

The Karma of Materialism

GA 176



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Rudolf Steiner

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Owen Barfield

Foreword

It is fair to warn the reader that this is not an easy book. Should he be broaching the territory, without any previous knowledge of Rudolf Steiner's work and techniques, simply as one option in his search for a convincing critique of the prevalent materialism (or, as it is more commonly called, reductionism), he might do better to begin with one or both of two other books by the same author, *The Origins of Natural Science* and *The Boundaries of Natural Science*. There is little doubt that dissatisfaction with reductionism is gradually becoming more widespread (compare the tiny minority that was touched by it in the Victorian age); and it is perhaps significant that another change in the current world-view appears to be accompanying it. I mean an increasingly wide acceptance of the notion that human consciousness itself is in process of evolution; that there has not merely been a 'progress' from one set of ideas (largely erroneous) about the nature of the world and humanity towards a more 'advanced' one, but that the very structure of consciousness, the whole relation between man and nature, has been changing through the millennia.

Nowhere is this perspective, and the revised cosmology it entails, more explicit than in the literary legacy of Rudolf Steiner, and nowhere is its importance more earnestly stressed. The title of the present work already contains the difference between evolution of consciousness and history of ideas. History is the record of a conscious process, and the term is often extended to signify the process itself. Evolution is a process occurring at a pre-conscious stage, and *up to the present* this has applied also to the evolution of consciousness. Thus, the karma of materialism is not the same as the history of materialism. Karma is the name of a process operating at an unconscious level in the development of a human individuality, a process normally observable only in its effects; and the Karma of materialism is such a process operating in the development of materialism. So underneath the history of materialism (which would amount to a history of ideas, culminating in reductionism) Steiner reveals an unconscious process extending both before and after that history. Reductionism as theory manifests first in natural science, but the change of consciousness underlying it began much earlier, and it continues now irrespective of theory and affects the whole life of humanity. These lectures were delivered in the year 1917, when the catalogue of global disasters, which Steiner saw as the Karma of materialism, was still not long past its dawn;

and it is with the effects of materialism in the social and political life, of humanity, both national and international, that they mainly concern themselves.

Just as in *Boundaries of Natural Science* Rudolf Steiner argues the necessity of penetrating this hitherto unconscious realm for the future health of science itself, so here he argues its necessity in order to cope with social and political problems that are growing more and more intractable as they are less and less understood. Penetrating it with what? With strengthened and energetic thinking. Notwithstanding his admiration for the achievements of natural science, disciplined as it is by its constant relation to observable fact, he accuses it of one disastrous oversight. While it has devised and continues to devise ever more elaborate and more precise tools for investigation, it has left unexamined and unimproved the first and most essential, the most ubiquitously applied, of all its tools. It has never tried to examine the nature of thinking itself; the point at which unconscious process blossoms into, or rather "sets" as, conscious thought. In the *Boundaries* course Steiner describes a method by which scientists could embark on such an examination. Here he is more concerned with the effects that have stemmed from their failure to do so at the time of the scientific revolution and after it. This involves reverting to that period in history and to the period preceding it. It is no use just saying: yes, there has been an evolution of consciousness, and it has resulted in materialism. It is no use simply chronicling effects; the process itself must be penetrated, and penetrated in detail; and if this entails reference to the thought processes of such historical figures as Thomas Aquinas and Martin Luther, so be it.

The first step however is to delineate the process itself, as far as possible, and this he does in Lecture III by way of a careful treatment, both synchronic and diachronic, of the relation between *intellect*, *perception* and *breathing*. The lecture should be read carefully, for it is there that he lays the foundation for the doctrine which he will go on to inculcate. Namely, that the unconscious is not just 'spirit' (still less of course the Freudian psycho-physical jumble); nor is it simply an inferred and unknowable 'world of spirit'; it is a world of active spiritual beings, whose particular aims and influences are not wholly, and will become less and less, beyond the reach of human knowledge.

Or perhaps it would be truer to say the doctrine which he will go on to assume. That is one of the reasons why it is a difficult book, not simply because such an immaterial cosmology is repugnant to the contemporary

mind-set: for repugnant it certainly is, except to a level of open-mindedness that is deplorably rare. Open-mindedness at a somewhat lower level is not so infrequent. There are many minds in our time acutely aware of the apparent impotence of the human spirit to deal with the complex and apparently insoluble problems that increasingly threaten its continued existence, and which go so far as to proclaim that a new kind of consciousness seems to be demanded of us. What is wanted, these uneasy people say, is altogether new ideas, a new kind of thinking. But they usually forget that the new is by definition unfamiliar; so that, when they are confronted with a picture of the universe that is not just a rearrangement of the old picture, but is really new and therefore wholly unfamiliar, they are offended or contemptuous. It becomes clear, Steiner repeats with emphasis and with examples to drive it home, that what they really wanted was something that looks new but is in fact old enough to feel quite comfortable. Confronted by anything beyond that they refuse even to examine the evidence for it. Exclamation marks are a sufficient refutation.

For many readers there will be the added difficulty of what they will feel as its author's tendency to plunge in *medias res*. Quite early in the book they will be confronted by references to named spiritual beings to whom they have not been introduced, notably certain of the spiritual hierarchies, who have been differently named in different traditions, but for whom Steiner uses the nomenclature found with their earliest recorded appearance in the extant literature of the West, that is the work of 'pseudo-Dionysius'; and, over and above these, to the 'adversary' figures of Lucifer and Ahriman, especially the latter. If the reader is wise, he will reflect that, where knowledge of the immaterial itself is at issue, and not simply knowledge of its material effects, it is the same as with all knowledge. Neither things nor beings can be spoken of without being identified, or identified without being named: It remains true that some previous acquaintance with the literature of Steiner's anthroposophy will greatly reduce this difficulty, and will prevent the names being *merely* names. Nor is there much doubt that most of his original audience enjoyed such an acquaintance.

Some acquaintance then with the literature of anthroposophy is desirable in a reader of this book. But I would not say it is indispensable. There is another way of acquainting oneself with unfamiliar terminology besides starting with a set of definitions. Indeed definitions, though useful in forestalling error, may even hinder close acquaintance with the actuality of what is defined, inasmuch as they tend to substitute abstraction for

experience. The other way of twigging the meanings of unfamiliar words is to plunge into contexts wherein they occur more than once, and sometimes perhaps by way of casual reference, and thus gradually to approach nearer and nearer to them by experiencing their use in those contexts. Incidentally if this way were not a way that is wide open to us, we should never have learned to speak or to understand anything at all.

I believe therefore that readers will not be lacking who will by-pass any initial stumbling-blocks as they enter into the substance of the book and become more and more impressed by its whole tone, by the authority born of wide learning, long reflection and exceptional insight and by the profound sense of responsibility, alike to the truth and to humanity, that breathe through its wide-ranging paragraphs.

Owen Barfield



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Forgotten Aspects of Cultural Life

31 July 1917, Berlin

Our time can be understood in its spiritual aspect only if it is recognized that external events must be seen as symbols, and that far deeper impulses are at work in the world. These deeper impulses can be difficult to discern and spiritual knowledge alone can enlighten us about them.

I would like to begin by speaking about an interesting personality of the 19th Century, someone who as a thinker is extraordinarily fascinating because he is one of those who, in a characteristic way, reflects what is alive in our time and also what has in a certain sense died out. This interesting thinker known only to a few: African Spir, (African Spir 1837–1890 Philosopher.) died in 1890. In the mid 1860s in Leipzig he began to consider how he could best convey his philosophy of life to his fellow men.

African Spir was an original thinker and he gained nothing of significance from his contact with Masonic circles. When we study him, which to begin with can be done through his writings, we find that he was very little influenced by the 19th Century cultural life around him. On the contrary there comes to expression in his view of life an inner quality peculiar to himself. The most significant of his writings: "Thinking and Reality" was published in 1873. African Spir came to recognize, intuitively as it were, what thinking actually is. Not an all-embracing recognition perhaps but significant all the same. What interested him was the true nature of thinking. He wanted to discover what actually happens in man while he is thinking. He also wanted to find out how man is related, while he is engaged in thinking, on the one hand to external reality and on the other to his own inner experience.

Thinking can be understood only when it is seen as a power in man which, in its own essential nature, does not belong to the external physical world at all. On the contrary in its own being and nature it belongs to the spiritual world. We already experience the spiritual world, though not consciously, when we really think; i.e., when our thinking is not merely acting as a mirror reflecting external phenomena. When we are engaged in real thinking then we have the possibility to experience ourselves as

thinkers. If man becomes conscious of himself within thinking he knows himself to be in a world that exists beyond birth and death. Few people are aware of it, but nothing is more certain than when man thinks, he is then active as a spiritual being.

