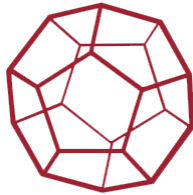


Mysteries of Light, of Space and of the Earth

GA 194



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GA 194

by

Rudolf Steiner

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Notes

1 The Dualism in the Life of the Present Time

12 December 1919, Dornach

Since our departure has been deferred for a few days more, I shall be able to speak to you here today, tomorrow, and the next day. This affords me special satisfaction, because a number of friends have arrived from England, and in this way I shall be able to address them also before leaving.

These friends will have seen that our Goetheanum Building has progressed during the difficult war years. Up to the present time it could not be completed, it is true, and even now we can hardly predict definitely when it will be finished. But what already exists will show you from what spiritual foundations this building has grown, and how it is connected with the spiritual movement represented here. Hence, on this occasion, when after a long interval I am able to speak again to quite a large number of our English friends, it will be permissible to take our building itself as the starting point of our considerations. Then in the two succeeding days we shall be able to link to what can be said regarding the building a few other things whose presentation at this time may be considered important.

To anyone who observes our building — whose idea at least can now be grasped — the peculiar relation of this building to our spiritual movement will at once occur; and he will get an impression — perhaps just from the building itself, this representation of our spiritual movement — of the purpose of this movement. Suppose that any kind of sectarian movement, no matter how extensive, had felt it necessary to build such a house for its gatherings, what would have happened? Well, according to the needs of this society or association, a more or less large building would have been erected in this or that style of architecture; and perhaps you would have found from some more or less symbolical figures in the interior an indication of what was to take place in it. And perhaps you would have found also a picture here or there indicating what was to be taught or otherwise presented in this building. You will have noticed that nothing of this sort has been done for this Goetheanum. This building has not only been put here externally for the use of the Anthroposophical Movement, or of the Anthroposophical Society, but just as it stands there, in all its details,

it is born out of that which our movement purposes to represent before the world, spiritually and otherwise. This movement could not be satisfied to erect a house in just any style of architecture, but as soon as the possibility arose of building such a home of our own, the movement felt impelled to find a style of its own, growing out of the principles of our spiritual science, a style in whose every detail is expressed that which flows through this our movement as spiritual substance. It would have been unthinkable, for example, to have placed here for this movement of ours just any sort of building, in any style of architecture. From this one should at once conclude how remote is the aim of this movement from any kind of sectarian or similar movement, however widespread. It was our task not merely to build a house, but to find a style of architecture which expresses the very same things that are uttered in every word and sentence of our anthroposophically-orientated spiritual science. (Rudolf Steiner, *Ways to a New Style in Architecture*, and *Der Dornacher Bau als Wahrzeichen künstlerischer Umwandlungs-Impulse* (not yet translated).)

Indeed, I am convinced that if anyone will sufficiently enter into what can be felt in the forms of this building (observe that I say "can be felt," not can be speculated about), — he who can feel this will be able to read from his experience of the forms what is otherwise expressed by the word.

This is no externality; it is something which is most inwardly connected with the entire conception of this spiritual movement. This movement purposes to be something different from those spiritual movements, in particular, which have gradually arisen in humanity since the beginning of the fifth post-Atlantean cultural period — let us say, since the middle of the 15th century.

And there is an underlying conviction that now, in this present time, it is necessary to introduce into the evolution of humanity something different from anything that has thus far entered into it since the middle of the 15th century. The most characteristic phenomenon in all that has occurred in civilized humanity in the last three or four centuries seems to me to be the following: The external practical life, which of course has become largely mechanized, constitutes today, almost universally, a kingdom in itself, — a kingdom which is claimed as a sort of monopoly by those who imagine themselves to be the practical people of life. Side by side with this external procedure, which has appeared in all realms of the so-called practical life, we have a number of spiritual views, world conceptions, philosophies, or whatever you wish to call them, which in reality have gradually become unrelated to life, but especially so during the last three or four centuries.

These views in what they give to man of feelings, sensations, hover above the real activities of life, so to speak. And so crass is the difference between these two currents that we can say: In our day the time has come when they no longer understand each other at all, or perhaps it is better to say, when they find no points of contact for reciprocal influence. Today we maintain our factories, we make our trains run on the tracks, we send our steamboats over the seas, we keep our telegraphs and telephones busy — and we do it all by allowing the mechanism of life to take its course automatically, so to speak, and by letting ourselves become harnessed to this mechanism. And at the same time we preach. We really preach a great deal. The old church denominations preach in the churches, the politicians preach in the parliaments, the various agencies in different fields speak of the claims of the proletariat, of the claims of women. Much, much preaching is done; and the substance of this preaching, in the sense of the present-day human consciousness, is certainly something with distinct purpose. But if we were to ask ourselves where the bridge is between what we preach and what our external life produces in practice, and if we wished to answer honestly and truthfully, we should find that the trend of the present time does not yield a correct answer.

I mention the following phenomenon only because what I wish to call to your attention appears most clearly through this phenomenon: You know, of course, that besides all the rest of the opportunities to preach, there are in our day all kinds of secret societies. Suppose we take from among these societies — let us say — the ordinary Freemasons' Lodges, whether those with the lowest degrees or with the highest. There we find a symbolism, a symbolism of triangle, circle, square, and the like. We even find an expression frequently used in such connections: The Master-Builder of all worlds.

What is all this? Well, if we go back to the 9th, 10th, 11th centuries and look at the civilized world within which these secret societies, these Masonic Lodges, were spread out as the cream of civilization, we find that all the instruments, which today lie as symbols upon the altars of these Masonic Lodges, were employed for house-building and church-building. There were squares, circles, compasses, levels and plummets, and these were employed in external life. In the Masonic Lodges today speeches are delivered concerning these things that have completely lost their connection with practical life; all kinds of beautiful things are said about them, which are without question very beautiful, but which are completely foreign to external life, to life as it is lived. We have come to have ideas, thought-forms, which lack the impulsive force to lay hold upon life. It has

gradually become the custom to work from Monday to Saturday and to listen to a sermon on Sunday, but these two things have nothing to do with each other. And when we preach, we often use as symbols for the beautiful, the true, even the virtuous, things which in olden times were intimately connected with the external life, but which now have no relation to it. Indeed we have gone so far as to believe that the more remote from life our sermons are the higher they will rise into the spiritual worlds. The ordinary secular world is considered something inferior. And today we encounter all kinds of demands which rise up from the depths of humanity, but we do not really understand the nature of these demands. For what connection is there between these society sermons, delivered in more or less beautiful rooms, about the goodness of man, about — well, let us say — about loving all men without distinction of race, nationality, etc., even color — what connection is there between these sermons and what occurs externally, what we take part in and further when we clip our coupons and have our dividends paid to us by the banks, which in that way provide for the external life? Indeed, in so doing we use entirely different principles from those of which we speak in our rooms as the principles of good men. For example, we found Theosophical Societies in which we speak emphatically of the brotherhood of all men, but in what we say there is not the slightest impulsive force to control in any way what also occurs through us when we clip our coupons; for when we clip coupons we set in motion a whole series of political-economic events. Our life is completely divided into these two separate streams.

Thus, it may occur — I will give you, not a classroom illustration, but an example from life — it may occur — it even has occurred — that a lady seeks me out and says: "Do you know, somebody came here and demanded a contribution from me, which would then be used to aid people who drink alcohol. As a Theosophist I cannot do that, can I?" That is what the lady said, and I could only reply: "You see, you live from your investments; that being the case, do you know how many breweries are established and maintained with your money?" Concerning what is really involved here the important point is not that on the one hand we preach to the sensuous gratification of our souls, and on the other conduct ourselves according to the inevitable demands of the life-routine that has developed through the last three or four centuries. And few people are particularly inclined to go into this fundamental problem of the present time. Why is this? It is because this dualism between the external life and our so-called spiritual strivings has really invaded life, and it has become very strong in

the last three or four centuries. Most people today when speaking of the spirit mean something entirely abstract, foreign to the world, not something which has the power to lay hold of daily life.

The question, the problem, which is indicated here must be attacked at its roots. If we here on this hill had acted in the spirit of these tendencies of the last three or four hundred years, then we would have employed any kind of architect, perhaps a celebrated architect, and have had a beautiful building erected here, which certainly could have been very beautiful in any architectural style. But that was entirely out of the question; for then, when we entered this building, we should have been surrounded by all kinds of beauty of this style or that, and we should have said in it things corresponding to the building — indeed, in about the same way that all the beautiful speeches made today correspond with the external life which people lead. That could not be, because the spiritual science which intends to be anthroposophically orientated had no such purpose. From the beginning its aim was different. It intended to avoid setting up the old false contrast between spirit and matter, whereby spirit is treated in the abstract, and has no possibility of penetrating into the essence and activity of matter. When do we speak legitimately of the spirit? When do we speak truly of the spirit? We speak truly of the spirit, we are justified in speaking of the spirit, only when we mean the spirit as creator of the material. The worst kind of talk about the spirit — even though this talk is often looked upon today as very beautiful — is that which treats the spirit as though it dwelt in Utopia, as if this spirit should not be touched at all by the material. No; when we speak of the spirit, we must mean the spirit that has the power to plunge down directly into the material. And when we speak of spiritual science, this must be conceived not only as merely rising above nature, but as being at the same time valid natural science. When we speak of the spirit, we must mean the spirit with which the human being can so unite himself as to enable this spirit, through man's mediation, to weave itself even into the social life. A spirit of which one speaks only in the drawing room, which one would like to please by goodness and brotherly love, but a spirit that has no intention of immersing itself in our everyday life — such a spirit is not the true spirit, but a human abstraction; and worship of such a spirit is not worship of the real spirit, but is precisely the final emanation of materialism.

Hence we had to erect a building which, in all its details, is conceived, is envisioned, as arising out of that which lives in other ways as well in our anthroposophically-orientated spiritual science. And with this is also connected the fact that in this difficult time a treatment of the social

question has arisen from this spiritual science, which does not intend to linger in Utopia, but which from the beginning of its activity intended to be concerned with life; which intended to be the very opposite of every kind of sectarianism; which intended to decipher that which lies in the great demands of the time and to serve these demands.

Certainly in this building much has not succeeded, but today the matter of importance is really not that everything shall be immediately successful, but that in certain things a beginning, a necessary beginning be made; and at least this essential beginning seems to me to have been made with this building. And so, when it shall some day be finished, we shall accomplish what we shall have to accomplish, not within something which would surround us like strange walls; but just as the nutshell belongs to the nut-fruit and is entirely adapted in its form to this nut-fruit, so will each single line, each single form and color of this building be adapted to that which flows through our spiritual movement.

It is necessary that at the present time at least a few people should comprehend what is intended here, for this *act of will* is the important matter.

I must go back once more to various characteristics which have become evident in the evolution of civilized humanity in the last three or four centuries. We have in this evolution of civilized humanity phenomena which express for us most characteristically the deeper foundations of that which leads *ad absurdum* in the life of our present humanity; for it is a case of leading *ad absurdum*. It is a fact that today a large proportion of human souls are actually asleep, are really sleeping. If one is in a place where certain things which today play their role — I might say, as actual counterparts of all civilized life — if one is in a place where these counterparts do not actually appear before one's eyes but still play a part, as they do in numerous regions of the present civilized world, and are significant and symptomatic of that which must spread more and more — then one will find that the souls of the people are outside of, beyond, the most important events of the time; people live along in their everyday lives without keeping clearly in mind what is actually going on in our time, so long as they are not directly touched by these events. It is also true, however, that the real impulses of these events be in the depths of the *subconscious* or *unconscious* soul-life of man.

Underlying the dualism I have mentioned there is today another, the dualism which is expressed — I would cite a characteristic example — in Milton's *Paradise Lost*. But that is only an external symptom of something that permeates all modern thinking, sensibility, feeling, and willing. We have in the modern human consciousness the feeling of a contrast between *heaven* and *hell*; others call it *spirit* and *matter*. Fundamentally there are only differences of degree between the heaven and hell of the peasant on the land, and the matter and spirit of the so-called enlightened philosopher of our day; the real underlying thought-impulses are exactly the same. The actual contrast is between God and devil, between paradise and hell. People are certain that paradise is good, and it is dreadful that men have left it; paradise is something that is lost; it must be sought again — and the devil is a terrible adversary, who opposes all those powers connected with the concept of paradise. People who have no inkling of the soul-contrasts to be found even in the outermost fringes of our social extremes and social demands cannot possibly imagine what range there is in this dualism between heaven and hell, or between the lost paradise and the earth. For — we must really say very paradoxical things today, if we wish to speak the truth (actually about many things we can scarcely speak the truth today without its often appearing to our contemporaries as madness — but just as in the Pauline sense the wisdom of man may be foolishness before God, so might the wisdom of the men of today, or their madness, also be madness in the opinion of future humanity) — people have gradually dreamed themselves into this contrast between the earth and paradise, and they connect the latter with what is to be striven for as the actual human-divine, not knowing that striving toward this condition of paradise is just as bad for a man, if he intends to have it forthwith, as striving for the opposite would be. For if our concept of the structure of the world resembles that which underlies Milton's *Paradise Lost*, then we change the name of a power harmful to humanity when it is sought one-sidedly, to that of a divinely good power, and we oppose to it a contrast which is not a true contrast: namely, the devil, that in human nature which resists the good.

The protest against this view is to be expressed in that group which is to be erected in the east part of our building, a group of wood, 9 ½ meters high, in which, or by means of which, instead of the Luciferic contrast between God and the devil, is placed what must form the basis of the human consciousness of the future: the trinity consisting of the Luciferic, of what pertains to the Christ, and of the Ahrimanic.

Modern civilization has so little consciousness of the mystery which underlies this, that we may say the following: For certain reasons, about which I shall perhaps speak here again, we have called this building Goetheanum, as resting upon the Goethean views of art and knowledge. But at the same time it must be said just here that in the contrast which Goethe has set up in his Faust between the good powers and Mephistopheles there exists the same error as in Milton's *Paradise Lost*: namely, on the one side the good powers, on the other the evil power, Mephistopheles. In this Mephistopheles Goethe has thrown together in disordered confusion the Luciferic on the one hand and the Ahrimanic on the other; so that in the Goethean figure, Mephistopheles, for him who sees through the matter, two spiritual individualities are commingled, inorganically mixed up. Man must recognize that his true nature can lie expressed only by the picture of *equilibrium*, — that on the one side he is tempted to soar beyond his head, as it were, to soar into the fantastic, the ecstatic, the falsely mystical, into all that is fanciful: that is the one power. The other is that which draws man down, as it were, into the materialistic, into the prosaic, the arid, and so on, We understand man only when we perceive him in accordance with his nature, as striving for balance between the Ahrimanic, on one arm of the scales, let us say, and on the other the Luciferic. Man has constantly to strive for the state of balance between these two powers: the one which would like to lead him out beyond himself, and the other tending to drag him down beneath himself. Now modern spiritual civilization has confused the fantastic, the ecstatic quality of the Luciferic with the divine; so that in what is described as paradise, actually the description of the Luciferic is presented, and the frightful error is committed of confusing the Luciferic and the divine — because it is not understood that the thing of importance is to preserve the state of balance between two powers pulling man toward the one side or toward the other.

This fact had first to be brought to light. If man is to strive toward what is called Christian — by which, however, many strange things are often understood today — then he must know clearly that this effort can be made only at the point of balance between the Luciferic and the Ahrimanic; and that especially the last three or four centuries have so largely eliminated the knowledge of the real human being that little is known of equilibrium; the Luciferic has been renamed the divine in *Paradise Lost*, and a contrast is made between it and the Ahrimanic, which is no longer Ahriman, but which has become the modern devil, or modern matter, or something of the kind. This dualism, which in reality is a dualism between Lucifer and Ahriman, haunts the consciousness of modern humanity as the

contrast between God and the devil; and Paradise Lost would really have to be conceived as a description of the lost Luciferic kingdom — it is just renamed.

Thus emphatically must we call attention to the spirit of modern civilization, because it is necessary for humanity to understand clearly how it has come upon a declivitous path (it is a historical necessity, but necessities exist, among other things, to be comprehended), and, as I have said, that it can again begin to ascend only through the *most radical corrective*. In our time people often take a description of the spiritual world to be a representation of something super-sensible but not existing here on our earth. They would like to escape from the earth environment by means of a spiritual view. They do not know that when man flees into an abstract spiritual kingdom, he does not find the spirit at all, but the Luciferic region. And much that today calls itself Mysticism or Theosophy is a quest for the Luciferic region; for mere knowledge of the spirit cannot form the basis of man's present-day spiritual striving, because it is in keeping with the spiritual endeavor of our time to perceive the relation between the spiritual worlds and the world into which we are born and in which we must live between birth and death.

