today we must look up from the narrowly limited events within the horizon, which today the majority of humanity would like to recognize as the only legitimate one, to the world at large, and also to the world of human soul and spiritual experience. But there we experience a world turning point. When we become aware of this world turning point, we realize that a world new year of the spirit must begin for humanity. If we learn to recognize such a turning point, then we alone can experience true humanity in our present epoch. For true humanity is only felt when the human being, who goes through repeated lives on earth, finds the possibility in each individual life on earth not only to feel generally as a human being, but as a human being with specific tasks in the specific period of time in which one of his lives on earth falls.

A person can only live with eternity if they find the possibility to live in the right way in time. For the eternal should not only reveal itself to a person in time, but through time a person should be able to experience the eternal. The eternal reigns in timeless duration, and also reigns in timeless duration through the human being. But its pulsation is the events of the individual epochs, as they strike into human experience. Only by experiencing these pulsations and uniting them into a comprehensive rhythm do we experience the eternal through time. Duration belongs to our true human nature. We can only experience duration if we lovingly and with strength allow the individual pulsations of the eternal world-being to become our own experience.

This is what I wanted to place on your hearts, on your souls today at the turn of the year. May the coming time bring us all the opportunity to apply in this sense, in the smallest and, if we are granted it, also in the larger, those impulses in our thinking, feeling and willing, of which we can become capable in our inner being.



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