African Spir was one of the few and he expressed it when he said: "When I form thoughts, particularly the loftiest thoughts of which I am capable, then I feel myself to be in a world of permanence, subject to neither space nor time; a world of eternity." He enlarged on this observation saying: "When one turns away from the world of thinking as such and contemplates what we experience when the external world acts upon us, then we are dealing with something which is qualitatively utterly different from the thoughts we apply to it. This is the case whether we contemplate external phenomena, man's evolution, his history or his life in society. Thoughts themselves lead me to the recognition that they, as thoughts, are eternal. In the external world everything is transitory; what is earthly comes into being and passes away. That is not true of any thought. Thinking itself tells me that it is absolute reality for it is rooted in eternity."

For African Spir this was something he simply experienced as a fact. He argued that what we experience as external reality does not agree, does not accord with the reality we experience as thinking. Consequently it cannot be real in the true sense; it is semblance, illusion. Thus, along a path, different to that followed by the ancient Oriental, different also from that followed by certain mystics, African Spir comes to the realization that everything we experience in space and time is fundamentally semblance. In order to confirm this from another aspect he said something like the following: "Man, in fact all living creatures, is subject to pain. However, pain does not reveal its true nature for it contains within itself a power for its overcoming; it wills to be overcome. Pain does not want to exist, therefore it is not true reality. Pain as such must be an aspect of the transitory world of illusion and the reality is the force within it which strives for painlessness. This again shows us that the external world is an illusion, nowhere is it completely free of pain so it cannot be true reality. The real world, the soul-world, is plunged into semblance and pain."

African Spir felt that man can only reach a view of life that is inwardly satisfying if he becomes conscious, through his own resolve and effort, that he bears within himself an eternal world. He maintains that this eternal world proclaims itself in man's thinking and in the constant striving to overcome pain and reach salvation. Spir insists that the external world is semblance, not because it appears as such to him, but because he is

convinced that in thinking he lays hold of true reality. It is because the external world does not conform, is not of like nature, to thinking that he says it is semblance.

If we survey the various world views held by those 19th-century thinkers who lived in the same milieu as Spir, we do not find any of such subtlety as his. So how does Spir come to experience the world the way he did? If we look for an explanation in the light of spiritual knowledge, we must make the following comments: Insofar as we are surrounded by the external material world, by events of history and also by our life in society we live on the physical plane. Whereas in thinking, that is to say, when we really live in thinking, we are no longer on the physical plane. It is only when we think about external material existence that we turn to the physical plane and in so doing we actually deny our own nature. When we become conscious of what really lives in thinking we cannot but feel that within thinking we are in a spiritual world.

Thus when Spir became aware of the real nature of what in man is the most abstract: pure thinking, he felt that there is a definite boundary between the physical and the spiritual world. Basically he asserts that man belongs to two worlds, the physical and the spiritual and that the two are not in agreement. Spir comes to the realization, out of an elemental natural impulse as it were, of the existence of a spiritual world. He does not express it in so many words, but declares that everything around us, be it our natural, historical or social life, is mere semblance. And he finds that this semblance does not agree with the reality given in thinking. So although his experience of the spiritual world is not of direct vision, but an experience within abstract thinking, he nevertheless establishes that these two spheres are divided by a sharp boundary.

Looking closer at the way Spir presented his view of the world one realizes that his 19th-century contemporaries were bound to find it difficult; and it is natural that he was not understood. It could be said that he tried to contract the whole spiritual world into a single point within thinking; draw it together so to speak from a spiritual world otherwise unknown to him. He put the whole emphasis on the fact that, in his experience of thinking, he found proof that the spiritual world exists and that the physical world is semblance. This led him to stress that truth, i.e., reality, could never be found in the external world, for that world is in every aspect untrue and incomplete. According to his own words he was convinced that his discovery was a most significant event in history for it proved once and for all that reality is not to be found in the external world.

He met no understanding. He was even driven to the expediency of offering a prize to anyone who could disprove his claim. No one took up the challenge, no one tried to refute him. He suffered all the distress that a thinker can experience from being entirely ignored; killed by silence as the saying goes. He lived for a long time in Tübingen, then in Stuttgart and finally in Lausanne due to lung trouble. He was buried in Geneva in the year 1890. On his grave lies a Bible carved in stone, showing the opening words of St. John's Gospel: "And the Light shineth in the darkness and the darkness comprehended it not," followed by "Fiat Lux" (Let there be light) which were his last words before he died.

One could say that Spir's whole philosophy was a kind of premonition. In concerning oneself with such thinkers one comes to recognize that there were many who, in the course of the 19th Century, had a premonition that something like spiritual science must come. These thinkers were prevented from reaching spiritual knowledge themselves by the circumstances and conditions prevailing in that century. African Spir was such a thinker. If we read his writings, without concerning ourselves with his life, we are faced with a riddle: How does a man come to recognize the reality of the spiritual world so decisively merely by means of thinking? How does he come to recognize the spiritual within himself with such certainty? How does he come to know that his inner being is so firmly rooted in true reality that it convinces him the external world is unreal? The explanation lies in Spir's life, in the simple fact that he was born in Russia (1837). His real name was African Alexandrovitch. He was a Russian transplanted into Central Europe, a Russian who, being influenced by Central and Western European views of life, represented a wonderful blend of the latter with Russian characteristics. He did not learn German till he came to Leipzig in the mid 1860s but then wrote all his works in that language.

Let us now remember that within the peoples of Western Europe there has gradually come to expression during the course of mankind's evolution the sentient soul in the Latin peoples of the South, the intellectual or mind soul in the Latin peoples of the West, the consciousness soul in the Anglo-American peoples, the 'I' in people of Central Europe; while the Russian people of Eastern Europe are waiting to Develop the Spirit Self. One could say that in the Russian people the Spirit-Self is still in an embryonic state. Bearing this in mind we realize that African Spir was born with an inner disposition to await the Spirit-Self. This aspect of his soul life was stirring within him but it came to expression colored by the world conceptions prevailing in Western Europe.

The time will come when the Eastern European will have developed his true nature. It will then be an impossibility for him to look upon the external physical world as a world that is real in the true sense. He will experience his own inner being as rooted in true reality. And this he will experience not just in thinking but in the Spirit-Self within the spiritual world. He will know himself to be a citizen of the spiritual world and it will seem sheer nonsense to him to regard man the way the West does: as a being evolved from the animal kingdom. That aspect of man the people of the East will recognize to be merely man's outer covering. The Eastern European, as he develops the Spirit Self, will ascend to the realm of the Hierarchies just as the Western European descends to the kingdom of nature. African Spir knew instinctively that his being was rooted in the spirit. This instinctive sense of living in spiritual reality is to be found today in Eastern Europe, but is as yet not able to come to expression in an appropriate view of life. This will become possible only when spiritual science, developed in Central Europe, becomes absorbed into Eastern European culture. What is as yet experienced only instinctively, in Eastern Europe, as life in spiritual reality, will then find expression.

African Spir was unable to express this instinctive experience in spiritual-scientific terms; instead he clothed it in concepts he took over from *Spencer, Locke, Kant, Hegel* and *Taine*. This means that instead of clothing it in images obtained through living thinking he used the kind of abstract concepts which are in reality no more than mental images reflecting the physical world. What in African Spir was leading an embryonic existence had as it were withdrawn from Western culture, but it had left its imprint in which could be recognized what had been there before as a living reality. African Spir is such an interesting figure because he incorporates both past and future. He is also a clear demonstration of the deep truth, continually stressed by spiritual science, i.e. that the European peoples are in reality like a human soul with its members placed side by side. The peoples towards the West constitute the sentient soul, intellectual soul and consciousness soul placed next to one another. In the Central Europeans the 'I' comes to expression and the Eastern Europeans prepare for the Spirit Self.

At present history is dealt with in a most unsatisfactory fashion. However, it can be foreseen how it will be dealt with in the future. At present external facts are always emphasized but they are not the essential. To hold on merely to external facts is comparable to undertaking a study of "Faust" by describing the letters page by page. An understanding of "Faust" is not dependent on the letters but on what is learnt through them.

Similarly a time will come when consideration of history will depend as little on external facts as reading a book depends on a description of the letters. Behind the external facts the real history will be discerned, just as the meaning in "Faust" is discerned behind the printed letters. This is radically expressed but it does illustrate the situation. Ordinary history will be seen as a history that describes the symptoms; a man like African Spir will be seen as a symptom of the soul element of Eastern Europe merging with that of Central Europe.