Especially when we direct our gaze toward spiritual worlds should this question concern us: *Why are we born out of the spiritual worlds into this physical world?* Well, we are born into this physical world (tomorrow and next day I will develop in greater detail what I shall sketch today) — we are born into this physical world because here on this earth there are things to be learned, things to be experienced, which cannot be experienced in the spiritual worlds; but in order to experience these things we must descend into this physical world, and from this world we must carry up into the spiritual worlds the results of this experience. In order to attain that, however, we must really plunge down into this physical world; our very spirit in its quest for knowledge must dive down into this physical world. *For the sake of the spiritual world, we must immerse ourselves in this physical world.*

In order to say what I wish to express, let us take — well, suppose we say a normal man of the present time, an average man, who sleeps his requisite number of hours, eats three meals a day, and so on, and who also has spiritual interests, even lofty spiritual interests. Because he has spiritual interests he becomes a member, let us say, of a Theosophical Society, and there does everything possible to learn what takes place in the spiritual worlds. Let us consider such a man, one who has at his fingertips, so to

speaking, all that is written in the theosophical literature of the day, but who otherwise lives according to the usual customs. Observe this man. What does all the knowledge signify which he acquires with his higher spiritual interests? It signifies something which here upon earth can offer him some inner soul gratification, a sort of real Luciferic orgy, even though it is a sophisticated, a refined soul-orgy. Nothing of this is carried through the gate of death, nothing of it whatever is carried through the gate of death; for among such people — and they are very numerous — there may be some who, in spite of having at their finger-tips what an astral body is, an etheric body, and so on, have no inkling of what takes place when a candle burns; they have no idea what magic acts are performed to run the tramway outside; they travel on it but they know nothing about it. But still more: they do indeed have at their finger-tips what the astral body is, the etheric body, karma, reincarnation, — but they have no notion of what is said today in the gatherings of the proletarians, for example, or what their aims are; it does not interest them. They are interested only in the appearance of the etheric body or astral body — they are not interested in the course pursued by capital since the beginning of the 19th century, when it became the actual ruling power. Knowing about the etheric body, the astral body, is of no use when people are dead! From an actual knowledge of the spiritual world just that must be said. This spiritual knowledge has value only when it becomes the instrument for plunging down into the material life, and for absorbing in the material life what cannot be obtained in the spiritual worlds themselves, but must be carried there.

Today we have a physical science which is taught in its most diversified branches in our universities. Experiments are made, research is carried on, and so forth, and physical science comes into being. With this modern science we develop our technical arts; we even heal people with it today — we do everything imaginable. Side by side with this physical science there are the religions denominations. But I ask you, have you ever taken cognizance of the content of the usual Sunday sermons in which, for example, the Kingdom of Christ is spoken of, and so on? What relation is there between modern science and what is said in these sermons? For the most part, none whatever; the two things go on separate paths. The people one group believe themselves capable of speaking about God and the Holy Spirit and all kinds of things — in abstract forms. Even though they claim to feel these things, still they present abstract views about them. The others speak of a nature devoid of spirit; and no bridge is being built between them. Then we have in modern times even all kinds of theosophical views, mystical views. Well, these mystical views tell of

everything imaginable which is remote from life, but they say nothing of human life, because they have not the force to dive down into human life. I should just like to ask whether a Creator of Worlds would be spoken of in the right sense if one thought of him as a very interesting and lovely spirit, to be sure, but as being quite incapable of creating worlds? The spiritual powers that are frequently talked about today never could have been world-creators; for the thoughts we develop about them are not even capable of entering into our knowledge of nature or our knowledge of man's social life.

Perhaps I may without being immodest illustrate what I mean with an example. In one of my recent books, *Riddles of the Soul*, I have brought to your attention — and I have often mentioned it in oral lectures — what nonsense is taught in the present-day physiology, — that is, one of our physical sciences: the nonsense that there are two kinds of nerves in man, the motor nerves, which underlie the will, and the sensory nerves, which underlie perceptions and sensations. Since telegraphy has become known we have this illustration from it: from the eye the nerve goes to the central organ, then from the central organ it goes out to one of the members; we see something make a movement, as a limb — there goes the telegraph wire from this organ, the eye, to the central organ; that causes activity in the motor nerve, then the movement is carried out. We permit science to teach this nonsense. We must permit it to be taught, because in our abstract spiritual view we speak of every sort of thing, but do not develop such thoughts as are able

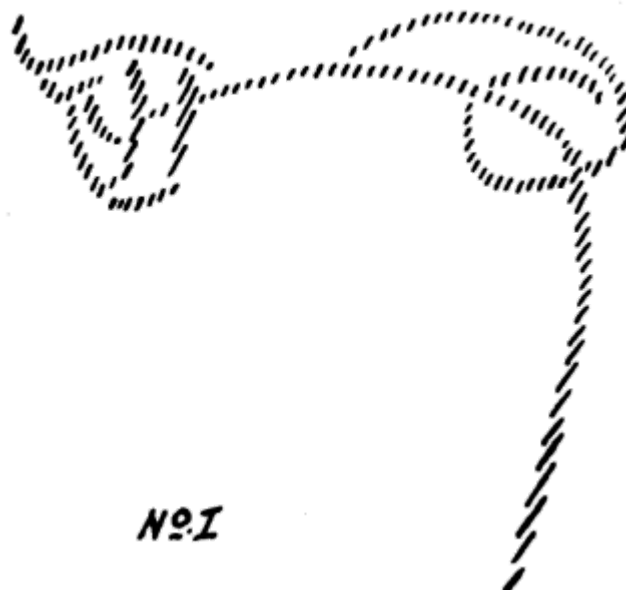


Figure 1

positively to gear into the machinery of nature. We have not the strength in our spiritual views to develop a knowledge about nature itself. The fact is, there is no difference between motor nerves and sensory nerves, but what we call voluntary nerves are also sensory nerves. The only reason for their existence is that we may be aware of our own members when movements are to be executed. The hackneyed illustration of tubes proves exactly the opposite of what is intended to be proved. I will not go into it further because you have not the requisite knowledge of physiology. I should very much like some time to discuss these things in a group of people versed in physiology and biology; but here I wish only to call your attention to the fact that we have on the one hand a science of the physical world, and on the other a discoursing and preaching about spiritual worlds which does not penetrate any of the real worlds of nature that lie before us. But we need a knowledge of the spirit strong enough to become at the same time a physical science. We shall attain that only when we take account of the intention which I wished to bring to your notice today. If we had intended to found a sectarian movement which, like others, has merely some kind of dogmatic opinion about the divine and the spiritual, and which needs a building, we should have erected any kind of a building, or had it erected. Since we did not wish that, but wished rather to indicate, even in this external action, that we intend to plunge down into life, we had to erect this building *entirely out of the will of spiritual science itself*. (Cf. Rudolf Steiner, *Der Baugedanke des Goetheanum* (with 104 illustrations), Not yet translated.) And in the details of this building it will some day be seen that actually important principles — which today are placed in a very false light under the influence of the two dualisms mentioned — can be established on their sound foundation.

I should like to call your attention today to just one more thing. Observe the seven successive columns which stand on each side of our main building. There you have capitals above, pedestals below. They are not alike, but each is developed from the one preceding it; so that you get a perception of the second capital when you immerse yourself deeply in the first and its forms, when you cause the idea of metamorphosis to become alive, as something organic, and really have such a living thought that it is not abstract, but follows the laws of growth. Then you can see the second capital develop out of the first, the third out of the second, the fourth out of the third, and so on to the seventh. Thus the effort has been made to develop in living metamorphosis one capital, one part of an architrave, and

so on, from another, to imitate that creative activity that exists as spiritual creative activity in nature itself, when nature causes one form to come forth from another. I have the feeling that not a single capital could be other than it now is.

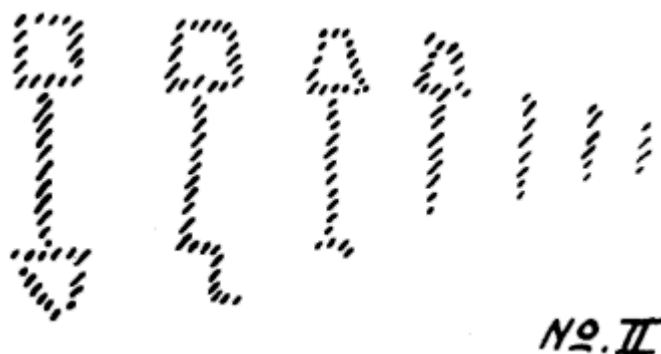


Figure 2

But here something very strange has resulted. When people speak today of evolution, they often say: development, development, evolution, first the imperfect, then the more nearly perfect, the more differentiated, and so on; and the more nearly perfect things always become at the same time more complicated. This I could not bear out when I let the seven capitals originate one from another according to metamorphosis, for when I came to the fourth capital, and had then to develop the next, the fifth, which should be more nearly perfect than the fourth, this fourth revealed itself to me as the most complicated. That is to say, when I did not merely pursue abstract things in thought, like a Haeckel or a Darwin, but when I had to make the forms so that each one came forth from the preceding — just as in nature itself one form after another emerges from the vital forces — then I was compelled to make the fifth form more elaborate in its surfaces, it is true, than the fourth, but the entire form became simpler, not more complicated. And the sixth became simpler yet, and the seventh still more so. Thus I realized that evolution is not a progression to ever greater and greater differentiation, but that evolution is first an ascent to a higher point, and after having reached this point is then a descent to more and more simple forms.

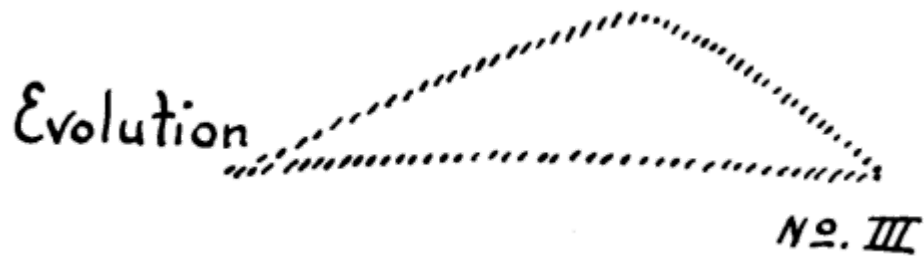


Figure 3

That resulted entirely from the work itself; and I could see that this principle of evolution manifested in artistic work is the same as the principle of evolution in nature. For if you consider the human eye, it is certainly more nearly perfect than the eyes of some animals; but the eyes of some animals are more complicated than the human eye. They have, for example, enclosed within them certain blood-filled organs — the metasternum, the fan — which do not exist in human beings; they have dissolved, as it were. The human eye is simplified in comparison with the forms of some animal eyes. If we study the development of the eye, we find that it is at first primitive, simple, then it becomes more and more complicated; but then it is again simplified, and the most nearly perfect is not the most complicated, but is, rather, a simpler form than the one to be found midway.

And it was essential to do likewise when developing artistically something which an inner necessity enjoined. The aim here was not research, but union with the vital forces themselves. And here in this building we strove to fashion the forms in such a way that in this fashioning dwell the same forces which underlie nature as the spirit of nature. A spirit is sought which is actually creative, a spirit which lives in what is produced in the world, and does not merely preach. That is the essential thing. That is also the reason why many a member here had to be severely rebuked for wanting our building fitted out with all sorts of symbols and the like. There is not a single symbol in the building, but all are forms which imitate the creative activity of the spirit in nature itself.

Thus there has been the beginning of an act of will which must find its continuation; and it is desirable that this very phase of the matter be understood — that it be understood how the springs of human intention, of human creativeness, which are necessary for modern humanity in all realms, are really to be sought. We live today in the midst of demands; but they are all individual demands springing from the various spheres of life;

and we need also coordination. This cannot come from something which merely hovers in the environment of external visible existence; for something super-perceptible underlies all that is visible, and in our time this must be comprehended. I would say that close attention should be given to the things that are happening today, and the idea that the old is collapsing will by no means be found so absurd — but then there must be something to take its place! To be reconciled to this thought there is nevertheless needed a certain courage, which is not acquired in external life, but must be achieved in the innermost self.

I would not define this courage, but would characterize it. The sleeping souls of our time will certainly be overjoyed if someone appears somewhere who can paint as Raphael or Leonardo did. That is comprehensible. But today we must have the courage to say that only he has a right to admire Raphael and Leonardo who knows that in our day one cannot and must not create as Raphael and Leonardo did. Finally, to make this clear, we can say something very philistine: that only he has a right today to appreciate the spiritual range of the Pythagorean theorem who does not believe that this theorem is to be discovered today for the first time. Everything has its time, and things must be comprehended by means of the concrete time in which they occur.

As a matter of fact, more is needed today than many people are willing to bring forth, even when they join some kind of spiritual movement. We need today the knowledge that we have to face a renewal of the life of human evolution. It is cheap to say that our age is a time of transition. Any age is a time of transition; only it is important to know what is in transition. So I would not voice the triviality that one age is a time of transition, but I want to say something else: It is continually being said that nature and life make no leaps. A man considers himself very wise when he says: "Successive development; leaps never!" Well, nature is continually making leaps: it fashions step by step the green leaf, it transforms this to the calyx-leaf, which is of another kind, to the colored petal, to the stamen, and to the pistil. Nature makes frequent leaps when it fashions a single creation — the larger life makes constant revolutions. We see how in human life entirely new conditions appear with the change of teeth, how entirely new conditions appear with puberty; and if man's present capacity for observation were not so crude a third epoch in human life could be perceived about the twentieth year, and so on, and so on.

But history itself is also an organism, and such leaps take place in it; only they are not observed. People of today have no conception what a significant leap occurred at the turn of the 14th and 15th centuries, or more properly, in the middle of the 15th century. And what was introduced at that time is pressing toward fulfilment in the middle of our century. And it is truly no weaving of idle fancies but exact truth when we say that the events which so agitate humanity, and which recently have reached such a culmination, disclose themselves as a trend toward something in preparation, which is about to break violently into human evolution in the middle of this century. Anyone must understand these things who does not wish, out of some kind of arbitrariness, to set up ideals for human evolution, but who wills to find, among the creating — forces of the world, spiritual science, which can then enter into life.



2 The Development of Architecture

13 December 1919, Dornach

I spoke to you yesterday of the relations of anthroposophical spiritual science to the forms of our building, and I wished particularly to point out that these relations are not external ones, but that the spirit which rules in our spiritual science has flowed, so to speak, into these forms. Special importance must be attached to the fact that it is possible to maintain that an actual understanding of these forms *through feeling* indicates, in a certain sense, a deciphering of the inner meaning existing in our Movement. Today I should like to take up a few things concerning the building, in order then to present today and tomorrow some important anthroposophical matters.

You will see when you contemplate the building that its ground-plan consists of two intersecting circles, one smaller than the other; so that I may sketch it roughly thus:

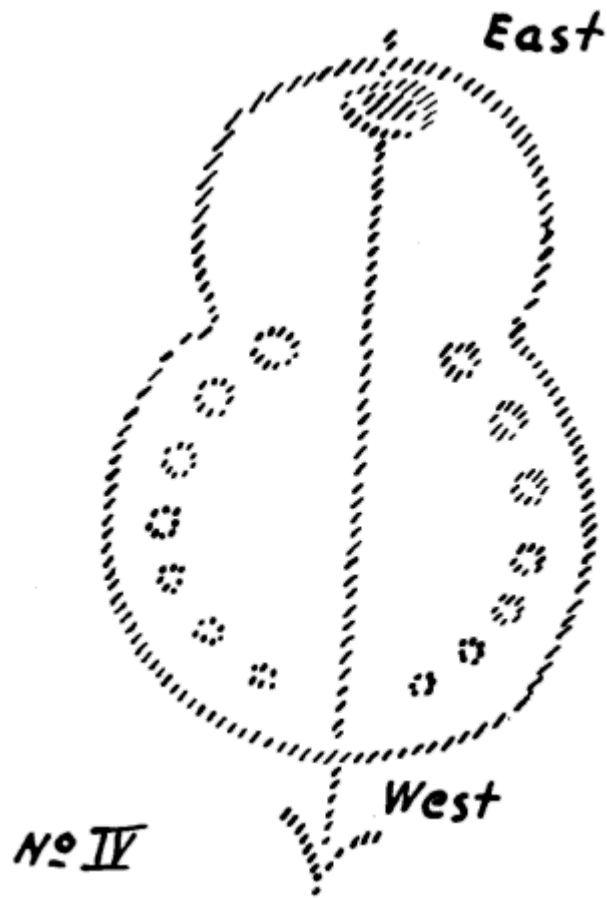


Figure 4

The whole building has an east-west orientation; and you will note that this east-west line is the only axis of symmetry; that is, everything is constructed symmetrically upon this axis.