The present age is as yet a long way from studying either history or life in this way. Yet only by bringing things of this nature together, and relating them with a deeper understanding to current events, can one become conscious of what is really happening in the world. The present age has to an unprecedented degree robbed the first half of the 19th Century of its spiritual achievements; this also applies to the second half but to a lesser degree. It is indeed justified to speak about forgotten aspects of spiritual life in relation to the 19th Century; even more than I have done in my book *Vom Menschenrätzel*. Some day the history of the 19th Century will have to be rewritten. This was felt by Hermann Grimm (Herman Grimm 1828–1901 Cultural Historian.) when he said: "A time will come when the history of the last decades will be completely rewritten. When this happens those who are now looked upon as great figures will appear rather puny and others, quite different figures, which are now forgotten will emerge as the great ones." One comes to realize what a "fable convenue" (a fable or lie agreed upon) the official history of the 19th Century is when one attempts to study its history as it truly is and can recognize the forces that were at work. The reason I said that our time has robbed the 19th Century of its spiritual achievements is because that century produced many thinkers who, for lack of recognition, were condemned to isolation. African Spir is a characteristic example. In saying this I am not referring to the public in general but to those who, through their vocation, had a duty to be interested in him and his work. When such human beings die and their souls pass into the spiritual world they do not just vanish. They continue to be influential from the spiritual world in ways of which there is usually little inkling.

Can anyone really believe that when a thinker such as African Spir dies he simply disappears as far as the world here is concerned? The spiritual world is no cloud-cuckoo-land; just as our individual bodies are permeated by soul and spirit, so does soul and spirit permeate the whole cosmos. Soul and spirit live all around us like the air. What a man has produced, in a life of strenuous thinking while in a physical body, does not just disappear

when he dies and passes into the spiritual world. In such cases something very remarkable happens. A thinker who here on earth has met with much acclaim is in a different position to a solitary neglected thinker like Spir. A thinker, who receives much popular recognition, has as it were finished with his thoughts when he dies. Not so a thinker like Spir, he strives to protect his thoughts—what I am now saying is of the greatest importance — which are present spiritually in the physical world. Such a thinker remains with his thoughts. He protects them for a period lasting decades; during this time they are not accessible to human beings living in physical bodies.

When a thinker like African Spir dies his thoughts stay with him, he as it were protects them so that those who are living have no immediate access to them. This causes an unconscious longing for these thoughts to arise in human beings which they cannot satisfy. In other words there are human beings whose forefathers paid no attention to such a thinker and allowed him to die unrecognized. He had produced thoughts which ought to be developed further, but because he protects them he prevents them being reached by human beings and this causes an undefined longing for these thoughts. Because the longing cannot be satisfied it results in a feeling of deep inner dissatisfaction. In earlier times there were many who experienced such unsatisfied longing. In our time it is present to a particularly high degree because the last third of the 19th Century produced a great number of highly significant thinkers to whom the world paid no attention, thus robbing them of their spiritual achievements.

What should be done? That is a most important question. What one must do is to speak about such forgotten aspects of cultural life. When, in a few strokes, I place before your mind's eye such a thinker as African Spir, it is not for any arbitrary reason or merely to tell you something interesting. It is to draw attention to the fact that we are surrounded by a spiritual world of real thoughts, thoughts which a thinker has preserved and which he now protects. What we must do is to turn with a feeling of reverence to the thinker concerned. He may then give us his thoughts himself, thus enabling our thinking to become creative. That is why in the course of our studies I like to call your attention to such forgotten thinkers. A link of real significance is forged thereby. If I manage to some extent to inscribe in your souls a picture of African Spir, something comes about which acts in a certain sense as a corrective of a wrong, and that is a task of spiritual science.

The spiritual world is not a nebulous pantheistic abstraction. It is as concretely real as the external sense-perceptible phenomena. We come in contact with the spiritual world not by constantly talking about spirit, spirit, spirit, but by pointing to concrete spiritual facts. And one such fact is that especially at the present time we can bring to life in ourselves a connection with forgotten thinkers so that fruits of their thoughts can enter our souls. On their side these souls become released from protecting their thoughts.

We therefore perform a real deed when, with the right feeling and attitude, we speak of these thinkers who in recent times have been victims of spiritual isolation and robbed of the fruits of their work. Our age will thereby receive, at least it may receive, spiritual thoughts which it so sorely needs. A thinking which merely mirrors the external world in the usual pedestrian manner is unfruitful. Thinking which in the customary way is applied to nature, history or social life has finished its task as soon as the external phenomena have been understood. Nowadays so many thinkers are unproductive because all that occupy their thoughts are external or historical events. Thinking is fruitful only when it takes its content from the spiritual world. A thought is like a corpse as long as it only mirrors nature or history. It becomes alive and creative when it is receptive to what the Hierarchies pour down from the spiritual world.

At present there is no inclination to seek union through thinking with the spiritual world. That is something which is positively avoided whereas pride is taken in pursuing "genuine" science. The view is that now at last science has arrived after mankind has remained for so long in a stage of infancy. It must be said though that this science, particularly when it forms the basis for a view of life, has produced some strange results. For one thing it cannot come to grips with what thinking actually is. Natural science dissects man's body and comes to amazing conclusions about the structure of the brain and its function. Thinking itself is disregarded. As a result thinking as such has gradually become a ghostly something of which science is afraid. As a consequence modern science is particularly against thinkers whose lives were steeped in thinking, thinkers like *Hegel*, *Schelling*, *Jacob Boehme* and other mystics whose view of life was built on thoughts. The modern researcher takes the attitude that these people no doubt did think, but thoughts do not lead to certainty. A scientist feels eerie when he must leave the sense world, i.e., the realm which African Spir called a world of semblance and illusion. Yet the scientist cannot establish science if he refuses to think, so he is caught in a dilemma. This dilemma caused one of science's elite, who felt himself especially suited to represent scientific opinion, to utter an aphorism which, when the history of the

second half of the 19th century comes to be rewritten, could well be inserted as characteristic of many aspects of this period. At a scientific congress this scientist declared: "We men of medicine have to admit that, like educated folk in general, exact science cannot do completely without thinking."

Thus in the 19th century, at a serious gathering of scientists it is admitted with regrets that thinking cannot be dispensed with altogether, at least not if one is a medical man or a well educated person. In other words thinking is something very awkward that causes uncertainty the moment one looks at it.

This attitude to thinking causes in people strange feelings when they hear that a spiritual world penetrates the physical world. They are afraid of thinking because they sense that this is where the spiritual world enters, and, as they insist that there is no spiritual world, they will have nothing to do with thinking. You may remember my explaining that what is understood by the word genius will change in the course of evolution. I pointed out that what makes someone a genius can only be understood by assuming that more spirit is active in him than in a non-genius. When the discoveries of a genius happen to be of a mechanical nature he meets great admiration. If his genius takes other forms people are nowadays apt to vent their aversion to such proof of spiritual power on the genius himself. A rather interesting essay has appeared on the subject of genius. After arguing that a genius is someone partly sick, partly mad the essay culminates with this curious sentence: "Let us thank God we are not all geniuses!"

These things must be seen as symptoms of our time, for they are characteristic of a general trend. Yet such things are usually ignored or not taken seriously because their true significance is not recognized. They may even be laughed at and the present miseries are not seen to be related to them. Far from attempting to bring order into the chaos through spiritual insight, man is allowing his contact with the spiritual world to deteriorate. As a consequence he also loses contact with the reality of the external world because without spiritual insight he can reach only its outer shell. In saying this I am pointing to a significant phenomenon of our time: catastrophes occur because thoughts, which ought to relate to external events, do not. As a result the external events take over and go their own way independent of man. They do this even when man has created the events himself. Then the thoughts of man, which may be excellent, often have no effect, they can find no foothold in the external events. It has

gradually come about that the individual may have fine ideas but they have a life of their own while external reality also has a life of its own. A dreadful discrepancy exists between what takes place in many heads and what goes on all around them, a disharmony of such proportions as has never before occurred.