For the rest, we do not have a mere mechanical repetition of forms, such as we find elsewhere in architecture, perchance with identical capitals, or the like, but we have an evolution of forms, as I explained in detail yesterday, with the later ones emerging from the preceding. (Compare: *Der Dornacher Bau als Wahrzeichen künstlerischer Umwandlungs-Impulse* (not yet translated).)

You will find seven columns on the left and seven on the right, defining the outer circular passage; and I mentioned yesterday that these seven columns have capitals and pedestals, with corresponding architraves above, which develop their forms in continuous evolution.

When you feel this ground-plan — and you must comprehend it through feeling — you will have, simply in these two intersecting circles, some-thing which points to the evolution of humanity. I said yesterday that a very significant, incisive change in the evolution of humanity occurred about the middle of the 15th century. What is exteriorly and academically called "history" is only a *fable convenue*, for it records external facts in such a way as to make it appear that the human being was essentially the same in the 8th or 9th century as, let us say, in the 18th or 19th. There are, however, modern historians — for example, Lamprecht — who have discovered that this is nonsense, that as a matter of fact man's soul-constitution and soul-mood were entirely different before and after the point of time indicated. We are at present in the midst of an evolution which we can only understand when we realize that we are developing toward the future with special soul forces, and that those soul forces which had been developed before the 15th century are now still, we might say, haunting the souls of men, becoming fainter and fainter; but that they belong to what is perishing, to what is condemned to fall out of human evolution. We must develop a consciousness concerning this important change in the evolution of humanity if we are to be qualified at all to have anything to say about the concerns of humanity in the present and the immediate future.

Such things find expression particularly when people wish to refer significantly to what they feel, what they sense. We need only to remind ourselves of one fact in the development of architecture which has already been mentioned here, but to which I wish to refer again today, in order to show by an example how the evolution of humanity strides forward.

Just observe the *forms of a Greek temple!* How can they be understood? Only by realizing clearly that the whole architectural idea of this Greek temple takes its orientation from the fact that it was the *drwelling place of a god or a goddess*, whose statue was placed within it. All the forms of the Greek temple would be absurdities if it were not conceived as the shelter, the abode, of the god or goddess who was intended to dwell in it.

If we proceed from the forms of the Greek temple to the next forms of construction which are significant, we come to the *Gothic cathedral*. Anyone who has the feeling upon entering a Gothic cathedral that in this cathedral he has before him something completed, something finished, does not understand the forms of Gothic architecture; just as anyone fails to understand the forms of the Greek temple who can regard it as if it contained no statue of a god. A Greek temple with-out the image of a god

— we need only to imagine that it is there, but it must be imagined in order to understand the form — a Greek temple *without* the statue of a god is an impossibility to the understanding which comes through feeling. A Gothic cathedral which is empty is also an impossibility for the person who really has some feeling for such things. The Gothic cathedral is complete only when the *congregation* is in it, when it is filled with people — really, only when it is filled with people and the word is spoken to them, so that the *spirit of the word* rules over the congregation or in their hearts. Then the Gothic cathedral is complete. But the congregation belongs to it; otherwise the forms are unintelligible.

What kind of an evolution really confronts us in the evolution from the Greek temple to the Gothic cathedral — for the other forms are actually intermediate ones, whatever mistaken historical interpretation may say about it — what kind of an evolution confronts us there? If we look at the Greek civilization, this flower of the fourth post-Atlantean period, we must say that in the Greek consciousness there still lived something of the tarrying of divine-spiritual powers among men; only that the people felt impelled to erect dwelling places for their gods whom they could represent to themselves only in images. The Greek temple was the abode of the god or the goddess, of whose presence among them the people were conscious. Without this consciousness of the presence of divine-spiritual powers the phenomenon of the Greek temple in the Greek civilization is unthinkable.

If we go on now from the summit of the Greek civilization to its close, toward the end of the fourth post-Atlantean period, that is, toward the 8th, 9th, or 10th Christian century, we come to the forms of Gothic architecture, which requires the congregation to complete it. Everything corresponds to the feeling life of the humanity of that time. Human beings were then naturally different in their soul-disposition from those living when Greek thought was at its height. There was no longer a consciousness of the immediate presence of divine-spiritual powers; they were thought of as being far removed to the beyond. The earthly kingdom was often accused of having deserted the divine-spiritual powers. The material world was looked upon as something to be avoided, from which the eyes were to be averted and to be turned instead toward the spiritual powers. The individual sought by joining with the others in the congregation — going in quest, as it were, *of the group-spirit of humanity* — the *rule of the spiritual*, which in this way acquired a certain abstract quality: hence the Gothic forms also produce an abstract-*mathematical* impression, as contrasted with those of Greek architecture, which appear more *dynamic*, and which

have something of the comfortable inclusion of the god or goddess. In the Gothic forms every-thing is *aspiring*, everything points to the fact that what the soul thirsts for must be sought in *remote spiritual regions*. For the Greek his god and his goddess were *present*; he heard their whispers, as it were, with the ear of the soul. In the time of the *Gothic* architecture the longing soul could only have an inkling of the presence of the divine in upward-pointing forms.

Thus in its soul-mood humanity had become filled with longing, so to speak; it built upon longing, upon seeking, believing that it was possible to be more successful in this seeking through union with the congregation; but it was always convinced that what is recognized as the divine-spiritual is not directly active among men, but conceals itself in mysterious depths. Now if one wished to express what was thus yearningly striven for and sought, it could only be done by linking it in one way or another with something mysterious. The contemporary expression of this whole soul-mood of the people was the temple or, we could also say, the cathedral, which in its proper typical form is the Gothic cathedral. But again, if that which man yearned for as the highest of all mysteries was observed with spiritual vision, then at the very moment when one was about to rise from the earthly to the super-earthly, it would be necessary to pass over from the mere Gothic to something else, which — we might say — did not unite the physical congregation, but *caused to tend toward one central point*, toward a mysterious central point, the whole *spirit of humanity striving together* — or the souls and spirits of humanity striving together.

If you imagine, let us say, the totality of human souls as streaming together from all directions, you have in a certain way united on the earth the humanity of the whole earth, as in a great cathedral, which was not however thought of as Gothic, although it should have the same significance as the Gothic cathedral. In the Middle Ages such things were connected with the Biblical narrative — and if you imagine that the seventy-two disciples (it is not necessary to think of physical history, but of the spirituality which in those times actually did permeate the physical view of the world) — if you imagine, as was believed in accordance with the spirit of the time, that the seventy-two disciples of Christ spread out in all directions and implanted in souls the spirit which was to flow together in the Mystery of Christ: then in all that streamed back again from those in whose souls the disciples had implanted the Christ Spirit, in the rays which come from all directions from all those souls, you have that which the man of the early Middle Ages conceived in the most comprehensive and universal way as *striving toward the Mystery*.

It is not necessary perhaps to draw all seventy-two pillars, but I merely indicate them (see drawing), and you are to imagine that there were seventy-two. From these seventy-two pillars, then, would come the rays which tend from all humanity toward the Mystery of Christ. Enclose the whole with some kind of wall — it would not be Gothic, but I have already told you why one did not stop sharply with the Gothic — enclose it with a wall whose ground-plan is a circle; and if you imagine here the seventy-two pillars, you would have the cathedral which encloses all humanity, so to speak. And if you also imagine it as having an east-west orientation, then naturally you must sense in it an entirely different ground-plan from that of our building, which is constructed from two segments of circles — the feeling toward this ground-plan must be entirely different, and I tried to describe this feeling roughly for you: it would then be supposed that the principal lines of orientation of a building erected according to this ground-plan would have the form of a cross, and that the main aisles would be arranged according to this cross-form (see drawing.)

This is the way the man of the Middle Ages conceived his ideal cathedral. If east is here and west here (see drawing), then we should have north and south here. And then in the north, south, and west there would be three doors, and here in the east would be a sort of lateral high altar, and a kind of altar at each pillar; but here, where the beams of the cross intersect, would have to stand the temple of the temple, the cathedral of the cathedral — a sort of epitome of the whole, a representation in miniature of the whole. We should say in modern speech, which has become abstract: here would stand a little tabernacle, but in the form of the whole.

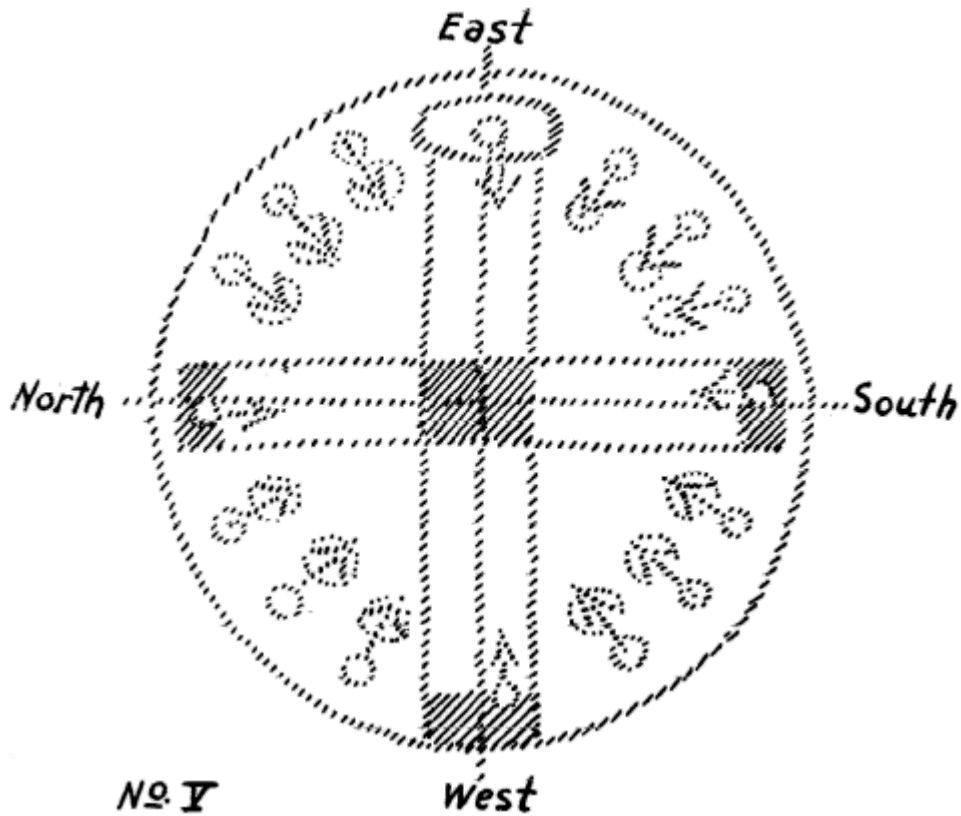


Figure 5

What I have drawn for you here you should imagine in a style of architecture which only approximates the real Gothic, which still includes all sorts of Romanesque forms, but which has throughout the orientation I have indicated. In this I have drawn for you at the same time the sketch of the Grail-temple, as conceived by the man of the Middle Ages, that Grail-temple which was, so to speak, the ideal of construction toward the end of the fourth post-Atlantean epoch, — *a cathedral in which the longings of all humanity orientated to Christ flowed together* — just as in the single cathedral the longings of the members of the congregation flowed together; and just as in the Greek temple the people felt them-selves united even when they were not in it — for the Greek temple demands only that the god or goddess be in it, not the people — in other words, as the Greek people of a certain territory felt that they were united through their temple with their god or goddess. If we wish to speak in accordance with the facts, we can say: When the Greek de-scribed his relation to the temple, he did it in somewhat the following way: When he said in speaking of any person — say Pericles — "*Pericles dwells in this house,*" this was not intended to mean that the man him-self who uttered it had a relation of ownership or any other relation to the house; but he simply realized the

fact of his union with Pericles when he said: "*Pericles dwells in this house.*" With exactly the same shade of feeling the Greek would also have expressed his relation to what was to be deciphered in the style of architecture, thus: "*Athene dwells in this house,*" — it is the abode of the goddess — or, "*Apollo dwells in this house!*"

The congregation of the Middle Ages could not say that with regard to their cathedral, because it was not the house in which the divine-spiritual being dwelt; it was the house which expressed in every single form the gathering-place where the people attuned their souls to the mysteriously divine. Therefore, in what I might call the prototype-temple, at the end of the fourth post-Atlantean period, there stood in the center the temple of the temple, the cathedral of the cathedral; and of the whole one might say: "If anyone enters here, he will be able herein to lift himself to the mysteries of the universe." It was necessary to *enter* the cathedral. Of the Greek temple it was only necessary to say: "That is the house of Apollo; that is the house of Pallas." And at the *central point* in that prototype-temple, where the beams of the cross intersect — at the central point the *Holy Grail* was enshrined, there it was preserved.

You see we must in this way follow the soul-attitude characterizing each historical epoch, otherwise we cannot come to know what really happened. And most of all, we cannot without such observation learn what soul-forces are beginning to bud again in our time.

The Greek temple, then, enclosed the god or goddess, and the people knew that *the gods were present among men*. But the man of the Middle Ages did not feel that; he felt that in a sense the earthly world was deserted by God, forsaken by the Divine. He felt the *longing to find the way back to the gods, or to God*.

Indeed we are today only at the starting point, for only a few centuries have elapsed since the great change in the middle of the 15th century. Most people scarcely notice what is unfolding, but *something is unfolding*; human souls are becoming different; and that must also be different which must now flow anew into the forms in which the consciousness of the time is embodied. These things cannot, of course, be grasped by speculating about them with the reason, with the intellect; they can only be sensed, felt, viewed artistically. Anyone who wishes to put them into abstract concepts does not really understand them; but they can be indicated descriptively in the most various ways. So it must be said that the Greek felt the god or the goddess as his contemporary, as his fellow-citizen. The

man of the Middle Ages had the cathedral which served, not as the dwelling-place for the god, but which was intended to be in a sense the entrance-door to the way which leads to the divine. The people gathered together in the cathedral and their yearning arose, as it were, out of the group-soul of humanity. That is the characteristic quality, that this entire humanity of the Middle Ages had something which can be understood only in the light of the group-soul. Up to the middle of the 15th century the individual human being was not of such importance as he has become since that time. Since then the most essential characteristic in the human being is the *striving to be an individuality*, the striving to concentrate individual forces of personality, to find a central point *within himself*.

Neither can that be understood which is arising in the exceedingly varied social demands of our time unless the *dominion of the individual spirit in each single human being* is discerned, the desire of each individual to stand upon the foundation of his own being.

Because of this there is something that becomes especially important for man at this time; it began about the middle of the 15th century and will not come to a close until about the third millennium — something of very special importance for this time set in then. You see it is quite indefinite to say that each man strives for his particular individuality. The group-spirit, even when it comprises only small groups, is much more comprehensible than is that to which each single human being aspires out of the well-spring of his own individuality. For this reason it is particularly important for the people of modern times to understand what may be called *seeking balance between opposite poles*.

The one wishes to soar beyond the head, as it were. All that causes a man to be a dreamer, a visionary, a deluded person, all that fills him with indefinite mystical impulses toward some indefinite infinity — even if he is pantheist or theist or whatever else, and there are many of the kind today — that is the one pole. The other is that of prosiness, aridity — expressed trivially, but not with unreality as concerns the spirit of the present time, certainly not — the pole of philistinism, of narrow-mindedness, the pole which draws us down to earth into materialism. These two poles of force are in man, and between them stands the essential being of man, seeking equilibrium. In how many ways can equilibrium be sought? You can represent that to yourselves by the illustration of the scales (see drawing). In how many ways can one seek balance between two poles pulling in opposite directions?