When such things are discussed one is invariably accused of exaggeration. But they are not exaggerated and one must speak about them, for they are the truth and must be recognized. There is evidence of these things everywhere but the awareness of them is not great enough to realize their implications. Take the following example which could be multiplied a thousandfold: In the year 1909 in Russia a conversation took place between two men concerning the relation of Russia to Central Europe. This was soon after Austria's annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. (Bosnia and Herzegovina were occupied by Austria 1878. They remained Turkish territory until annexed in 1908.) The conversation took place as feelings in Russia were running high, threatening already then to bring about the terrible situation which finally erupted in 1914. That the 1914 war did not break out already in 1909 hung on a thread. It was prevented, but this was not thanks to certain quarters in Russia. These things must be seen as they truly are. The two men, one a Croatian, the other Russian, discussed in particular the relation between Russia and Austria. After they had looked at all existing possibilities for stabilizing relations between Central and Eastern Europe the Russians summed up his own view by saying: "A war between Russia and Austria-Germany would be, not only utterly inhuman, but also completely senseless." These sensible words, which were by no means based on emotions, summed up well-thought-out, well-considered judgements about the structure of Central and Eastern Europe. When I now mention the name of the Russian who spoke them you will have confirmation of what has just been discussed. The Russian who so vehemently rejected war in 1909 was Lvov. (Georgi Evgenievich Lvov 1861–1925 Russian politician. Became leader of the first provisional government on March 15, 1917.) Five years later in 1914 — when he could not after all have changed into someone completely different — we find him as the president of the first revolutionary Russian Government. In other words he was by then the person at the very center of all the events that have led to the present miseries in Europe.

Just imagine the situation: we see external events run their course and we see human beings, active in the midst of these events, who think quite differently. Human beings with sensible ideas are active in these events but are overwhelmed by them. Why are they overwhelmed? Because of the

failure to relate concepts and ideas to spiritual reality. Thoughts are powerless unless they are united with the spiritual element of the world. According to the general opinion held nowadays it is a drawback for someone, active in social or political life, to be a thinker. A thinker is regarded as unpractical, incapable of understanding the realities of life. Yet the truth is that those who are usually regarded as practical have only the kind of abstract thoughts which cannot lay hold of reality. One must ask if it really is sensible to select for high political office someone who is more renowned for fly-fishing than his thinking ability? "Fly-fishing" is the title of a book written by Sir Edward Grey (Sir Edward Grey 1862–1933 English politician 1905–1916 British Foreign Minister.) and fly-fishing is what fills his mind. A ministerial colleague once said about him, not without justification: "The reason Grey has such excellent concentration is because he simply repeats what others put into his mind; no thought of his own ever disturbs his concentration." — That colleague hit the nail on the head. So you see, according to modern opinion, someone who understands fly-fishing must also understand politics for it would be a drawback if he had any real thoughts. However, as I have said, so often it is just such opinions which at present reveal their futility for they have brought about the disastrous conditions we are in.

It is obvious that the capabilities which today are regarded as adequate for political office and statesmanship are in fact inadequate. This is because modern man has no interest in turning his thoughts to anything other than external phenomena. Many years ago I called this condition "fact-fanaticism"; earlier still I called it "the dogma of practical experience." You can read about it in my books *Goethe's Conception of the World and Goethe the Scientist*.

We must be clear about the fact that those whose thinking merely reflects natural processes, historical events or external social life, develop thoughts which are purely ahrimanic. That does not necessarily mean that they are wrong or incorrect, but they are ahrimanic. The ahrimanic element must of necessity exist. The whole content of natural science is ahrimanic and will only lose its ahrimanic nature when it becomes imbued with life. This will happen when man's thinking ceases merely to mirror external phenomena in a mechanical way. Thinking must become creative, it must become saturated through and through with spiritual content. Social laws, laws of rights, etc. will be ahrimanic if, when formulating them, one relies solely on that capacity, on that aspect of thinking which mirrors the external events and reflects upon them. When, as in such instances, ahrimanic forces are active in spheres where they do not belong they

become destructive. Healing will come to our age when the thoughts and ideas that are applied to social conditions and political life are in living contact with spiritual reality.

Because of the demands it would make upon them there are few people today who are able to accept these facts. When one speaks about the spirit it is noticeable that people are on their guard. What goes on in their consciousness on such occasions is not so important; what goes on in their sub-consciousness is of great importance. What lives there is bad conscience which they experience only subconsciously. Because they are unable to admit to themselves that their thoughts are lifeless and ahrimanic they avoid becoming conscious of the fact. The moment one's thinking attains a living grasp of spiritual reality one can no longer avoid the recognition that thoughts, which merely mirror external phenomena, are ahrimanic. This recognition causes fear. It is fear that holds man back from attaining creative thinking. Creative thinking is only attained when man is inspired — even unconsciously — from the spiritual world.

Thus we see that, apart from all the many other ills that beset mankind, nothing less than a war against the spirit is waged in our time. It is a war which, under the influence of certain circles, will become more and more widespread; and is being promoted in the strongest possible way by what may be termed the spirit of our time. — I have to admit that it is extremely difficult to speak about things belonging to this domain, at the same time it is not enough merely to hint at them or avoid calling them by their proper names. In this world nothing can be said to be absolute good or absolute evil; it always depends on the aspect from which it is viewed. The important thing is to recognize that in their right place at the right time things are good; shifted out of the right place and time they are no longer good. Nowadays people all too readily take things in a dogmatic or absolute sense, which so easily leads to misunderstanding about such matters. There is no question of levelling criticism at the age as such, only of drawing attention to facts.

There is an inclination in our time to turn away from the spirit and towards the ahrimanic — the ahrimanic is also spirit but it is spirit which is dead and reveals only what is material. Life has become immensely differentiated and there is more and more need for discrimination. Many examples could be given of different aspects of social life through which one can become aware of the kind of impulses that are at work in our time. Impulses of which we all partake. I shall mention just two such impulses.

One impulse is noticeable mainly in people who have strong links with the land, with the soil. If we travel eastwards we shall find more and more people of this type. If we go westwards we find more and more conditions of emancipation from the soil. In recent decades the Central European has made rapid strides from attachment to the soil to emancipation from it. Country folk have a close connection with the soil; town folk have emancipated themselves from it. One could say the country type of person is agrarian, the city type industrial. These two terms, agrarian and industrial, have taken on a different meaning in the last decade to what they once meant. It is difficult to explain these things because they tend to be taken in a dogmatic, absolute sense, but that is not what is meant. What is meant is a characterization of general tendencies. They are streams within human evolution and we are all involved in them.

Whatever we do in life we have an inclination towards one or the other of these two tendencies in man. Both are naturally good in themselves but under the influences that exist in our time they deteriorate. In the agrarian the deterioration takes the form of a disinclination to rise to anything spiritual; there is a tendency to let the spirit in man lie fallow, wanting to remain as one is and unite with what is not yet spirit. The industrial type develops an opposite tendency; he loses connection with the spirit active in nature and lives more and more in abstractions. His concepts become ever more rarefied and insubstantial. In our time the agrarian is in danger of suffocation for lack of spirituality. For the industrial the danger is of an opposite kind, he lives in spirit which is too rarefied, his concepts have lost all connection with true reality; he could be compared with someone living in air which is too thin.

These are the shadow-sides, especially in our age, of the two tendencies in man. We see that the agrarian type all too easily develops aversion for the spirit, i.e. for cultural development. One cannot however just stand still and avoid participating in evolution. If one remains at the level of nature by turning away from the spirit one sinks below nature and comes into relationship with demonic beings who make one into a real hater of the spirit. As a consequence a view of life develops based on ahrimanic demonology.

The extreme industrial type on the other hand, living in concepts that are completely abstract, develops an attitude of superiority; he sees himself as a kind of superman — though not in the Nietzschean sense — he comes into the realm of Lucifer. Ahriman hands him over to luciferic powers and he becomes steeped in luciferic concepts and emotions. The tendency in

the agrarian is towards brutishness; in the industrial it is towards an abstract recklessness of concepts. These phenomena are very conspicuous in our time. They are also serious matters that bring home the fact that our age cannot be understood without spiritual knowledge. Human beings must live together; to do so they must find common ground of understanding by rubbing off their one-sidedness on each other, and certainly both agrarians and industrials have their place.

Already at the time when the Gospels were written it was foreseen that human beings would become more and more differentiated. St. Luke's Gospel is written more with regard for agrarians, St. Matthew's Gospel more for industrials. However, not only the Gospel of St. Luke or that of St. Matthew should speak to us, but all the Gospels. There are "clever" people who find contradictions between the Gospels; they fail to take into account that the Gospels were written by human beings of different inner dispositions. The soul experiences of the writer of St. Luke's Gospel were akin to those of the agrarian type; whereas those of the writer of St. Matthew's Gospel were akin to the inner disposition of the industrial type. The essential thing is not to remain one-sided but to recognize that things which contradict each other are also complementary.