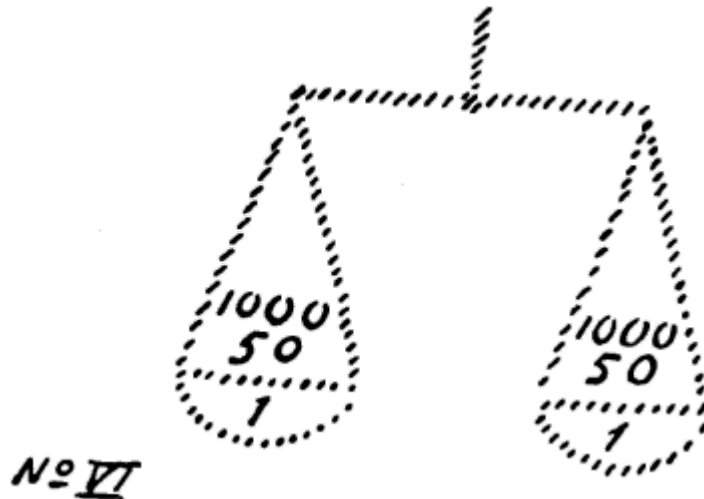


Figure 6

If here on one side of the scales there are 50 grams or 50 kilograms, and also here on the other side, they balance, do they not? But if here on one side there is one kilogram and one kilogram on the other, they still balance; and if there are a thousand here and a thousand here, they balance! You can seek equilibrium in innumerable ways. That corresponds to the infinite number of ways of being an individual human being. Hence for people of the present it is very essential to comprehend that their nature consists in the struggle for balance between two opposite poles. And the indefiniteness of the effort for balance is that very indefiniteness of which I spoke before. Therefore the man of the present time will succeed in his seeking only if he unites this seeking with the struggle for balance.

Just as it was important for the Greek to feel: In the commonwealth to which I belong Pallas rules, Apollo rules; that is the abode of Pallas, that, of Apollo; just as it was important for the people of the Middle Ages to know: There is a place of assembly which enshrines something — be it relics of a saint, or even the Holy Grail — there is a place of assembly, in which, when the people gather, the soul-yearnings can flow toward indefinite mysterious things, — so is it important for modern man to develop a feeling for what he is as an individual human being; that as an individual human being he is a *seeker for equilibrium*, between two opposite, two polaric forces. From the point of view of the soul it may be expressed thus: On one side that force holds sway through which man wishes to soar beyond his head, as it were, the ecstatic, the fantastic, that which would develop rapture and takes no account of the real conditions of existence. As from the point of view of the soul we can characterize one extreme in this way, and the

other by saying that it pulls toward the earth, toward the insipid, the barren, the aridly intellectual, and so on, and so on, we can also say, speaking physiologically, that the one pole is everything that heats the blood, and if heated too much it becomes feverish. Expressed physiologically, the one pole is everything connected with the forces of the blood; the other pole all that is connected with the ossifying, the petrifying of man, which if it goes to the physiological extreme would lead to sclerosis in most varied forms. And man must also maintain his balance physiologically between sclerosis and fever as the terminal poles. Life consists fundamentally in seeking the balance between the insipid, the and the philistine, and the ecstatically fantastic. We are *healthy in soul* when we find this balance. We are *healthy in body* when we can live in balance between fever and sclerosis, ossification. That can be done in an endless number of ways, and in it the individuality can express itself.

It is in this sense that modern man must come to understand, through his feeling, the ancient Apollo-saying: "Know thou thyself." But "Know thou thyself" not in some abstract way; "Know thou thyself in the struggle for balance." Therefore we have to set up at the east end of the building what is intended to cause the human being to feel this struggle for balance. That is to be represented in the plastic wood group mentioned yesterday, with the Christ-Form as the central figure — the Christ-Form which we have tried to fashion in such a way that one may imagine: It was really thus that the Christ went about in Palestine at the beginning of our era in the man Jesus of Nazareth. The conventional pictures of the bearded Christ are actually only creations of the fifth or sixth century, and they are really not in any way true portraits, if I may use the expression. That has been attempted here: to produce a true portrait of Christ, Who is to be at the same time the Representative of the seeking human being, the human being striving for balance.

You will see then in this group two figures (see drawing No. VII): here the falling Lucifer, here the upward-striving Lucifer; here below, connected with Lucifer, as it were, an Ahrimanic form, and here a second Ahrimanic form. The Representative of Humanity is placed between the Ahrimanic form — the philistine, the insipid, the aridly materialistic — and the Lucifer-form — the ecstatic, the fantastic; between the Ahriman-figure — all that leads to petrification, to sclerosis — and the Lucifer-figure — the representation of all that leads man feverishly out beyond the limit of what his health can endure.

After we have placed in the center, as it were, the Gothic cathedral, which encloses no image, but either the relics of saints or even the Holy Grail — that is, something no longer directly connected with beings living on earth — then we come back again, I might say, to the idea of the building as *enclosing* something, but now enclosing the *being of man in his struggle for balance*.

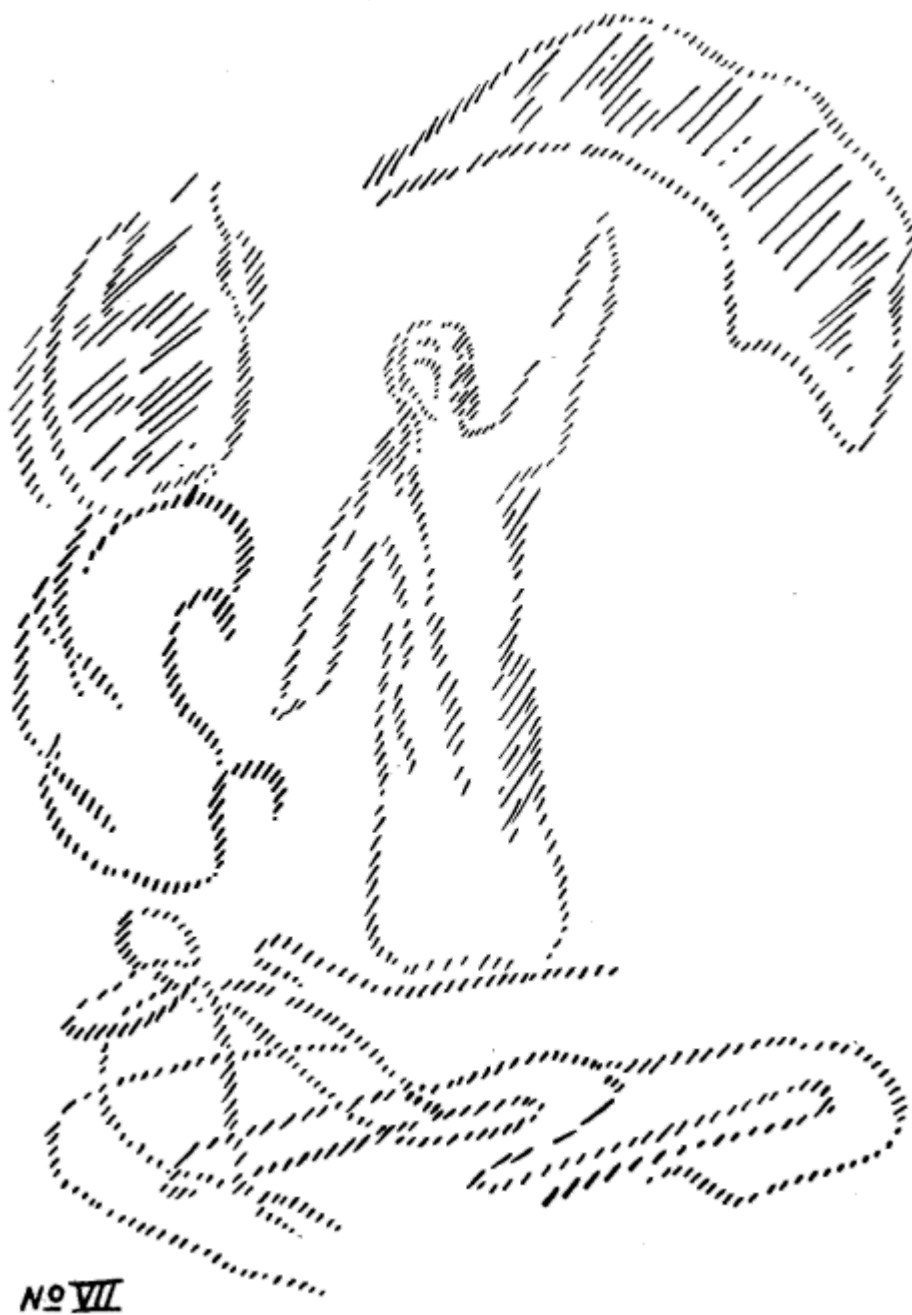


Figure 7

If destiny permits it, and this building can some day be completed, he who sits within it will have directly before him, while he is looking upon the Being who gives meaning to the earth evolution, something which suggests to him to say: the *Christ-Being*. But this is to be felt in an artistic way. It must not be merely reasoned about speculatively as being the Christ, but it must be *felt*. The whole is artistically conceived, and what comes to artistic expression in the forms is the most important part. But it is nevertheless intended to suggest to the human being through feeling — I might say to the exclusion of the intellect, which is to be merely the ladder to feeling — that he is to look toward the east of the building and be able to say: "That art thou." But now, not an abstract definition of man, for balance can be effected in innumerable ways. Not an image of a god is enclosed, for it is true for Christians also that they are to make no image of a God — not an image of a god is enclosed, but that is enclosed which has developed of the qualities of the human group-soul into the *individual force-entity of each separate human being*. And the working and weaving of the individual impulse is taken into account in these forms. —

If you do not reason about what I have now said (that of course, is the favorite method today), but if you penetrate it with the feeling, and realize that nothing is symbolized or thought out with the intellect, but that first of all the effort has at least been made to let it flow out in artistic forms: then you have the basic principle which is intended to be expressed in this Goetheanum Building; but you have also the nature of the connection between that which purposes to be anthroposophically-orientated spiritual science and the inner spirit of human evolution. In our time one cannot reach this anthroposophical spiritual science except by way of the great modern demands of humanity's present and immediate future. We must really learn to speak in a different way about that which is actually *bearing mankind toward the future*.

There are now many kinds of secret societies which take pride in themselves, but which are really nothing more nor less than mere custodians of that which is still being projected into the present out of the time *before* the great turning point in the 15th century, — a fact which frequently comes to expression even quite externally. We have also repeatedly been able to experience that such aspiration has penetrated our ranks. How very often, when some one wishes to express the special merit of a so-called occult movement is reference made to its age. We had among us at one time, for example, a man who wished to play himself up a little bit as a Rosicrucian; and when he said something, which was generally his most personal, trivial opinion, he almost never failed to add: "as the old

Rosicrucians used to say;" and he never omitted the "old." If one looks about among many of the secret societies of the present time, it will be seen everywhere that the value of the things advocated consists in being able to point to their venerable age. Some go back to Rosicrucianism — in their own way of course — others naturally go back much farther still, especially to Egypt; and if anybody today can retail Egyptian temple wisdom, a large proportion of humanity will be taken in at the mere announcement.

Most of our friends know that we have continually emphasized that this anthroposophically-orientated spiritual movement has nothing to do with this straining after the ancient. Its endeavor concerns that which is now being revealed directly from the spiritual world to this physical world. Therefore about many things it must speak differently from some secret societies, — which are to be taken seriously, but which are nevertheless building upon antiquated foundations, and are at present still playing a prominent role in human events. When you hear such people talking (indeed, sometimes in this day their own inclinations make them speak), people who are initiated into certain mysteries of present day secret societies, you will notice that they speak chiefly of three things. First, of that which the real seeker for the spiritual world experiences, and which he cannot possibly avoid when he first crosses the threshold of that world, namely, the meeting with powers which are the actual enemies of mankind, the real essential opponents of the physical human being living here on earth as he is intended by the Divine Powers to live. That is to say, these people know that what is concealed from the ordinary human consciousness is permeated by those powers which may be called with some justice the essential causes of illness and death, but with whom also is interwoven all that is connected with human birth. And you can hear from the people who know something of these things that one ought to be silent about them, because what lies beyond the normal consciousness cannot be revealed to profane humanity. (In speaking thus they really mean the immature souls who have not made them-selves strong enough for it — and indeed that includes a large proportion of humanity.)

The second experience is, that at the moment in which man learns to recognize the truth (it can be recognized only when one has knowledge of super-sensible mysteries) he learns to recognize also to what extent everything that can be affirmed merely through sense observation of the environing world is illusion, deception, — indeed, the more exact the external research, the greater the illusion. This loss of the solid ground

from under his feet which the man of our time especially needs, so that he can say, "That is a fact, for I have seen it" — this loss takes place with the crossing of the threshold.

The third is, that at the moment we begin to do the work of a human being — whenever *human deeds* are accomplished, whether working with tools or cultivating the ground, but especially when we perform human deeds which we weave into the web of the social organism — when we work in this way we do something which not only concerns us as men, but which is related to the whole universe. Of course man believes to-day that when he builds a locomotive, or makes a telephone or a lightning conductor or a table, or when he cures the sick, or even fails to cure, or does anything at all, — he believes that such things play a role only with-in human evolution on earth. No; it is a deep truth which I have indicated in my mystery-drama, *The Portal of Initiation*, that when some-thing occurs here, there are resultant events in the whole universe (call to mind the scene between Strader and Capesius). The people who today know something of these things begin with these three experiences, which are, however, preserved in these societies in the form they had be-fore the middle of the 15th century — and in this form they are often greatly misunderstood. Such people begin with these things, referring first to the mysteries of illness, health, birth, and death; second, to the mystery of the great illusion in the sense world; third, to the mystery of the universal significance of human work; and they speak *in a certain way*. What is said about all these things, and especially about these most important things, must be different from the past. I should like to give you an idea how differently such things were spoken of in the *past*, how what was said flowed out into the general consciousness, how it permeated the ordinary natural science, the ordinary social thinking, and so on; and how they must be spoken of in the *future*, whenever the truth is really spoken; how what then comes from the secret sources of the striving for knowledge must flow out into the external knowledge of nature, into the external social view, and so forth.

Of this mighty metamorphosis — which should be understood today, because men must awake fully from the group consciousness to the individual consciousness — of this great metamorphosis, this historic metamorphosis, I should like to speak to you further.



3

Historical Occurrences of the Last Century

14 December 1919, Dornach

Today I should like to discuss a few things, speaking at times more generally, in connection with what was said yesterday and the day before. From those two lectures you will have been able to learn that spiritual science, as conceived here, is to be born, in our time and for the very near future, out of the deepest and most serious demands of human evolution. I have often mentioned that we are not concerned here with those ideals which originate in man's subjective nature, but rather with what is being deciphered from the spiritual history of the evolution of humanity; and from this spiritual history one can clearly see that the *science of initiation*, that is, the science which brings over its knowledge from beyond the threshold of the spiritual world, is absolutely necessary for the further evolution of mankind. But all that can be said today concerning a genuine knowledge of the spiritual world is opposed by those powers which stand for the *antiquated*; and the opposition of the people in whom these powers live must be overcome. The statement of the necessity for a complete *transformation of learning and thinking* with regard to the most important affairs of human evolution must be seriously and basically understood. Therefore I should like to ask you to attach special importance to the idea that it must be our purpose to overcome everything of a merely sectarian nature, still rampant even in the anthroposophical mind, and really to see the significance for the world and for humanity of anthroposophically-orientated spiritual science.

People today are still far from being awakened out of the sleep in which they were enfolded by that development which I have already described to you in certain of its fundamental characteristics, and which began about the middle of the 15th century. Certainly what was incorporated in the evolution of humanity during that time: namely, external physical science with its great triumphs, the materialistic conception of cosmic laws, and with it the mistaken social ideas so clearly evident today — all that has from this direction enveloped humanity in sleep continues to have a powerful effect; and a fruitful advance will not be possible unless mankind is shaken out of this sleep. Let us never forget that the knowledge of the spiritual has powerful enemies in all those who wish to be assured first of

all — just from pure mental indolence — of the continuance of what they have been accustomed to think. We cannot say that we should take no notice when on the part of such people hostility and opposition to spiritual science as it is purposed here become more and more determined as this spiritual science becomes better known. To be sure, anyone might believe that such things should be allowed to pass entirely unnoticed; but that would be an utterly wrong view in our present time. We do not fail to notice noxious insects which approach us; we try to get rid of them, and often this must be done in ungentle ways. The mode of procedure must be decided in each individual case.