Unless man seeks to unite with the Universal Spirit, which today can be found only through spiritual knowledge — the Spirit which, though it pervades everything, does not live in any individual entity — the time will come when he will resemble the environment he lives in and identifies with. Eduard von Hartmann (Eduard von Hartmann 1842–1906 Philosopher) once made the apt remark that, when one goes into a rural district and catches sight of an ox with the peasant beside it, there is no great difference in their physiognomy. That is to express it radically, the remark is also derogatory, but one sees what is meant. In our time, because man turns away from the spirit, an intimate relationship develops between his soul and the environment. When one is able to observe life's more subtle aspect it is obvious that the mental life of the agrarian is influenced by his association with the soil, just as the industrial is influenced by his kind of environment. When either of these two types of people thinks about politics or religion, their thoughts are invariably colored by their particular kind of environment. Man's concepts and ideas are dependent today to an awful extent on his external physical environment; they must be set free by the knowledge and insight spiritual science can provide.

A thinker like African Spir would feel things of this kind very strongly. When he said that everything in the external world is semblance, illusion, it was because he became aware, by observing his own inner life, that man comes to experience his inner being as semblance. Through participating in external semblance he comes to feel his inner self as unreal. — How can one expect healing or solutions to come from the semblance in which man is immersed? His inner life is so entangled in conflicting impulses that it is no wonder external conflicts are rife.

To be a spiritual scientist, not just in name or because of some indefinite feeling, but in the deepest and truest sense, life must be observed with the insight of spiritual knowledge. Life today is not seen as it truly is; people shun the spirit and attempt to shape their life purely on the basis of what is unspiritual. It is useless to harbor spiritual knowledge as an abstract general truth, paying no heed to it when trying to understand life. To know that man consists of physical body, etheric body, astral body and 'I' or that Lucifer and Ahriman exist, is not enough. One should be able to apply concepts such as ahrimanic or luciferic scientifically, like a physicist applies the concepts of positive and negative electricity when testing these phenomena.

Agrarian and industrial are concepts which cease to be abstract when we, in looking at life, recognize them as luciferic and ahrimanic tendencies, as we have just done. One takes risks when describing things in this way, for people do not want to hear the truth. Yet the truth has to be faced if mankind is ever to find a cure for all the confusion in the world. Salvation from and the healing of the evils of our time are closely related to understanding human life.



2 False Analogies

7 August 1917, Berlin

I should like to add supplementary material to our recent considerations. The primary aim has been to show what, in view of the fundamental character and direction of present-day cultural life, is so urgently needed. Our studies also set out to show that from spiritual knowledge there must flow into man's thinking, feeling and willing the impulses needed at the present time. That spiritual impulses are needed must be obvious to many from even a superficial observation of present events.

Let me begin by illustrating the fact that at every turn we encounter proof of the need for spiritual insight. Many examples related to our recent studies could be chosen, but I will take an article that appeared a few days ago in a Berlin newspaper under the title: "Physiology of Politics." We must pay attention to symptoms of this kind for they indicate the nature of contemporary man's thinking, feeling and willing. Provided one refrains from entering into a one-sided controversy over such an article, seeing it rather as characteristic of the present-day outlook, then a publication of this kind can be enlightening.

The author of the article, Max Verworn, (Max Verworn 1863–1921) as I have mentioned before, is deemed one of the greatest authorities in his branch of science. This famous professor of physiology sets out to show that politics ought to be influenced by his way of thinking. This is understandable, indeed it is almost a matter of course, for everyone naturally considers his own thinking the best and therefore recommends its application to important affairs of the time. However, the article leaves one with a peculiar impression. First of all it brings home the fallacy that materialism, even in its crudest form, has been eradicated from natural science. Many who are firmly in the clutches of materialism, nevertheless believe this to be the case. They may have absorbed one or two ideas considered to be philosophical and so imagine materialism to be transcended. This article, by a leading authority on natural science, demonstrates how little materialism is overcome. A sentence like the following brings it home: "The general concept of the animal kingdom includes as a special example the concept of man, just as the animal

kingdom is itself a special example within the still more comprehensive concept of the organic world." This means that if we want to understand man we must turn to the animal kingdom; to understand the animal we must turn to the general concept of organism. Furthermore, this distinguished authority finds it of utmost importance that mutual relationships in political life should be studied the way one studies — that is to say, the way professor Verworn studies — mutual relationships in the animal kingdom. He considers himself to have made a remarkable discovery, for he says: "No one can deny this fact (that man is a special example of the animal kingdom) unless he is completely ignorant of biological evolution. Man differs from the rest of the animal kingdom merely through certain distinguishing features and through his cultural achievements. Nevertheless he is and remains, an animal organism whose total behaviour is subject to the general laws that govern animal species."

Official science is of the same conviction despite what is said, with more or less emphasis, to the contrary. It is obvious that this way of thinking is prevalent in every aspect of modern science even if theoretically some scientific statements go beyond this view. Consequently it leads Verworn to say: "No doubt our culture has evolved as a special instance of organic evolution." This means that organic development is supposed to be the source of all man's cultural achievements. So we must study how animals eat and digest, how they gradually develop, how the individual cells in their organism interact. We must then transfer these ideas to family life, to larger and smaller corporations and other bodies within the greater body of the State. We then, according to Verworn, have a proper foundation on which to build up a science of politics. He says: "We shall arrive at sound ideas in this domain only when we try to think of the political State (as he calls it) as a great organism." According to him the human organism is no different from the animal organism. When investigated one will find that individual cells and systems of cells in the organism are related and interdependent just like the various corporate bodies within the State.

Verworn sees development as a basic feature of the animal organism, but his view of development is peculiar. He says: "Development is a factor common to all living entities." But what does he understand by development? According to him development takes place when an organic entity adapts itself to the conditions in which it finds itself. Thus development is the result of something organic; i.e., something living adapting to its environment. But at the very first hurdle he stumbles, for he says: "A lower organism such as the amoeba is no doubt adapted from the start for otherwise it would not be capable of life and would be destroyed."

There is the catch! If the lower organism is adapted from the first to its environment, and development is supposed to consist in adaptation, then why does the amoeba evolve further when it is already adapted?

You see from this example that modern science disregards the basic principle of scientific investigation when it comes to the exact application of concepts and ideas. If a sentence such as the one Verworn makes in regard to development was taken seriously the whole current concept of evolution would collapse. But he goes on to make another statement based on the first: "A comparison of the different stages of organization, in various organisms, shows that increasing perfection is due to ever more elaborate and improved physiological means for maintaining life within the most varied changes of environment." In other words, because the amoeba, the lowest organism, is already adapted to the environment and therefore has no need to evolve further Verworn conceives the idea that the reason it nevertheless does evolve is in order to become ever better adapted. What is not explained is where this impulse to better adaptation comes from. The impulse cannot be inherent in the amoeba for Verworn says himself that if it were not already adapted it would perish.

This is the kind of evidence that is continuously brought forward. The public at large, though denying it has blind faith in authority, is conditioned to accept patiently such somersaults in ideas. These things are simply looked upon as signs of great and reliable science. When such ideas are applied in physiology they do no great harm in individual cases because what is investigated in physiology can be verified under the microscope. Facts may be falsely interpreted, the most extraordinary discoveries may be construed, but mistakes will be corrected when the facts are put under the microscope. It is in fact possible to be a great physiologist yet a dunce when it comes to working out ideas. However, the harm becomes immense when someone has the pretention to suggest that the concepts belonging to the realm of physiology can be transferred to social and political life. In this sphere false and misinterpreted ideas remain undetected as they no longer refer to something physical which can be verified under a microscope. Here concepts themselves are the guiding factor and if they are foolish their application results in foolishness. These things must be recognized, they lead to great tragedies in life.

In view of present-day intellectual proficiency it is astonishing how much ignorance, how much sheer lack of knowledge prevails among prominent scientific investigators — thoughtlessness on the one hand, superficiality on the other as demonstrated by claims such as those made by the famous

authority just mentioned. One asks in despair if a man in his position can really be unaware that what he suggests has already been attempted not very long ago. And then it was based on concepts that were equally obscure. In three volumes by Schäffle, (Albert Schaffle 1831–1903 Sociologist Austrian Minister of Trade.) the former Austrian prime minister, entitled "The Structure and Life of the Body Social" ("Bau and Leben des sozialen Körpers") the attempt is made to depict the State as a cellular organism. So the experiment had been made already and had ended in failure. Schäffle also wrote a book with the title: "The Lack of Prospect in Social Democracy" ("Die Aussichtslosigkeit der Sozialdemokratie") ; to which Hermann Bahr, (Hermann Bahr 1863–1934) then a young man, wrote a rejoinder with the title: "The Lack of Insight of Herr Schäffle." ("Die Einsichtslosigkeit des Herrn Schäffle")

This kind of ignorance results in repeated attempts to try again what has already been tried and has failed. Before acting on a general notion of this kind one would expect some one like Verworn to acquaint himself with a work such as that by Schäffle on the body social. It is interesting to ask: How does Verworn come to entertain these ideas at all? The answer could be that only a few decades earlier Virchow (Rudolf Vischow 1821–1902 Founder of Cellular Pathology) spoke about the structure of the human organism and the animal organism in general. Concerning the animal organism he said that it contains various systems of cells which are related and which interact with one another. But the relevant point is the *way* Virchow arrived at this idea of interacting systems of cells: He coined a word; calling the animal organism a "cell-State." In other words, he takes the idea of the State and compares the animal organism to it. Verworn turns the idea around, he extracts the concept of the State and proceeds to apply to it the whole evolution of the animal organism. — One is reminded of the story of the ingenious Münchhausen who pulls himself up by his forelock.