These things must also be understood out of the necessities of the time. Therefore it must be viewed with very special satisfaction in these times of ours, which are becoming ever more difficult, if there are nevertheless people who are possessed of sufficient power of will to stand up for our cause. But there are alas! still far too few people who fully comprehend the seriousness of what is now at stake in the evolution of humanity. On the one hand, there are those who do not intend to stir out of long-accustomed habits — not for any spiritual reasons, but from mental laziness and other such considerations; and on the other hand, there must be those who strongly oppose with their whole being whatever is ripe for destruction. We must not suppose that any sort of indulgence toward what is ready to perish can be allowed to hinder us today. In the last five or six years people could have learned that things belonging to the old order lead *ad absurdum*; and those who have not yet learned it will have abundant opportunity to do so in the immediate future. There must be in us the *zeal* for that which is to be implanted as something new in the evolution of mankind.

That a violent hatred would be manifest toward that anthroposophical spiritual science which has now been carried on in Europe for two decades, could be foreseen — anyone could foresee it who knew and knows that what we call anthroposophical spiritual science is intimately connected with the powers which must be summoned in the present and the very near future for the progress of humanity. This spiritual science must not be confused with sleepy-headedness, with that disposition to create for oneself a little sensual soul-enjoyment by means of spiritual ideas and concepts. We stand at the beginning. Against us rages the battle of the will to exterminate. In so far as we have understood the true impulse of our spiritual science, we have never intended to act aggressively; but we must not neglect whatever is necessary to meet the opposition of the aggressive element which will appear more and more from without. Here our courage

must not give way; we must not try to proceed through indolence. It will not be easy to infuse truth into human evolution, and indulgence is positively not that with which to gird ourselves. Matters have come to a pretty pass indeed, as the recent events on the occasion of a lecture by Professor T. in Reutlingen prove. If the gentlemen who are the official representatives of Christianity are baffled, then they are ready to say, as a city clergyman did in the discussion: "Here Christ is mistaken!" Of course Professor T. is not mistaken; but if what he has to say does not agree with the revealed text of the Bible, then Christ is wrong, not Professor T. That is characteristic of the disposition we meet today, only people will not see it because it is uncomfortable to see it; and it could be found in all fields if only people were inclined to look for it.

For those who are able to see the relations in life, it is clear that the European calamity of recent years, although it has apparently played an external role, is inwardly connected with what people have become accustomed to think, and concerning which — please pardon the somewhat trivial, banal expression — concerning which people are so fond of saying: What glorious progress we have made! and smack their lips with satisfaction.

What is necessary is *to become inwardly objective*. Under the influence of modern culture people have lost objectivity. The personal is everywhere in evidence. When sometime the history of the last five or six years is written, that will be possible only from spiritual-scientific foundations, and then the chapters of this world history will show how enormously the personal element has influenced the great world-historical events. I said that it will be impossible without spiritual-scientific foundations to speak of the events of the last five or six years; and in support of this I need only refer to what I have frequently indicated here. Of the thirty or forty men in prominent leading positions who participated in 1914 in what is called the outbreak of the World War — people love inexact language nowadays, because it is adapted to cover up the truth; it was neither an "outbreak," but something quite different, nor was it a "world war"; it was something entirely different, which will not come to an end for a long time yet — of the thirty or forty men who participated at that time, a large proportion were not entirely *compos mentis*, the forces of soul and spirit were not all functioning, and where the consciousness is clouded, there are doors by which the Ahrimanic powers have especially easy access to human resolutions and human intentions.

The Ahrimanic powers played an essential role in the beginning of those events of 1914. Even today anyone who is so minded could easily perceive, from following up events in a purely external way, how necessary it is to infuse spiritual knowledge into the evolution of humanity. But man is far removed by habits of thought, perception, and feeling from observing such things with absolute seriousness. There is on the one hand the fact — and more than that, the imminent fact — that the time is ripe for people to appear who are able to bring suitable and capable souls to meet those spiritual impulses which have been entering our physical world since the last third of the 19th century. Side by side with the fact that we have sailed into a materialistic time, there exists the other fact that the doors between the spiritual world and ours stand open since the last third of the 19th century, and that people who open their souls and minds to spiritual impulses can have relations with the spiritual world. To be sure, the number may be small of those whose consciousness is touched today by the spiritual world; but it is a fact that this spiritual world makes itself felt in many a human spirit. We may say that the next ten, twenty, thirty years, up to the middle of the century, will be years in which more and more people will have learned to listen to the still small voice, and so open their inner being to the impulses of the spiritual world which would enter.

Those people today who receive such impulses from the spiritual world, who know about the truths and the knowledge that must enter into human evolution, know the following also: If what we call *science*, and especially what we call *art*, is not fructified by the science of initiation practiced by such people, humanity will face a quick decline, a fearful decline. *Let the kind of teaching that prevails in our universities continue for another three decades, let social questions be treated as they are now for thirty years more, and you will have a devastated Europe.* You can set up ideals in this field or that as much as you please, you can talk yourselves hoarse about individual demands coming from one group or another, you can talk in the belief that with such urgent demands something will be done for humanity's future — it will all be in vain unless the transformation comes from the *depths* of human souls, *from the thought of the relation of this world to the spiritual world.* If in this regard there is not a change in learning, a change in thinking, then the moral deluge will overwhelm Europe!

The important thing is to realize what it would actually mean if a number of persons who look deeply into the knowledge from beyond the threshold were obliged to recognize that the confusion, the materialistic tendencies, the social errors, are going on and on — and people do not wish to alter

their thinking and learning — it is important to realize what it would signify if these few persons possessing the science of initiation were compelled to see that humanity is going downwards because of sheer laziness in thinking and feeling. You should not be deceived as to the number of motives there are today for such a state of affairs in the so-called civilized world. There are many ruling motives — *for is it not really natural to expect the humanity of our time in its pride to reject everything coming from the direction of the science of initiation?* Humanity is so immensely clever in every single one of its individuals! humanity is so inclined to sneer at what can be won only by working upon the development of one's own soul. Humanity believes that without learning anything it knows everything. In neither the natural nor the social realm can the problems of the present time be solved without a fructifying of human thinking, feeling, and willing from the spiritual world. To many people today it seems positively like a creation of fancy when we speak of this science of *initiation*, or of anything like the *threshold of the spiritual world*. It is true, not everyone today can cross the threshold to the spiritual world; but no one would be prevented from perceiving the truth of what is said by those who have crossed that threshold. It is false reasoning when it is said again and again by one or another: How am I to know that what is presented by anyone as the science of initiation is correct, when I cannot myself see into the spiritual world? That is false reasoning. Common sense which is not led astray by the erroneous ideas of our time in the natural or the social sphere can decide of itself whether the element of truth rules in what anyone says. If someone speaks of spiritual worlds, you must take account of everything: the *manner* of speaking, the *seriousness* with which things are treated, the *logic* which is developed, and so on, and then it will be possible to judge whether what is presented as information about the spiritual world is charlatanism, or whether it has foundation. Anyone can decide this; and no one is hindered from making fruitful in the natural and social realms that which is brought over from the well-spring of spiritual life by those who have the right to speak of the principle of initiation.

Those forces of humanity's evolution which have so far guided man unconsciously, so that he has been able to advance, are becoming exhausted, and will be entirely exhausted by the middle of the century, approximately speaking. *The new forces must be drawn from depths of souls*; and man must come to understand that in the depths of his soul he is connected with the roots of spiritual life.

As to crossing over the threshold, naturally not everyone today can accomplish that, for the human being has become accustomed in the course of recent centuries to consider everything he encounters as taking place in time. But the first experience beyond the threshold is of a world in which time as we understand it has no significance. The time concept must be abandoned. Hence it is advantageous for people who wish to prepare themselves for an understanding of the spiritual world, to begin this training at least, by trying to picture backwards — let us say a drama, which outwardly starts, of course, with the first act and proceeds to the fifth — to picture it as starting at the end and going back to the beginning of the first act; to imagine and feel a melody, not in the succession in which it is played, but letting the tones run backward; to picture the daily experience, not from morning to evening, but running backward from evening to morning. In this way we seriously accustom our thinking to the *canceling of time*. In our daily life we are accustomed to picture the second event as occurring after the first, the third following the second, the fourth following the third, and so on; and our thinking is always an image of external happenings. If now we begin to think sometimes from the end toward the beginning, to feel from the end toward the beginning, we impose an inner compulsion upon ourselves, and this compulsion is good, for it forces us out of the ordinary sense world. Time runs one, two, three, four, and so on, in this direction. If we reverse our thinking, so that it goes from evening to morning, thus: instead of from morning to evening, then we are thinking against time. We cancel time.

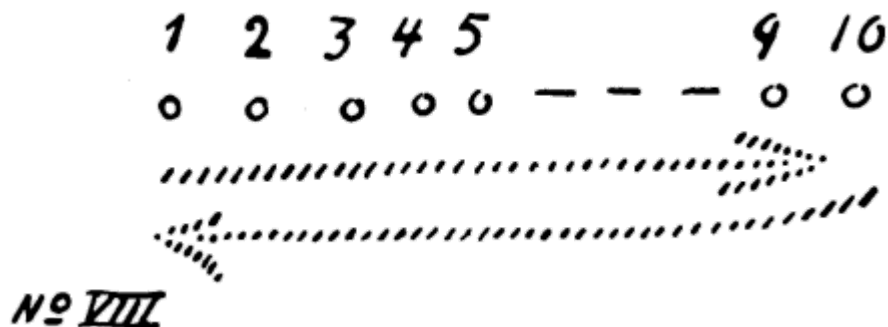


Figure 8

If we are able to continue such thinking, going back in our life as far as we possibly can, we shall have gained very much; for only one who escapes from time can enter into the spiritual world.

We say that man is provided with physical body, etheric body, astral body, and ego. At first only the physical and etheric bodies come into consideration for the physical sense world. The etheric body still takes part in time in earth events; the astral body can be found only when we are freed from time. The physical body is in space; the ego, the true ego, can be found only when we have escaped from space, for the world in which the true ego lives is spaceless.

So there are two conditions belonging to the earliest experiences namely, that we become free from time and free from space when we cross the threshold to the spiritual world. I have often referred previously to various ways of attaining concepts which disregard space, when I have called your attention to the dimensions — not in such a childish way as four-dimensional space and the like are often spoken of by spiritists, but in a more serious way. Just consider how much of the content of your consciousness is lost when you are no longer in space and time. Your life is completely adjusted to space and time. The soul life of man, as well, is entirely accommodated to space and time. If you enter a world to which you are not adapted, the lack of adaptation implies sensations of pain and suffering; so that the first entrance into the spiritual world is not won without the vanquishing of pain and suffering. People fail to realize this, or else they shrink back in terror from the spiritual world because they are unwilling to enter the kind of abysmal world in which space and time do not exist.

When I thus call before your mental vision this first experience of life beyond the threshold, you become vividly conscious that there are indeed few people today who have sufficient inner courage to venture themselves, as it were, into the *bottomless* and *timeless* in actual experience. Certain people, however, are bound by their destiny to cross over the threshold; and without the wisdom which can be brought over from beyond the threshold no further progress is possible. From this you will feel what is necessary. *It is necessary that what we call confidence of one man in another should be increased in the future. It would be a fundamental social virtue.* In our time of social demands this virtue is one of the rarest, for although people demand that everyone shall serve the community, no one has confidence in another; the most unsocial instincts hold sway. In order that the general education of humanity shall progress in such a way that human beings may grow into the spiritual world, it will be necessary that those who may rightly speak of the science of initiation be given confidence — not confidence arising from blind belief in authority, but from

common sense; for what is brought as information from beyond the threshold can always be comprehended if only common sense is really employed.

And then from the viewpoint of common sense, and keeping that in mind on the one hand, we must, on the other, constantly direct our attention to what confronts us today. Although not everyone says thus openly, "There the Christ is mistaken" yet the logic of the present life is characterized by this kind of talk. And when people say they cannot distinguish between what is announced with inner logic from the spiritual worlds and what the university professors say — then common sense is not in evidence, or at least there is no intention to use it. When anyone declares that Christ is mistaken, surely from his common sense a man can say without further ado that such a person can no longer be taken into account from this point of view.

We have lost a real *science of the soul*. We no longer have any; and I have pointed out — only recently in public lectures in Basel (On November 10, 1919: *The Spirit as Guide through the Sensible and Supersensible Worlds*.) and in other places — why we have lost the science of the soul. The science of the spirit became uncomfortable to the Catholic Church as early as the 9th century; and, as I have frequently explained, the spirit was abolished at the Eighth General Ecumenical Council at Constantinople in 869. At that time the dogma was announced that, if a man is a true Christian, he must not think that he consists of body, soul, and spirit, but only of body and soul, and that the soul has spiritual qualities. Psychology still teaches that today, and believes that such teaching represents the point of view of unprejudiced science; but it is only repeating the dogma of 869. Even all that refers to the soul was monopolized by the confessional churches in the form of belief, in the form of creed or dogma. All knowledge pertaining to the soul that should come from man himself was monopolized by the denominational societies; and only external nature was left as the object of real knowledge, of *free* knowledge. No wonder we have today no science of the soul, for secular scholarship has devoted itself entirely to the science of nature, since the science of the soul was monopolized and the science of the spirit abolished. So we have no science of the soul. If we build upon the science that is the fashion today, we can make no progress; for if we build upon the word-psychology of our time (it really is not much more than that), we cannot come to a real understanding of what takes place in the soul. You know from my statement in *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and Its Attainment* that upon crossing over the threshold to the spiritual world, thinking, feeling, and

willing become separated in the consciousness. In the ordinary present-day consciousness thinking, feeling, and willing form a sort of chaos; they are intermingled. At the moment when the threshold to the spiritual world is crossed, at the moment when one sets about acquiring the science of initiation through experience, thinking, feeling, and willing become independent powers in the consciousness. They become independent, and then one learns to know them.

Only then does one learn really to distinguish thinking from feeling and from willing.

Especially does one learn to distinguish thinking from willing. If we consider the thinking which is active in us as human beings, not according to its content, but as a force — if we consider the *thinking force* in us, we find that the very force with which we think is something like a shining into our life of that which we experienced in the spiritual world before birth, or before conception. And the *will-nature* in man is something embryonic, something germinal, which will come to complete development only *post mortem* after death. So we may say: If this (see diagram) is the course of human life between birth and death, then thinking, as it exists in man within the course of this human life, is only an appearance, for its true being lies in the time before birth, or before conception; and willing is only a germ, for what develops from this germ does so only after death.

Thinking and willing in human nature are fundamentally different.

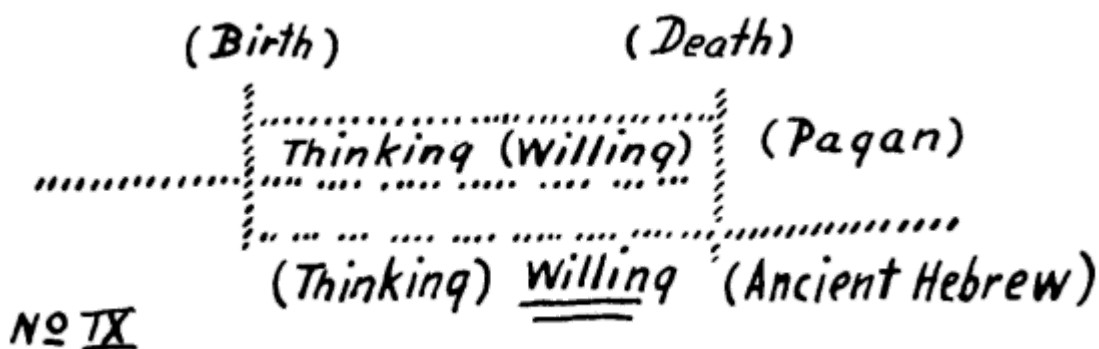


Figure 9

If now someone appears possessing the logic of our time, which tends to classify and arrange everything systematically, he will say: "We have been told today that thinking is the force which comes from the life before birth, and that willing is the force which points to the life after death." Now one

has defined; by definition one has nicely drawn the line between thinking and willing. But nothing is accomplished by definitions, though their insufficiency is generally not observed. Many definitions, especially those which are considered scientific, appear very clever; but they all have a hitch somewhere — which recalls that definition once given in ancient Greece to the question, What is man? "Man is a two-legged creature without feathers." Whereupon the next day a pupil brought a plucked fowl and said: "This is a man, for it is a two-legged creature without feathers." Things are not so simple that they can be treated thus with the ordinary intellectual tools. You see we can say quite well, we must maintain, that what we experience as thinking has its true reality before birth, and that only something like a reflected image of it shines into us. Here a certain difficulty presents itself, but you will overcome it with a little effort of thought.

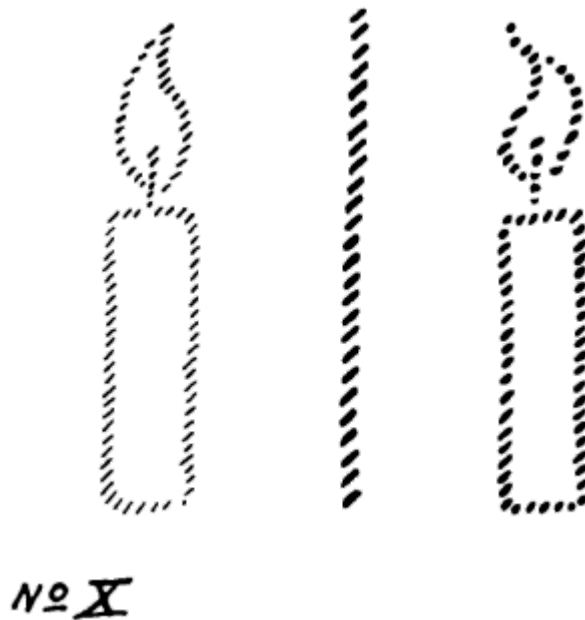


Figure 10

If you have a mirror here, and here an object — for example, a candle — you have here a reflected image. You can distinguish the image from the object, and will not take the one for the other. If in some way — let us say with a screen — you have the candle itself covered, you will see only the reflection in the mirror. The reflected image will do whatever the candle does, and so from the reflection you will be able to see what it does. You are accustomed to think spatially, and you can therefore easily imagine how the reflection of the candle is related to the reality. But the thinking force in us, *as force*, is a *reflected image*, and its *reality is in the life before*

birth. The real force whose image we employ in this life, is in the life before birth. Therefore the principle of human consciousness which results from observing one's own consciousness is: I think, therefore I am *not, cogito ergo non sum!* That is based on the principle which must be grasped: that in thinking something of the nature of an image exists, and that the force of thinking belongs to the life before birth. Modern development began by setting up the opposite as the basic axiom of philosophy: *Cogito ergo sum*: I think, therefore I am, which is nonsense. You see what tests modern humanity must go through; but we are at the crossroads, and we must learn to transform our thinking about the basic factors of the soul life.

Having thus in a certain way traced back thinking to its essential being, we might now be able to state something similar with regard to *willing*. When we regard the will-force between birth and death and what it becomes after death, we must conceive willing, not as reality and reflection, but as *germ* and *completion*. This provision: namely, that we have the image of thinking and the embryo of willing, alone gives us the possibility of *The Riddle of Man*, and *Riddles of the Soul*, as well as in the second edition of *Philosophy of Spiritual Activity* where these things are also treated philosophically.

But here is a peculiar fact from which you must see how little the indolent, everyday thinking suffices for entering into reality. We have grasped the essential nature of thinking; but when we do grasp this essential nature of thinking, we must say at the same time: This thinking is not mere thinking, but in it is also a force of willing. With the very inner being with which we think we will at the same time. It is principally thinking and has an undertone of willing; but in the same way, our willing has an undertone of thinking. We have in fact two different things in us: something which is chiefly thinking but has an undertone of willing; and something which is chiefly willing but has an undertone of thinking (see Diagram No. IX). When you consider the reality, you will not be able to form pure concepts which can be arranged systematically, but in a certain sense the one is always at the same time the other. Only when you come to an understanding of these things do you begin to perceive certain relations of man with worlds which are beyond those seen with our eyes and heard with our ears, but within which we live no less than in the world of the senses. We cannot say that other worlds than the sense world do not concern us; we are in their midst. We must realize that, while we are walking about here on this earth, we walk through the spiritual worlds exactly as we walk through the physical air.

Relations — I say — with the spiritual worlds result when one sees into these delicate details of human soul-life. Through that which is more thinking and has only an undertone of willing we are connected with a certain kind of spiritual existence of the spiritual worlds. And with another kind of spiritual worlds we are connected through that which is more willing and less thinking. That has indeed its deeper significance; for what we discover in this way manifests itself in human life; and the differentiations which exist in the world arise because the one or the other force of human nature is always developed more in one direction or another. Those forces, for example, existing in the willing which has an undertone of thinking were pre-eminently developed in the *ancient Hebraic culture*; and those forces of the human soul-being which are based essentially in the thinking which has an undertone of willing were developed in what is called the *ancient pagan culture*. At the present time we have the two streams flowing side by side; we have in the civilized world the two streams intermingling: one, a continuation of ancient paganism, in the *conception of nature*; and the other, which comes from the ancient Hebrews, we have in the *social viewpoint of the present*, in our ethical and religious concepts.

This dualism also exists today in the individual human being himself. On the one hand, man worships nature in a pagan fashion; and on the other — without finding a proper basis in nature, except that he carries over his habits of thought into so-called social science, or sociology — he ponders on the social life, even the ethical life. And when he philosophizes, he says that in one realm he finds freedom and in the other natural necessity, between which there is supposed to be no bridge; he finds himself in a ghostlike region between the two, and the confusion is terrible.

But in many respects this confusion is the content of the life of the present time, of the life that is perishing. What is lacking in this present life of ours? We have a conception of nature: it is merely the continuation of ancient paganism; we have a moral social conception: it is merely the continuation of the Old Testament. Christianity was an episode which was at first historically understood; but today it has fallen through the sieve of human culture, so to speak. In reality, Christianity *does not exist*; for with the people who frequently speak of Christ you can do as I recommended in connection with Harnack's *Nature of Christianity*. Wherever Harnack writes "Christ" in this book, you can strike out the word "Christ", and substitute "God the Father," or you can even replace it with a merely pantheistic "God," or anything of the kind, and generally speaking there will be no essential contradiction. Where there is contradiction, he is talking

nonsense, with predicates unrelated to subjects. All these things must be said today, for it must be thoroughly understood here what the content of the future consciousness must be.

Likewise, you see what the present theory of evolution is: that man has evolved from lower beings, and so forth; that these lower beings have developed themselves up to him. Certainly you need only to refer to my *Occult Science* to see that in one sense that must be said even by us. The fact is, however, that when we consider the human head, we see that this human head as we carry it on our shoulders today is already devolving, not evolving. If our entire organism (please understand me clearly now) — if our entire organism were to have the same organization as our head, we should have to be continually dying. We live only by means of the vital force in the rest of our organism, which is constantly being sent up into the head. The forces through which we finally die have their being in our head — *are in* our head. The head is an organism that is perpetually perishing; it is in retrogression. For this reason that which pertains to soul and spirit can attain its development in the head. If you represent the head in a sketch, you must do it thus: its ascending evolution has already passed over into a retrograde process; here is a void (see illus.).

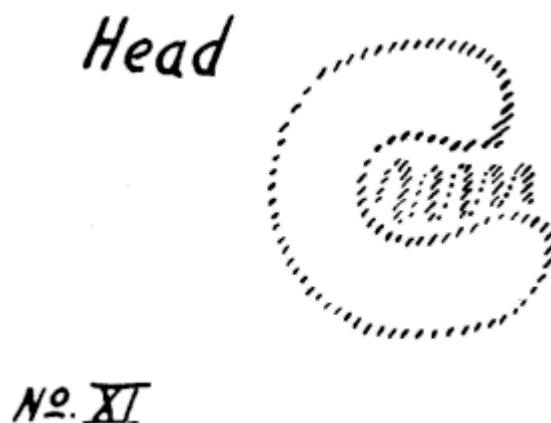


Figure 11

Into this void, into what is being continuously destroyed, the soul and spirit enter. That is literally true: it is owing to our head that we have soul and spirit, because our head is already perishing. That is to say, in our head we are perpetually dying; and the undertone of willing, which is a

quality of our thinking, lies in our head; but this undertone of willing is a continuous stimulus, a constant impulse to dying, to the overcoming of matter.

Now when we die, this willing really begins; and when our body is given over to the earth, that which played its role in our head between birth and death is carried on through our whole body, even physically in the earth-body. You carry your head on your shoulders, my dear friends, and in it the process goes on automatically which is accomplished when you are committed to the earth by fire or decomposition, only in life this process is constantly being revived, and hence obstructed, by what is sent up from the rest of the organism. After death the same process continues which you carry on in your body between birth and death. It is continued in the earth: the earth thinks according to the same principles as the thinking you do with your human head, owing to the fact that your body becomes decomposed in the earth, that corpses are put into it. When we pass through the gate of death, we carry into the physical earth, by means of our decomposing corpse, the process which we seize for ourselves during our life between birth and death. That is a truth of modern science, and people must know such truths in the future. The science of the present time is childish regarding such things, for it does not even think about them, investigate them.

And inversely, what we have in our head as evolution through destruction, is the continuation of that which existed before birth, or before conception. The destruction begins only with birth, for only then do we have a head — before that there was no destruction. Here we are really touching the edge of an extraordinarily significant mystery of cosmic existence. What exists in our head, through which we come into relation with other people and with external nature, is the continuation of something which exists in the spiritual worlds before we enter into the physical body. If anyone understands that perfectly, then he comes to comprehend *how* forces play into this physical world from the spiritual worlds. That is most clearly seen when these things are considered concretely, rather than in the abstract. Let me give an example:

In 1832 Goethe died. The period belonging to the first generation after his death, that is, up to 1865, was not such that many forces from his spirit influenced it. (This is merely a representative example; of course the forces of other men are active also.) Thus, up to the year 1865 anyone who directed his attention to Goethe's soul would have noticed little influence coming from his forces to the earth. Then after the first thirty-three years

the forces began to come from him out of the spiritual worlds into our earth evolution; and they became stronger and stronger up to the year 1898. If we follow it further, beyond this period, we can say: The first period of influence of Goethe's super-sensible forces upon our earth civilization is, then, 1865 to 1898 (as I have said, up to 1865 it was insignificant, then it began). After thirty-three years we have in 1931 the end of a further period, which would be the second; and 1964 would be the end of the third period.

1832
 1865 } — I
 1898 } — II
 1931 — II
 1964

N^o. XVII

Figure 12

From such an example it can really be learned how relatively soon after a man has passed through the gate of death the forces which he then develops take part in what is going on here on earth. Only we must know *how* these forces take part. Anyone who works spiritually — *really* spiritually — knows how the forces of the spiritual worlds cooperate with the forces he uses. When I said day before yesterday that the middle of this century will be an important point of time, the statement was made — as in the example just given — on the basis of observations from which it can be seen how forces from the spiritual world pervade the physical world.

The middle of this century, however, will coincide with that point of time when the atavistic forces still remaining from before the middle of the 15th century will have fallen into the worst decadence; hence humanity must resolve before the middle of this century to turn toward the spiritual. We still meet many people today who say: "Why does misfortune come? Why do the Gods not help?" The fact is, we are in the period of humanity's

evolution in which the Gods will immediately help if men turn to them, but in which the Gods are compelled by their laws to deal with free men, not with puppets.

Now I have reached the point to which I referred yesterday. When, let us say, a man with vision — even in the Greek epoch and up to the middle of the 15th century — alluded to the phenomena of birth and death, he could point to the divine world, he could point out that man's destiny between birth and death is woven out of the divine worlds. Today we must speak differently: we must say that man's destiny is determined by his previous earth-lives; and through the manner in which he is conditioned by his destiny he *creates* the forces through which the divine worlds can approach him. Our thinking must be the opposite of that of earlier times regarding the relation of man to the divine-spiritual worlds: we must learn to seek *in man* the sources from which the powers are developed which will enable one or another divine being to approach him. We have now reached this momentous point of time in earth-evolution. What takes place outwardly must today be understood as an expression of inner occurrence, which can be comprehended only from the point of view of spiritual-scientific insight. You see it is possible today for every person to observe, I might say the ultimate consequences of events. There have been plenty of people murdered in the last four or five years — at least ten or twelve million in the civilized world, probably more; three times as many have been made cripples in the different countries — our civilization has certainly done a grand job! But we must gradually come to recognize these things as the *mouth of the stream*, as it were, and we shall have to seek the *source* in what is going on in human souls in connection with that opposition to the will of the spiritual world to break into our world, — the spiritual world which would bear the being of man into the future. In our time everything must be observed from this point of view; that is, must be treated profoundly.

We might say that many events might perhaps be more correctly evaluated if we were to alter the viewpoint. Roughly speaking — and I say this now as something intended to give this lecture an entirely appropriate conclusion, as indeed the nuance has been given to these three lectures by the gratifying presence among us of a number of our English friends — we can speak today of victors and vanquished. It is an obvious point of view, but perhaps not the most important one. Perhaps there is another, a much more important point of view, which might be taken from the following.

I once read aloud here from this same platform a thesis of *Fercher von Steinwand*, (Compare: *Entwicklungsgeschichtliche Unterlagen zur Bildung eines sozialen Urteils* (not yet translated).) that German-Austrian poet, who in the sixth decade of the 19th century expressed his opinion about the future of the German people. The lecture is noteworthy because it was given before the ruling King of Saxony and his ministers. In this sixth decade — those who were there at the time heard it — Fercher van Steinwand said that his German people is predestined some time in the future to play a role somewhat like that which the Gypsies were playing then. It was a deep glimpse into the evolution of humanity which Fercher van Steinwand had. These things can be looked in the eye with complete objectivity; and if this is done, perhaps another point of view will be chosen than the one frequently taken today. It will be asked: What is to be said about the changed conditions — changed among the so-called vanquished, changed among the so-called victors? Well, the actual victor is Anglo-Americanism; and this Anglo-Americanism, through the forces which I have publicly characterized here is destined for world-dominion.

Now we can ask: Since the German people will be excluded from sharing the things by means of which the *external world* will be ruled in the future, what really happens in that case? The responsibility — not that of the individual, naturally — the people's responsibility for events concerning the whole of human society ceases. Not that of the individual, but the people's responsibility ceases among those who are down-trodden — for they are that. The responsibility ends, and it becomes all the greater on the other side; that is where the actual responsibility will rest. The outer dominion will be easily won; it is won by means of forces for which the victors can take no credit. The external passing over of the external dominion is accomplished as the final natural necessity; *but the responsibility will be something of deep significance for souls*. For the question is already written down in humanity's book of destiny: Will there be found among those upon whom the external dominion devolves as by an external necessity, a sufficiently great number of people who feel the responsibility, so that into this external, materialistic dominion, into this culmination of materialistic dominion, may be transplanted the *impulses of the spiritual life*? And that must not happen too slowly! The middle of this century will be a very significant point of time. The whole weight of the responsibility should be *felt*, if one is chosen, as it were by outer natural destiny, to enter upon the dominion of materialism in the external world, — for that is what it will be. For this dominion of materialism bears within it at the same time the seed of destruction. The destruction which has begun will not cease; and "entering upon external dominion" means taking over the forces of

destruction, the forces of human illness, and living in them. That which will bear humanity into the *future* will come forth from the *new seed of the spirit*, and will have to be fostered. Therefore, the responsibility rests directly upon that side to which falls world-dominion.

Our thinking today must not be superficial concerning these things, but thorough; neither must we merely seem to be spiritual while in reality we are materialistic. Two things are very frequently heard in our time: One is, "Why talk of social ideas; no bread comes from ideas!" It is a cheap objection that is very often made. And the other is, "When the people are working again then everything will be all right; then the social question will have a different appearance." Both statements are disguised materialism, for both have the purpose of denying the spiritual life.

In the first place, what differentiates us from the animal world? The animals go around and get their food, so far as there is any, according to their implanted instincts. If there is not enough, they must starve. In what way is man better off? He *works* on the production of food. At the moment he begins to work, thought begins; and only when thought begins, does the social question begin also. If a man is to work, he must have an incentive for it; and the incentives that have existed up to the present time will no longer exist in the future. *New* incentives will be required for work; and the question is not at all a matter of everything's being all right when the people work again — no; but when, arising from a feeling of world-responsibility, men shall have thoughts which sustain their souls, then the forces proceeding from these thoughts will be carried over from hand to will, and work will result. Everything depends upon *thoughts*, and thoughts themselves depend upon our opening our *hearts* to the impulses of the spiritual world. Of *responsibility* and of the significance of thoughts much must be said in our time. Therefore I wished in this lecture to lay stress upon just this aspect.

Since destiny is now such, my dear friends, that one really cannot get away when one wishes to travel, we shall still be here tomorrow. Therefore, at eight o'clock tomorrow night I will speak to you especially about the *anthroposophical foundation*, the spiritual-scientific, occult foundation of the *social question*. Thus I shall be able before leaving to speak to our friends on the social question, but I shall explain its deeper foundations from the spiritual-scientific point of view.