That is just one example of the superficiality that one meets at every turn. Here is someone who conceives the notion of how a State functions and transfers this notion to organisms. Someone else comes along and transfers his notion of how an organism functions over to the State. The whole subject remains obscure to the public in general who simply accept what is presented and have no idea that concepts, belonging to quite a different realm, are introduced. It is the kind of situation that is prevalent everywhere. People, trying to gain a firm hold on life, turn to popular science for guidance but do not find the security they long for. All that the highly respected science has to offer are theories built on shaky

foundations. The most arbitrary notions are bandied about; statements are issued and no trouble taken to verify their correctness first. If only they were examined first one would realize the nonsense they often present. Take this statement by Verworn: "All systems of cells are dependent on others, which however does not mean that one kind of cell exercises a power to suppress another kind. On the contrary, cell systems mutually promote one another's specific quality in the interest of the social whole and consequently in the interest of each individual cell." — Verworn is here referring to the human organism. Thus groups of cells are supposed to be dependent on each other but in such a way that it is to their mutual benefit. This arrangement is then held up as a model for arranging the various departments within a State. The notion is that, in order to function, brain cells; i.e., one kind of cells, need the cooperation of blood cells, while the blood cells at the same time place themselves at the service of the brain cells. One wonders what the outcome would be were these notions introduced into organizing a State. The whole idea is so preposterous that we need look at one aspect only to realize the insanity of the whole idea.

Verworn visualizes individual departments of State interacting the way that, according to him, individual systems of cells interact in an animal organism. This, he maintains, reveals the real concept of freedom. He continues: "A close study of the direction evolution has taken in the case of the cell State in the animal organism, provides us with guidelines for the direction we should take in order to establish a corresponding system within the social organism of the political State. It reveals to us among other things the true idea of individual freedom, seen here in its natural setting, free from all nonessential externalities with which it is often associated." — So, according to Verworn, because blood cells are enjoying freedom in their interaction with brain cells, human freedom can be discovered by studying their relationship! — As for the nervous system, Verworn sees it as corresponding in the organism to the administrative machinery of the State. Not only is the comparison ridiculous, it is not even consistent for he overlooks that nerves lead to sense organs, so where do we have the eyes and ears of the State?

When one works with spiritual knowledge one is led to lofty, sublime concepts. They apply to the way things are related spiritually; they therefore apply also to the spiritual connections in man's animal-human organism. But when concepts are derived one-sidedly from the human organism as such, especially as done in this case, one simply gets nowhere. Yet in another statement Verworn carries the absurdity even further when he says: "The level of greater perfection of organic

development in the animal cell-State is only reached at a further stage through centralization. At this stage the function of single cells and groups of cells is regulated and guided, according to momentary needs, from a center which is able to assess the need on the basis of information received." Verworn suggests with these childish ideas that the brain receives information from other groups of cells and sends messages accordingly to the stomach, and so on.

And how, according to Verworn, does civilization, does culture come about? He says: "Culture is the sum total of all the ways and means created by man himself that enables him to be fully conscious of his environment and adapt to whatever occurrence happens in his life. Culture is nothing else than the totality of all the values man has created for the preservation and advancement of his life." — To define culture in this way one must have lost all capacity of observation and taken leave of one's reason as well! Culture is supposed to be the sum total of values created by man for the preservation and advancement of life! The intellect must indeed have ceased to function for undoubtedly the culture created by man at present consists mainly in instruments designed to destroy. Looking at what culture has become in this domain it can hardly be described as preserving and advancing human life. Had it been described as created for oppression and destruction that would have been correct, at least in regard to a part of culture. But statements like those brought forward by Verworn one meets everywhere in modern science. Take the following example: "The production of cultural values is a physiological function not just in individuals but is to a large extent a specific function of the political State. This is because there are many cultural values which cannot be created by single individuals, as they are values which serve the whole community they need the cooperation of many. The political State as such is therefore an organism that produces cultural values just like the individual. Moreover, as it is obvious that a close relation exists between politics and physiology it is time that practical results were gained from this fact. One should reckon with the reality that a political State has a physiological basis, therefore information should be derived from the living organism concerning all matters of organization." —Verworn would no doubt have said that information should be derived from *his* knowledge of the human organism.

These things are symptoms and must be brought to light. They delude the unhappy soul of man who at present is longing to know how and where it belongs within the great organism of the universe. It is nonsense of this kind that makes it so extraordinarily difficult to reach any

understanding, particularly with people who are proficient in science. It would be an illusion to imagine that someone like Verworn could begin to understand even the most elementary aspects of spiritual science. While that is unthinkable there is at least the possibility that spiritual science, through its own power, will sustain more and more people so that eventually such scientific folly with its colossal pretensions will be overcome. It is no use trying to refute it and trying to be understood is hopeless. All that can be done is for a sufficient number of people to become aware of the danger threatening mankind if what today calls itself science is allowed to lead the way and to insinuate itself into realms where concepts become realities. This danger is a serious one of which one ought to be well aware; it is all the more important because this kind of superficiality, prevalent though it already is, will undoubtedly increase. These things are staring one in the face and it is so much to be wished that a sufficient number of people would look at them from a deeper aspect as we have to some extent just done.

Very much depends upon these things being evaluated rightly, but what happens is usually something like the following: A speech by Virchow appears in print; how is it received? Because Virchow is famous and regarded as a very important person it is taken for granted — though of course no one is supposed to suffer from blind faith in authority — that what such a famous man says can be accepted without question, it must be Gospel truth. Yet even if for once it was the truth one still ought to think through and evaluate for oneself what has been said. Take another example: at a meeting of scientists in Munich, Haeckel and Virchow discussed the liberty that prevailed in spreading scientific theories. Virchow suggested that conclusions should not be drawn indiscriminately from the theory of evolution. Much of what he said in opposition to *Haeckel* was justified. He was more particularly against Darwinism being introduced without reservations into schools, where it would only serve to close the minds to other views. In his speech Virchow said among other things the following: "It is to my credit that I know my own ignorance. It is important for me to know the exact extent of my ignorance of chemistry, otherwise I should forever labor under uncertainty." Of course, it is commendable of Virchow to admit knowing nothing of chemistry. However, the unfortunate consequence is that his followers refuse to concern themselves with chemistry, simply saying they know nothing about it. On the other hand they look upon those who confess to spiritual-scientific knowledge as fools or visionaries. If only these people would let what Virchow says about chemistry apply also to spiritual science, then they would say: It is

important that I know exactly to what extent I know nothing about spiritual science. But this is not said; the same honest attitude is not forthcoming. So you see, it is essential to recognize the consequences even when what is said is correct.

Nonetheless there was much of greatness in the 19th Century, but it is necessary to have a proper understanding of this greatness. Many things which are now part of mankind's general destiny, can be understood only in relation to what took place in the 19th Century. Souls without a rudder, souls without a firm grip on life who feel they do not belong, are numerous in our time. They are for the most part souls who, out of an instinctive need, long for something different from what traditional values can offer, souls who have been searching without finding anything which could give them a feeling of security, of belonging. So what is lacking, what is it that man needs? — I will not say to give him security once and for all, that is no more possible than it is possible for a single meal to sustain the whole of life. It is perhaps better to ask: What does man need to find a secure path through life? What he needs above all is a consciousness of belonging within the world. Weakness and inner discontent comes from the soul's feeling of isolation. Life's greatest question is in fact: Where and how do I fit into the world? This is putting it abstractly; but this abstract question expresses much of immense significance concerning the deeper aspect of human destiny.

When man today turns to natural science in order to reach a satisfying answer to the question: Where, as man, is my place in the world? then at best the natural-scientific world view will tell him where his physical body belongs within world evolution as a whole. Today it is known, at least up to a point, where man's physical body belongs in the evolutionary process. But the natural-scientific world view has absolutely nothing to say about how man's soul, let alone spirit, fits into world evolution. Compare for a moment the evolutionary process, as described by spiritual science, with that described by natural science. The natural-scientific theory of evolution leads to the animal kingdom — how this is arrived at is a separate issue — spiritual science leads us back through the different phases of earth evolution: through the Ancient Moon evolution, the Ancient Sun evolution to the Ancient Saturn evolution. It shows us that what lives within us as soul and spirit were germinally present already within the Ancient Saturn evolution. Nothing physically was then present, except conditions of warmth. We are shown how we are related to the primordial warmth,

pervaded through and through by the individual beings of the Hierarchies who are still about us. We are placed within a cosmos filled with soul and spirit. That is the great difference.