4 The Old Mysteries of Light, Space, and Earth

15 December 1919, Dornach

The tasks assigned to the humanity of the present and of the immediate future are great, significant, and peremptory; and it is really necessary to bring forth a strong soul courage in order to do something toward their accomplishment. Anyone who today examines these tasks closely, and tries to get a true insight into the needs of humanity, must often reflect how superficially so-called public affairs are treated. We might say that people today talk politics aimlessly. From a few emotions, from a few entirely egotistic points of view — personal or national — people form their opinions about life, whereas a real desire to gain the factual foundations for a sound judgment would be more in conformity with the seriousness of the present time. In the course of recent months, and even years, I have inquired into the most varied subjects, including the history and the demands of the times, and have given lectures here on such subjects, always with the purpose of furnishing facts which will enable people to form a judgment for themselves — not with the purpose of placing the ready-made judgment before them. The longing to know the realities of life, to know them more and more fundamentally, in order to have a true basis for judgment — that is the important thing today. I must say this especially because the various utterances and written statements which I have made regarding the so-called social question, and regarding the threefold structure of the social organism, are really taken much too lightly, as anyone can clearly see, for the questions asked about these things are concerned far too little with the actual, momentous, basic facts. It is so difficult for people of the present time to arrive at these basic facts, because they are really theoreticians in all realms of life, although they will not acknowledge it. The people who today most fancy themselves to be practical are the most decidedly theoretical, for the reason that they are usually satisfied to form a few concepts about life, and from these to insist upon judging life; whereas it is possible today only by means of a real, universal, and comprehensive penetration into life to form a relevant judgment about what is necessary. One can say that in a certain sense it is at least intellectually frivolous when, without a basis of facts, a man talks politics at random, or indulges in fanciful views about life. It makes one wish for a fundamentally *serious attitude of soul toward life*.

When in the present time the practical side of our spiritual scientific effort, the Threefold Social Order, is placed before the world as the other side has been, it is a fact that the whole mode of thought and conception employed in the elaboration of this Threefold Social Order is met with prejudices and misgivings. Where do these prejudices and misgivings originate? Well, a man forms concepts about truth (I am still speaking of the social life), concepts about the good, the right, the useful, and so forth, and when he has formed them, he thinks they have absolute value everywhere and always. For example, take a man of western, middle, or eastern Europe with a socialistic bias. He has quite definite socialistically-formulated ideals; but what kind of fundamental concepts underlie these ideals? His fundamental concept is that what satisfies him must satisfy everyone everywhere, and must possess absolute validity for all future time. The man of today has little feeling for the fact that every thought that is to be of value to the social life must be born out of the fundamental character of the time and the place. Therefore he does not easily come to realize how necessary it is for the Threefold Social Order to be introduced with different nuances into our present European culture, with its American appendage. If it is adopted, then the variations suited to the peoples of the different regions will come about of themselves. And besides, when the time comes, on account of the evolution of humanity, that the ideas and thoughts mentioned by me in *The Threefold Commonwealth* are no longer valid, others must again be found.

It is not a question of *absolute* thoughts, but of thoughts for the present and the immediate future of mankind. In order, however, to comprehend in its full scope how necessary is this three-membering of the social organism in an independent *spiritual life*, an independent *rights and political life*, and an independent *economic life*, one must examine without prejudice the way in which the interaction of the spiritual, the political, and the economic has come about in our European-American civilization. This interweaving of the threads — the spiritual threads, those of rights or government, and the economic threads — is by no means an easy matter. Our culture, our civilization, is like a ball of yarn, something wound up, in which are entangled three strands of entirely different origins. Our spiritual life is of essentially different origin from that of our rights or political life, and entirely different again from that of our economic life; and these three strands with different origins are chaotically entangled. I can naturally give only a sketchy idea to-day, because I shall briefly follow these three streams, I might say, to their source.

First, our spiritual life, as it presents itself to one who regards as real the external things, the obvious, is acquired by people through the influence of what still persists of the ancient Greek and Latin cultural life, the Greco-Latin spiritual life, as it has flowed through what later became our high schools and universities. All the rest of our so-called humanistic culture, even down to our elementary schools, is entirely dependent upon that which, as one stream let us say, flowed in first from the Greek element (Diagram 13. orange); for our spiritual life, our European spiritual life, is of Greek origin; it merely passed through the Latin as a sort of way-station. It is true that in modern times something else has mingled with the spiritual life which originated in Greece: namely, that which is derived from what we call technique in the most varied fields, which was not yet accessible to the Greek, the technique of mechanics, the technique of commerce, etc., etc. I might say that the technical colleges, the commercial schools, and so forth, have been annexed to our universities, adding a more modern element to what flows into our souls through our humanistic schools, which reach back to Greece — and by no means flows only into the souls of the so-called educated class; for the socialistic theories which haunt the heads even of the proletariat are only a derivative of that which really had its origin in the Grecian spiritual life; it has simply gone through various metamorphoses. This spiritual life reaches back, however, to a more distant origin, far back in the Orient. What we find in Plato, what we find in Heraclitus, in Pythagoras, in Empedocles, and especially in Anaxagoras, all reaches back to the Orient. What we find in Aeschylus, in Sophocles, in Euripides, in Phidias, reaches back to the Orient. The entire Greek culture goes back to the Orient, but it underwent a significant change on its way to Greece. Yonder in the Orient this spiritual life was decidedly more spiritual than it was in ancient Greece; and in the Orient it issued from what we may call the *Mysteries of the Spirit* — I may also say the *Mysteries of Light* (Drawing). The Grecian spiritual life was already filtered and diluted as compared with that from which it had its origin: namely, the spiritual life of the Orient, which depended upon quite special spiritual experiences.

Naturally, we must go back into prehistoric times, for the *Mysteries of Light*, or the *Mysteries of the Spirit*, are entirely prehistoric phenomena. If I am to represent to you the character of this spiritual life, the manner of its development, I must do so in the following way: We know, of course, that if we go very far back in human evolution, we find increasingly that human beings of ancient times had an atavistic clairvoyance, a dream-like clairvoyance, through which the mysteries of the universe were revealed to them; and we speak with entire correctness when we say that over the whole civilized Asiatic earth, in the third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh

millennium before the Mystery of Golgotha, there dwelt people to whom spiritual truths were revealed through clairvoyance — a clairvoyance that was completely bound to nature, to the blood, and to the bodily organization. This was true of a widely dispersed population; but this atavistic clairvoyance was in a state of decline, and became more and more decadent. This "becoming decadent" of the atavistic clairvoyance is not merely a cultural-historical phenomenon, but is at the same time a *phenomenon of the social life* of mankind.

Why? Because from various centers of this wide-spread population, but chiefly from a point in Asia, there arose a special kind of human being, so to speak, a human being with special faculties. Besides the atavistic clairvoyance, which still remained to these people in a certain sense — for there still arose out of their inner soul-life a dream-like comprehension of the mysteries of the world — besides this they also had what we call the *thinking faculty*; and indeed they were the *first* in the evolution of humanity to have this power. They were the first to have dawning intelligence.

That was a significant social phenomenon when the people of those ancient times, who had only dream-like visions of the mysteries of the world arising within them, saw immigrants enter their territories whom they could still understand, because they also had visions, but who had besides something which they themselves lacked: the *power of thought*. That was a special kind of human being. The Indians regarded that caste which they designated as Brahman as the descendants of these people who combined the thinking power with atavistic clairvoyance; and when they came down from the higher-lying regions of northern Asia into the southern regions, they were called *Aryans*. They formed the Aryan population, and their primal characteristic is that they combined the thinking-power with — if I may now use the expression of a later time — with the plebeian faculties of atavistic clairvoyance.

And those mysteries which are called the Mysteries of the Spirit, or particularly, the mysteries of Light, were founded by those people who combined atavistic clairvoyance with the first kindling of intelligence, the *inner light* of man; and our spiritual culture derives from that which entered humanity at that time as an illuminating spark — it is nothing but a derivative of it.

Much has been preserved in humanity of what was revealed at that time; but we must consider that even the Greeks — just the better educated personalities among them — had seen the ancient gift of atavistic

clairvoyance gradually wane and become extinguished, and the thinking-power remained to them. Among the Romans the power of thought alone remained. Among the Greeks there was still a consciousness that this faculty comes from the same source as the ancient atavistic clairvoyance; and therefore Socrates still clearly expressed something which he knew as experience when he spoke of his *Daemon* as inspiring his truths, which were of course merely dialectic and intellectual.

In art, as well, the Greeks significantly represented the pre-eminence of the intelligent human being, or better, the development of the intelligent human being from the rest of humanity; for the Greeks have in their sculpture (one need only study it closely) three types differing sharply from one another. They have the *Aryan type*, to which the Apollo head, the Pallas Athene head, the Zeus head, the Hera head belong. Compare the ears of the Apollo with those of a Mercury head, the nose of the Apollo with that of a Mercury head, and you will see what a different type it is. The Greek wanted to show in the Mercury-type that the ancient clairvoyance, which still persisted as superstition and was a lower form of culture, had united with intelligence in the Greek civilization; that this existed at the bottom of Greek culture; and that towering above it was the Aryan whose artistic representation was the Zeus head, the Pallas Athene head, and so forth. And the very lowest races, those with dim remnants of ancient clairvoyance — who also still lived in Greece but were especially to be observed near the borders — are plastically preserved in another type, the *Satyr-type*, which in turn is quite different from the Mercury-type. Compare the Satyr nose with the Mercury nose, the Satyr ears with the Mercury ears, and so forth. The Greek merged in his *art* what he bore in his consciousness concerning his *development*.

What gradually filtered through Greece at that time, by means of the Mysteries of the Spirit or of the Light, and then appeared in modern times, had a certain peculiarity as spirit-culture. It was possessed of such inner impulsive force that it could at the same time, out of itself, establish the *rights life* of man. Therefore we have on the one hand the revelation of the gods in the Mysteries bringing the spirit to man, and on the other, the implanting of this spirit acquired from the gods into the external social organism, into the *theocracies*. Everything goes back to the theocracies; and these were able not only to permeate themselves with the legal system, the political system, out of the very nature of the Mysteries, but they were able also to regulate the economic life out of the spirit. The priests of the Mysteries of Light were at the same time the economic

administrators of their domains; and they worked according to the rules of the Mysteries. They constructed houses, canals, bridges, looked after the cultivation of the soil, and so forth.

In primitive times civilization grew entirely out of the spiritual life, but it gradually became abstract. From being a spiritual life it became more and more a sum of ideas. Already in the Middle Ages it had become *theology*, that is, a sum of concepts, instead of the ancient spiritual life, or it had to be confined to the abstract, legalistic form, because there was no longer any relation to the spiritual life. When we look back at the old theocracies we find that the one who ruled received his commission from the gods in the Mysteries. The last derivative is the occidental ruler, but he no longer gives any evidence of having originated from the ruler of the theocracy, with his commission from the gods of the Mysteries. All that remains is crown and coronation robe, the outer insignia, which in later times became more like decorations. If one understands such things it may often be observed that titles go back to the time of the Mysteries; but everything is now externalized.

Scarcely less externalized is that which moves through our secondary schools and universities as spiritual culture, the final echo of the divine message of the Mysteries. The spiritual has flowed into our life, but this has now become utterly abstract, a life of mere ideas. It has become what the socialistically-orientated groups latterly call an *ideology*, that is, a sum of thoughts that are *only* thoughts. That is what our spiritual life has really become.

Under its influence the social chaos of our time has developed, because the spiritual life that is so diluted and abstract has lost all impulsive force. We have no choice but to place it again on its own foundation, for only so can it thrive. We must find the way again from the merely *rational* to the *creative* spirit, and we shall be able to do so only if we seek to develop out of the spiritual life prescribed by the State the *free spiritual life*, (The human being is essentially a spiritual being. When he is engaged in art, science, and religion, he is active spiritually; this activity is his spiritual life. — Editor.) which will then have the power to awake to life again. For neither a spiritual life controlled by the Church, nor one maintained and protected by the State, nor a spiritual life panting under economic burdens, can be fruitful for humanity, but only an independent spiritual life.

Indeed the time has come for us to find the courage in our souls to proclaim quite frankly before the world that the spiritual life must be placed on its own foundation. Many people are asking: Well, what are we to do? The first thing of importance is to inform people about what is needed: to get as many people as possible to comprehend the necessity, for example, of establishing the spiritual life on its own foundation; to comprehend that what the pedagogy of the 19th century has become can no longer suffice for the welfare of mankind, but that it must be built anew *out of a free spiritual life*. There is as yet little courage in souls to present this demand in a really radical way; and it can be thus presented only by trying to bring to as many people as possible a comprehension of these conditions. All other social work today is provisional. The most important task is this: to see that it is made possible for more and more people to gain insight into the social requirements, one of which has just been characterized. To provide enlightenment concerning these things through all the means at our disposal — that is now the matter of importance.

We have not yet become productive with regard to the spiritual life, and we must first *become* productive in this field. Beginnings have been made in this direction, of which I shall speak presently — but we have not yet become productive with regard to the spiritual life; and *we must become productive by making the spiritual life independent*.

Everything that comes into being on earth leaves remnants behind it. The Mysteries of Light in the present-day oriental culture, the oriental spiritual life, are less diluted than in the Occident, but of course they no longer have anything like the form they had at the time I have described. Yet if we study what the Hindus, the oriental Buddhists, still have today, we shall be much more likely to perceive the echo of that from which our own spiritual life has come; only in Asia it has remained at another stage of existence. We, however, are unproductive; we are highly unproductive. When the tidings of the Mystery of Golgotha spread in the West, whence did the Greek and Latin scholars get the concepts for the understanding of it? They got them from the oriental wisdom. The West did not produce Christianity. It was taken from the Orient. And further: When in English-speaking regions the spiritual culture was felt to be very unfruitful, and people were sighing for its fructification, the Theosophists went to the subjugated Indians to seek the wellsprings for their modern Theosophy. No fruitful source existed among themselves for the means to improve their spiritual life: so they went to the Orient. In addition to this significant fact, you could find many proofs of the unfruitfulness of the spiritual life of the West;

and each such proof is at the same time a proof of the necessity for making the spiritual life an independent member in the threefold social organism.

A second strand in the tangled ball is the *political* or *rights current*.

There is the crux of the cultural problem, this second current. If we look for it today in the external world, we see it when our honorable judges sit on their benches of justice with the jurors and pass judgment upon crime or offence against the law, or when the magistrates in their offices rule throughout the civilized world — to the despair of those thus ruled. All that we call jurisprudence or government, and all that results as politics from the interaction of jurisprudence and government, constitutes this current (see drawing, white). I call that (orange) the current of the spiritual life, and this (white) the current of rights, or government.