Spiritual science shows our soul and spirit to be part and parcel of a universal all which it can describe in detail. Thus spiritual science alone can give the human soul that without which it feels annihilated. The dissatisfaction and insecurity felt by modern man reflect modern thinking. This thinking disregards the soul and declares that only the human body exists within the cosmic all. Another aspect is that the soul feels it has nothing to relate to, and that prevents it from finding inner strength. To reach inner strength of soul one must have attained concepts and ideas which depict the cosmic all as containing man as a being of soul and spirit; just as natural science depicts physical man as part of the physical evolution of the universe.

The courage shown today so admirable in regard to external issues must be extended to the inner life. In this respect modern man is far from courageous. He draws back from all aspects of spiritual reality with the consequence that so many human beings experience inner dissatisfaction and insecurity. Very much has to be done it is true, before distorted ideas give way to sound ones. Nowadays there is, for example, still a preoccupation with atomic theories, even though the earlier crude form has given way to ions and electrons. The modern view is that everything consists of atoms. Many are of the opinion that everything can be traced back to minute atomic structures. Matter is thought to consist of the tiniest of particles; i.e., atoms. And many scientists, in fact most, endow matter with force so that the particles of matter are supposed to attract and repel one another. At this point investigations come to an end. The 19th Century will be seen as a significant period in mankind's evolution: the time when the universe was explained as a structure of matter and force, a view that has been given classical expression in innumerable works.

This example shows the extent to which ideas must be readjusted before it is possible to evaluate what is needed now. Let us hold on to the fact that there are those whose speculations are mainly concerned with matter; they imagine that the world consists of atoms. How does this view compare with what spiritual science has to say? Certainly natural physical phenomena do lead us back to atoms, but what are these atoms? They reveal what they are at the moment the very first stage of spiritual perception has been attained. At the stage of imaginative perception atoms reveal what they truly are. I have spoken about this in various connections

many years ago in public lectures. Those who speculate on matter come to the conclusion that space is empty and atoms whirl around in this empty space. Atoms are supposed to be the most solid entities in existence. That is simply not the case, the whole issue is based on illusion. To imaginative cognition atoms are revealed as bubbles and the reality is where the empty space is supposed to be. Atoms are blown up bubbles. In other words, in contrast to what surrounds them they are nothing. You know that where bubbles are seen in soda-water there is no water. Atoms are bubbles in that sense; where they are the space is hollow, nothing is there. And yet it is possible to push against it; impact occurs precisely because, in pushing against hollowness, an effect is produced. How can nothing produce an effect? Take the case of the space, practically empty of air, within an air-pump; there you see how air streams into nothingness. A wrong interpretation might imagine the empty space in the bulb of the air pump as containing a substance that forced in the air. That is exactly the illusion prevailing in regard to the atom. The opposite is true: atoms are empty — yet again not empty. There is after all something within these bubbles. And what is it? — This is also something about which have already spoken — what exists within the atom bubbles is ahrimanic substance. Ahriman is there. The whole system of atoms consists of ahrimanic substantiality. As you see this is a considerable metamorphosis of the ideas entertained by those who theorize about matter. Where in space they see something material we see the presence of Ahriman.

Force is another concept which in particular occupies those who speculate about force in their attempt to build up a world picture. Here again the very first stage of spiritual cognition shows that where force is supposed to be active there is in fact nothing. But where the force is thought not to be, there something is at work. It is exactly as if two people walked side by side and were observed by a third person. He looks towards them and, as they are walking a little apart, he looks between them and describes, not one or the other person, but the space between them. He is concerned, not with the two persons but the emptiness between them. That is the way those who theorize about force are looking at what is between the reality. Where it is said that a force of attraction is operating there is actually nothing, but to the left and the right there is the reality.

I would have to go into many things were I to explain in detail what I have put forward simply as facts. It is time such things were discussed, for clear ideas corresponding to facts are needed. Otherwise it is not possible to refute such brilliant nonsense as, for example, the theory of relativity which has made Einstein (Albert Einstein 1879–1955 Physicist, formulated

the Theory of Relativity) a figure of renown. The theory of relativity seems so self-evident: for example, when a cannon is fired at a distance the sound is heard after a certain interval; if one moves nearer to the cannon the sound is heard sooner. Now, according to the theory of relativity if one moved with the speed of sound one would not hear it for one would go with it. If one went even faster than the sound, then one would hear something which is fired later, before one would hear what was fired earlier. This idea is generally accepted today but it has no relation whatever to reality. To go as fast as sound would mean to be sound and to hear none. These quite distorted ideas exist today as the theory of relativity and enjoy the greatest respect.

As it has already been said, physicists draw lines to depict currents of force, but where the force is supposed to be there is in fact nothing, whereas all around there is something. There is Lucifer, the luciferic element is there. If we want to depict what corresponds to actual reality we must place the luciferic element where force is placed by those who theorize about it. In the 19th Century someone wrote a book with the title "Force and Matter" in which the world is presented as consisting of force and matter. In the 20th Century we must substitute that title with "Lucifer and Ahriman," for Lucifer and Ahriman are identical with what are described as force and matter. What can be described as force and matter are really described by Lucifer and Ahriman. You may say: this is dreadful! It is not dreadful for as I have often emphasized Lucifer and Ahriman are only dreadful when they are not balanced against each other. In mutual balance they serve the wise guidance of worlds. When Lucifer is placed on one side of the scales and Ahriman on the opposite side the balance between them must be achieved. It is a balance for which we must constantly strive.

In our own being this balance comes about in a remarkable way. You may remember my speaking about the extraordinary way we are related to the whole universe through our breathing. We draw a certain number of breaths per minute; if we count the number of breaths inhaled in one day we arrive at a number which corresponds to the days of a person's life, if he lives to the age of seventy. It really is quite astonishing: we live the same number of days as the number of breaths drawn in one day. And that is only one detail of the mighty concordance of harmonies within the universe. One of our breaths is related to the days of our life as one day of our life is related to our whole earthly life and the whole earthly life is related to a great Solar Year, the so-called Platonic Year, just as one day of life is related to the whole life and one breath to one day. Thus our

breathing is in a wonderful inner relationship to the whole cosmos. If in our cognition we could achieve a tempo that corresponded to that of our breath then we would come into harmony with the whole universe in a way that befits man. People in the Orient attempt this through breathing exercises which are not suitable for Western man. He must seek this harmony along a more spiritual path.

All the exercises described in the book *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and its Attainment* are the spiritual correlate suited to the West, of that for which the Orient longs: to bring the rhythm of the process of breathing into the process of cognition. If our thinking had the same tempo as our breathing many secrets of the universe would be disclosed to us. The universe does disclose its secrets but unfortunately not to our cognition — if one can use the word, unfortunately in this connection — but to our dim feelings which are subject to many illusions. On the other hand our cognition, our thinking by means of which we form mental pictures, is too "short" when compared to the rhythm of the breath. The swing of the pendulum in our thinking is too short. In our ordinary normal external life, we are not able to enter, by means of thinking, into the great rhythm of the cosmos. Our thinking is too small. By contrast there is something in us which is too large: that is our will. In the will the pendulum swings out too far; its amplitude is too strong.

Thus we live between our thinking and our will. In thinking the swing of the pendulum is too short, in the will it is too wide. That is the reason our thinking forms mental pictures which must always be modified by others. The only way we can gradually come to an insight is by adopting various standpoints. As for the will, because it swings out too far the amount we are able to catch hold of is always too small. The will must therefore flow together with another will in order to reach its predestined goal. The will can only achieve something in connection with another will; i.e., the will of one incarnation together with the will of a former incarnation and so on.

I am sketching these things in merest outline; they all require elaboration. But my aim is to indicate the kind of concepts spiritual science must bring to man; concepts that will enable him to recognize where he belongs, now and in the future, within the universe. Our ordinary thinking is too narrow. It does not oscillate far enough compared with the wider oscillation of our breath. However, thinking in itself is not the goal, only the path. All human beings think, but they are not conscious of everything which passes through their soul. A thought has not reached its goal by merely being formulated, it must unite itself with our being. Thoughts

which become conscious pass over into memory; but we assimilate a great deal which does not reach consciousness. Just think of all the experiences that have passed through your soul, some you have thought about, others not. Some you remember, others not, but all are within you; within your etheric body. After death they separate themselves from us and pass over into the world in general. There they become what we behold in the time between death and a new birth. They enable us to perceive the reality around us. Our thoughts unite themselves with what there constitutes our external world. Just as here, in the physical world, we need light in order to perceive so do we there need what separates itself from us. I have often described this process of our thoughts separating themselves from us after death to become our external world.