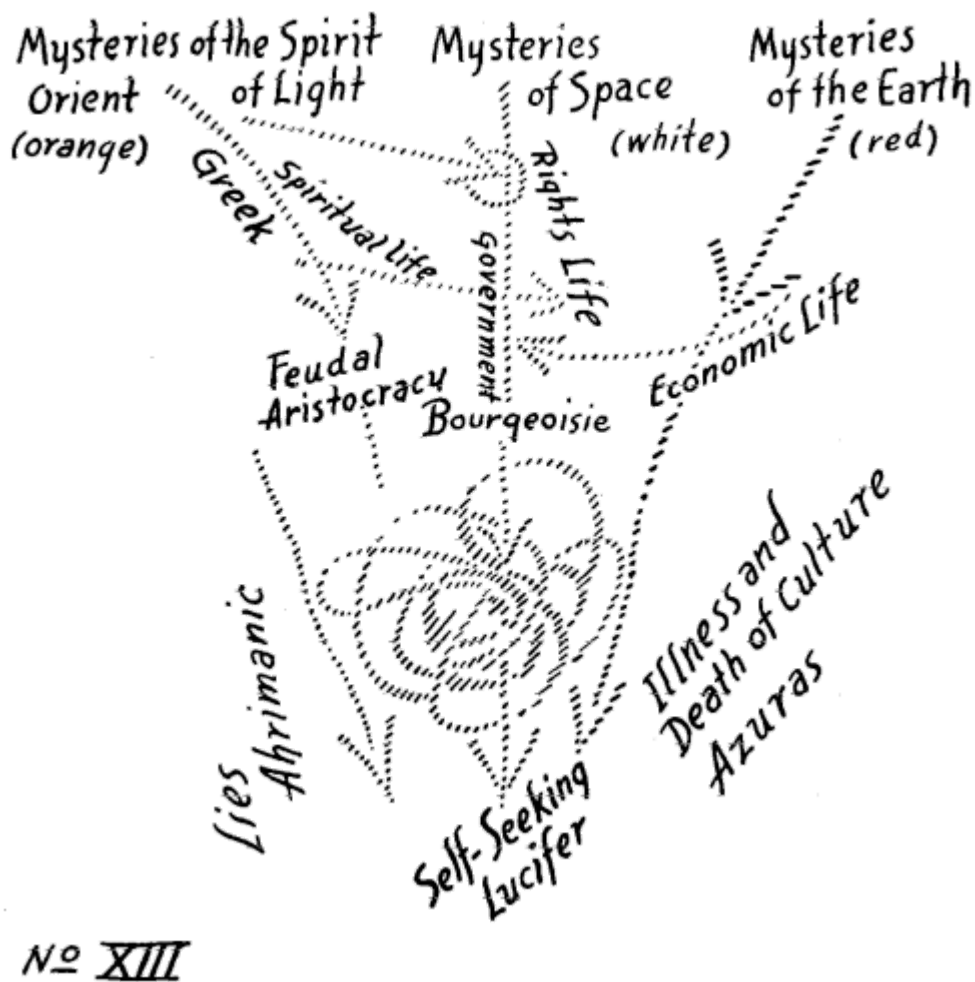


Figure 13

Where does this come from? As a matter of fact this too goes back to the Mystery-culture. It goes back to the Egyptian Mystery-culture, which passed through the southern European regions, then through the prosaic, unimaginative Roman life, where it united with a side branch of the oriental life, and became Roman Catholic Christianity, that is, Roman Catholic ecclesiasticism. Speaking somewhat radically, this Roman Catholic ecclesiasticism is also fundamentally a jurisprudence; for from single dogmas to that great and mighty Judgment, always represented as the *Last Judgment* throughout the Middle Ages, the utterly different spiritual life of the Orient, which had received the Egyptian impulse from the *Mysteries of Space* (see drawing), was really transformed into a society of world-magistrates with world-judgments and world-punishments, and sinners, and the good and the evil: it is a *jurisprudence*. That is the second element existing in our spiritual tangle which we call civilization, and it has been by no means organically combined with the other. That this is the case anyone can learn who goes to a university and hears one after the other, let us say a juridical discourse on political law, and then a theological discourse even on canonical law, if you like, for these are found side by side. Such things have shaped mankind; even in later times, when their origins have been forgotten, they are still shaping human minds. The rights life caused the later spiritual life to become abstract; but externally it influenced human customs, human habits, human systems.

What is the last social offshoot in the decadent oriental spiritual current, whose origin has been forgotten? It is *feudal aristocracy*. You could no longer recognize that the aristocrat had his origin in the oriental, theocratic spiritual life, for he has stripped off all that; only the social configuration remains (drawing). The journalistic intelligence often has very strange nightmarish visions. One such it had recently when it invented a curious phrase of which it was especially proud: "spiritual aristocracy" — this could be heard now and then. What is that which passed through the Roman Church system, through theocratising jurisprudence, juridical theocracy, became secularized in the civic systems of the Middle Ages, and completely secularized in modern times — what is it in its ultimate derivative? It is the bourgeoisie (drawing). And thus are these spiritual forces in their ultimate derivatives actually jumbled up among men.

And now still a third stream unites itself with the other two. If you would observe it today in the external world, where does this third current appear in an especially characteristic way? Well, there actually was in Central Europe a method of demonstrating to certain people where these final remnants of something originally different were to be found. It happened

when the man of Central Europe sent his son to an office in London or New York to learn the methods of the economic system. In the methods of the economic life, whose roots are to be found in the popular customs of the Anglo-American world, the final consequence is to be seen of that which has been developed as outgrowths from what I might call the *Mysteries of the Earth*, of which, for example, the Druid Mysteries are only a special variety. In the times of the primitive European people the Mysteries of the Earth still contained a peculiar kind of wisdom-filled life. That European population, which was quite barbaric, which knew nothing regarding the revelations of oriental wisdom, or of the Mysteries of Space, or of what later became Roman Catholicism — that population which advanced to meet the spreading Christianity possessed a strange kind of life-steeped-in-wisdom, peculiar to it, which was entirely physical wisdom. Of this one can at best study only the most external usages, which are recorded in the history of this current: namely, the festivals of those people from whom have come the customs and habits of England and America. The festivals were here brought into entirely different relations from those in Egypt, where the harvest was connected with the *stars*. Here the harvest as such was the festive occasion; and the highest solemn festivals of the year were connected with other things than was the case in Egypt: namely, with things that belong entirely to the economic life. We have here without doubt something which goes back to the economic life.

If we wish to comprehend the whole spirit of this matter, we must say to ourselves: Over from Asia and up from the South men transplanted a spiritual life and a rights life which they had received from above and brought down to earth. Then, in the third current, an economic life sprang up which had to develop of itself and work its way up, which really was originally so completely economic in its legal customs and in its spiritual adaptations that, for example, one of the yearly festivals consisted in the celebration of the fructification of the herds as a special festival in honor of the gods; and there were similar festivals all derived from the economic aspect of life. If we go through the regions of northern Russia, middle Russia, Sweden, Norway, or into those regions which until a short time ago were parts of Germany, or to France, at least northern France, and to what is now Great Britain — if we go through these regions, we find dispersed everywhere a population which, before the spread of Christianity in ancient times, undoubtedly had a pronounced economic life. And what ancient customs can still be found, such as festivals of legal practices and festivals in honor of the gods, are an echo of this ancient economic culture.

This economic culture met what came from the other side. At first it did not succeed in developing an independent rights life and spiritual life. The primitive legal customs were discarded because Roman law flowed in, and the primitive spiritual customs were cast aside because the Greek spiritual life had entered. And so this economic life becomes sterile at first, and only gradually works its way out of this sterility; it can succeed in this, however, only by overcoming the chaotic condition created by the introduction of the spiritual life and rights life from outside. Consider the present Anglo-American spiritual life. In this you have two things very sharply differentiated from one another. First, you have everywhere in the Anglo-American spiritual life, more than anywhere else on earth, the so-called *secret societies*, which have considerable influence, much more than people know. They are undoubtedly the keepers — and are proud to be the keepers — of the *ancient* spiritual life, of the Egyptian or oriental spiritual life, which is completely diluted and evaporated into mere symbols, — symbols no longer understood but having a certain great power among those in authority. That, however, is ancient spiritual life, not spiritual life grown in its own soil. Side by side with this there is a spiritual life which does grow entirely in economic soil, but hitherto it has produced only very small blossoms, and these in abundance.



Figure 14

Anyone who studies such things and is able to understand them knows very well that Locke, Hume, Mill, Spencer, Darwin, and others, are nothing but these little blossoms springing from the economic life. You can get quite exactly the thoughts of a Mill or a Spencer from the economic life. Social democracy has elevated this to a theory, and considers the spiritual life as a derivative of the economic life. That is what we encounter first:

everything is brought forth from the so-called practical — actually from life's routine, not from its real practice. So that going along side by side are such things as Darwinism, Spencerism, Millism, Humeism — and the diluted Mystery teachings, which are perpetuated in the various sectarian developments, such as the Theosophical Society, the Quakers, and so forth. The economic life has the will to rise, but has not yet made much progress, having produced thus far only these small blossoms. The spiritual life and the rights life are exotic plants and — I beg you to note this well — they are more and more exotic the farther we go toward the West in the European civilization.

There has always been in Central Europe something — I might say like a resistance, a struggling against the Greek spiritual life on the one hand and against the Roman Catholic rights life on the other. An opposition has always been there. An illustration of it is the Central European philosophy, of which really nothing is known in England. Actually, Hegel cannot be translated into the English language; it is impossible. Hence, nothing is known of him in England, where German philosophy is called Germanism, by which is meant something an intelligent person cannot be bothered with. In just this German philosophy, however — with the exception of one incident, namely, when Kant was completely ruined by Hume, and there divas brought into German philosophy that abominable Kant-Hume element, which has really caused such devastation in the heads of Central European humanity — with the exception of this incident, we have later, after all, the second blossoming of this struggle in Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel; and we already have the *search* for a free spiritual life in Goethe, who would have nothing to do with the final echo of the Roman Catholic jurisprudence in what is called the *law of nature*. Just feel the legal element in the shabby robes and the strange caps which the judges still have from ancient times, and feel it likewise in the science of nature, the law of nature — the legal element is still there! The expression "*law of nature*" has no sense in connection, for example, with the Goethean science of nature, which deals only with the primordial phenomenon, the primordial fact.

There for the first time is radical protest made; but naturally it remained only a beginning. *That was the first advance toward the free spiritual life: the Goethean science of nature*; and in Central Europe there already exists the first impulse even toward the independent rights life, or political life. Read such a work as that of Wilhelm van Humboldt, who was even Prussian minister of public instruction — read *The Sphere and Duties of Government*, (Translated by Joseph Coulthard, London, 1845.) and you will

see the first beginning toward the construction of an independent rights life, or political life, of the independence of the true political realm. It is true it has never gone beyond beginnings, and these are found as far back as the first half of the 19th century, even at the end of the 18th century. It must be borne in mind, however, that there are nevertheless in Central Europe important impulses in this very direction, impulses which can be carried on, which must not be left unconsidered, and which may flow into the impulse of the Threefold Social Organism.

In his first book Nietzsche wrote that passage that I have quoted in my book on Nietzsche ("Extirpation des deutschen Geistes zu Gunsten des deutschen Reiches," Extirpation of the German Spirit in favor of the German Empire — quoted in *Friedrich Nietzsche, ein Kämpfer gegen seine Zeit* (not translated).) in the very first pages, a premonition of something tragic in the German spiritual life. Nietzsche tried at that time in the foreword to his work, *The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music*, to characterize the events of 1870–71, the founding of the German Empire. Since then this strangulation of the German spirit has been thoroughly accomplished; and when in the last five or six years three-fourths of the world fell upon this former Germany (I do not wish to speak about the causes or the guilty, but only to sketch the configuration, the world situation), it was really then already the corpse of the German spiritual life. But when anyone speaks as I did yesterday, characterizing the facts without prejudice, no one should infer that there is not still in this German spiritual life much that must come forth, that must be considered, that intends to be considered, in spite of the future gypsy-like condition. For what was the real cause of the ruin of the German people? This question must also be answered without prejudice. They were ruined because they too wanted to share in materialism, and they have no talent for materialism. The others have good talents for it. The Germans have in general that quality which Herman Grimm characterized excellently when he said: The Germans as a rule retreat when it would be beneficial for them to go boldly forward, and they storm ahead with terrific energy when it would be better for them to hold back. That is a very good description of an inner quality of character of this German people; for the Germans have had propulsive force throughout the centuries, but not the ability to sustain this force. Goethe was able to present the primordial phenomenon, but he could not reach the beginnings of spiritual science. He could develop a spirituality, as, for example, in his *Faust*, or in his *Wilhelm Meister*, which could have revolutionized the world if the right means had been found; but the outer personality of this gifted man achieved nothing more than that in

Weimar he put on fat and had a double chin, became a stout privy counselor, who was also uncommonly industrious as minister, but still was obliged at times to wink at certain things, especially in political life.

The world ought to understand that such phenomena as Goethe and Humboldt represent everywhere *beginnings*, and that it would really be a loss to the world and not a profit, to fail to take into account what lives in the German evolution in an unfinished state, but to which must come forth. For after all, the Germans do not have the predisposition which the others have in such remarkable degree the farther we go toward the West: namely, to rise on all occasions to ultimate abstractions. What the Germans have in their spiritual life is called "abstractions" only by those who are unable to experience it; and because they themselves have squeezed out the life, they believe others lack it too. The Germans have not the talent for pressing on to ultimate abstractions. This was shown in their political life, in their most unfortunate political life! If the Germans had had from the beginning the great talent for monarchy which the French have preserved so brilliantly to this day, they would never have become the victims of "Wilhelmism"; they would neither have countenanced this strange caricature of a monarch, nor have needed him. It is true that the French call themselves republicans, but they have among them a secret monarch who firmly holds together the structure of the state, who keeps a terribly tight rein on the people's minds; for in reality the spirit of Louis XIV is everywhere present. Naturally, only a decadent form remains, but *it is there*. There is no doubt that a secret monarch is there among the French people; for it is really shown in every one of their cultural manifestations. And the talent for abstraction demonstrated in Woodrow Wilson is the ultimate talent for abstraction in the political field. Those fourteen points of the world's schoolmaster, which in every word bear the stamp of the impractical and unachievable, could only originate in a mind wholly formed for the abstract, with no discernment whatever for true realities.

There are two things which the cultural history of civilization will doubtless find it difficult to understand. One I have often characterized in the words of Herman Grimm — the Kant-Laplace theory, in which many people still believe. Herman Grimm said so finely in his *Goethe*: People will some day have difficulty in comprehending that malady now called science, which makes its appearance in the Kant-Laplace theory, according to which all that we have around us today arose through agglomeration, out of a universal world-mist; and this is supposed to continue until the whole thing falls back again into the sun. A putrid bone around which a hungry dog circles is a more appetizing morsel than these fanciful ideas, this fantastic

concept of world-evolution. So thinks Herman Grimm. Naturally, there will some day be great difficulty in explaining this Kant-Laplace theory from the standpoint of the scientific insanity of the 19th and 20th centuries!

The second thing will be the explanation of the unbelievable fact that there ever could be a large number of people to take seriously the humbug of the fourteen points of Woodrow Wilson — in an age that is socially so serious.

If we study the things that stand side by side in the world we find in what a peculiar way the economic life, the political rights life, and the spiritual life are entangled. If we do not wish to perish because of the extreme degeneration which has come into the spiritual life and the rights life, we must turn to the Threefold Social Order, which from independent roots will build an economic life now struggling to emerge, but unable to do so unless a rights life and a spiritual life, developed in freedom, come to meet it. These things have their deep roots in the whole of humanity's evolution and in human social life; and these roots must be sought. People must now be made to realize that way down at the bottom, on the ground I might say, crawls the economic life, managed by Anglo-American habits of thought; and that it will be able to climb up only when it works in harmony with the whole world, with that for which others also are qualified, for which others also are gifted. Otherwise the gaining of world dominion will become a fatality for it.

If the world continues in the course it has been taking under the influence of the degenerating spiritual life derived from the Orient, then this spiritual life, although at one end it was the most sublime truth, will at the other rush into the most fearful lies. Nietzsche was impelled to describe how even the Greeks had to guard themselves from the lies of life through their art. *And in reality art is the divine child which keeps men from being swallowed up in lies.* If this first branch of civilization is pursued only one-sidedly, then this stream empties into lies. In the last five or six years more lies have been told among civilized humanity than in any other period of world history; in public life the truth has scarcely been spoken at all; hardly a word that has passed through the world was true. While this stream empties into *lies* (see drawing), the middle stream empties into *self-seeking*; and an economic life like the Anglo-American, which should end in world-dominion — if the effort is not made to bring about its permeation by the independent spiritual life and the independent political life, it will flow into the third of the abysses of human life, into the third of these three. The first abyss is *lies*, the degeneration of humanity through Ahriman; the

second is *self-seeking*, the degeneration of humanity through Lucifer; the third is, in the physical realm, *illness and death*; in the cultural realm, the *illness and death of culture*.

The Anglo-American world may gain world dominion; but without the Threefold Social Order it will, through this dominion, pour out cultural death and cultural illness over the whole earth; for these are just as much a gift of the Azuras as lies are a gift of Ahriman, and self-seeking, of Lucifer. So the third, a worthy companion of the other two, is a gift of the Azuric powers!

We must get the enthusiasm from these things which will fire us now really to seek ways of enlightening as many people as possible. Today the mission of those with insight is the enlightenment of humanity. We must do as much as possible to oppose to that foolishness which fancies itself to be wisdom, and which thinks it has made such marvellous progress — to oppose to that foolishness what we can gain from the practical aspect of anthroposophically-orientated spiritual science.

My dear friends, if I have been able to arouse in you in some measure the feeling that these things must be taken with profound seriousness, then I have attained a part of what I should very much like to have attained through these words.

When we meet again in a week or two, we shall speak further of similar things. Today I wished only to call forth in you a feeling that at the present time the really most important work is to *enlighten* people in the widest circles.



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