The content of our will becomes our inner world, not that which we have merely wished; but will that has become deed. What we have willed here, what we have imprinted into the external world, the actions we have carried out become our inner world in the time between death and a new birth, whereas our thoughts, our inner life, become what illumines our external world. *The outer becomes the inner; the inner becomes the outer.* It is important to keep that well in mind.

To use a popular saying: a great deal of water will have to flow under the bridge before official science wakes up to the fact that force and matter should be termed Lucifer and Ahriman, or come to realize that we tend towards one-sidedness in two directions: our thinking, related to breathing, has a tendency towards the luciferic; while our will, related to metabolism, has a tendency towards the ahrimanic. We oscillate between Lucifer and Ahriman. In the middle is the breathing process, the sphere of equilibrium, where we partake of the great harmony of the universe. That is true science, that is *experienced*, not abstract science.

And now let us turn from spiritual science and compare it to the verse in the Old Testament where it says. "And He breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul." It is not said that power of will or of thinking was bestowed upon man; it is the breath that is emphasized. You can sense that this primordial revelation stems from a knowledge very different from that of modern spiritual science. But you will also sense the marvelous concordance, the marvelous agreement that exists between the findings of spiritual science today and the content of this and other great historical documents dealing with mankind's evolution. It goes without saying that the revelations in the Old Testament were not arrived at in the same way as the findings of modern spiritual science, but

for that very reason the agreement between them is all the more significant. We shall see in the next lecture that this agreement applies also to other historical documents such as the New Testament, especially to the Mystery of Golgotha.

My aim today was to call your attention to what is needed at present and also to point out how very difficult it is to come to any understanding, especially in the sphere of science, with people who hold on to outdated ideas which they regard as infallible. As I once said: the infallibility of the Pope may be questioned but the authority of a great many people is thought to be infallible by those who labor under the illusion that they are above taking things on authority.



3

Rhythm in Breathing and Cognition

14 August 1917, Berlin

I spoke last time about the fact that, had evolution run its intended course, earthly man would not have strayed from his appointed place in the cosmic order. This is well known and is imaginatively expressed in various religions in such symbols as that of original sin and the like. Viewed in the light of spiritual science this aspect of mankind's evolution is directly connected with the fact that man's essential nature — that is, earthly man's essential nature — manifests itself through breathing. I indicated last time that the rhythm of the breath, and with it knowledge, cognition, was predestined to be man's most significant experience during his earth-existence. Last time I summarized briefly things spoken about on earlier occasions, namely that the rhythm of breathing is in wonderful harmony with the cosmos. I mentioned how, in a normal human life, the number of days equals the number of breaths drawn in one day. And I pointed to other numerical relationships which give evidence of the harmonious agreement that exists between our microcosmic breathing process and the great cosmic processes within which we are placed.

It can be shown, not only through the findings of spiritual science, but also through external observation, that the rhythm of breathing, more than anything else, shows man to be a microcosm, a little world. Man's breathing copies the processes of the Great World, the macrocosm. However, in regard to man, far too little attention is paid to slight differences, to individual characteristics. The fact is that there are no two people whose breathing is exactly the same, because each individual sounds, as it were, a different chord within the cosmos. However, in man's present earth-existence everything connected with the rhythm of the breath remains unconscious. Only under abnormal conditions or through some illness does the process of breathing become conscious. Our normal consciousness functions at a level above the process of breathing and is, as a consequence, not so closely bound up with the cosmos. If cognition had been based on the rhythm of breathing instead of processes in the brain our whole relation to, and knowledge of, the world would be different. It is because our cognition is dependent on the brain that we were forced out of what should have been our normal relationship with the macrocosm.

This secret of the breath is indicated in religious records, such as the Old Testament, when it says that the Divine Spiritual Being, concerned with the guidance of mankind, breathed into man the breath of life and he became a living soul. In the sense of ancient atavistic clairvoyance this is an absolutely true rendering of the facts. As far as his intellect is concerned man has a different relationship to the cosmos before and after the Mystery of Golgotha. This is because the brain and not the breath became the bodily foundation for knowledge. — In order to deepen our understanding we have considered the Mystery of Golgotha from many aspects; today we shall approach it from yet another.

It is true to say that before man was exposed to the influence of Lucifer, his knowledge, indeed his whole relation to the world, was intended to be different. Knowledge was to have been based on the rhythm of the breath. But before the Mystery of Golgotha, due to the Luciferic influence, the process of cognition developed higher up in man's organism and became related to the head and sense organs instead of to the chest and breathing. This is looking at it purely from the point of view of the body but in this connection the body itself has a deeper significance. The difference in man before and after the Mystery of Golgotha is not likely to be perceived or acknowledged by natural science. For although the difference is considerable it can be ascertained only by subtler means. Before the Mystery of Golgotha, as Anthroposophy explains, man had as a matter of course a relationship with spiritual beings in the cosmos, with the beings of the higher Hierarchies. But what was the relationship? Among the beings of the Hierarchies we distinguish to begin with, immediately bordering on the human realm, the Angeloi, the Archangeloi and so on. Therefore the nearest beings to whom we look up, when we turn to the spiritual world are the Angeloi. As human beings we have a relationship to the Angeloi and they in turn feel their relationship to man. It is not a matter of indifference to the Angeloi what kind of relationship they have to man. When we turn our attention to this relationship we can begin to understand the difference in human beings before and after the Mystery of Golgotha.

The remarkable fact is that before the Mystery of Golgotha an intimate relation existed between the activity and being of the Angeloi and the human intellect. One could say that before the Mystery of Golgotha the Angeloi dwelt mainly in man's intellect. Man knew nothing of this but as a consequence he had, though in decreasing strength, atavistic, imaginative clairvoyance. When I said that before the Mystery of Golgotha the Angeloi dwelt in man's intellect, this holds good for his life between birth and death. It was different in man's life between death and new birth. Then the

Angeloi, and especially the Angels belonging to individual human beings, dwelt in the memory man had of his sense impressions. They dwelt in pictures of what had surrounded man in the world of the senses on earth. The result was that in his life between death and new birth — before the Mystery of Golgotha — man had a vivid knowledge of what took place on earth. In a sense one could say that the Angeloi carried up to man knowledge of what was happening on earth.

This gives an idea of man's relation to the Angeloi before the Mystery of Golgotha. Afterwards this relationship gradually changed. So what relationship does man have now to the beings of the Hierarchy of the Angeloi? Now it is the case that, although we are not conscious of it, the Angeloi dwell in our sense perceptions between birth and death. When we open our eyes and look around at everything that surrounds us affecting our senses we are not aware that our Angel dwells in the sun rays which penetrate our eyes making objects visible. The beings of the Angeloi live in waves of sound, in the rays of light and color and in other sense perceptions. The reason man does not know he is surrounded by the Angeloi is because he transforms his perceptions into mental pictures and into these the Angeloi do not enter. It has often been emphasized in our lectures that the spiritual world must be visualized all around us and not in some far away cloud-cuckoo-land. The spiritual world is literally everywhere about us and it is possible to explain quite concretely in what sense it surrounds us as in this case in regard to the Angeloi. Yet no consciousness of the Angeloi enters our intellect between birth and death. By contrast man is at present very conscious of his relation with the Angeloi between death and new birth because then the Angeloi dwell in his intellect.

What I have just explained has significant consequences for human life. Let us go back for a moment to man as he was before the Mystery of Golgotha. Then the Angeloi, particularly his own Angel dwelt in his intellect; this made his senses in particular accessible to luciferic powers. In ancient times man's consciousness in general was accessible to luciferic influences. This has changed since the Mystery of Golgotha. As I have just explained the beings of the Hierarchy of the Angeloi who weave and move — borne on rays of light and color and on wings of sound — do not penetrate our intellect. As a consequence our intellect is exposed to the attacks of ahrimanic powers during our life between birth and death. Whereas before the Mystery of Golgotha man was exposed essentially to the attacks of Lucifer; since the Mystery of Golgotha the intellect is particularly exposed to the influence of ahrimanic powers. Their main

objective is to stifle man's consciousness of his connection with the spiritual world. All the tendencies to materialism that man develops in his life of thought stem from this direct relationship between his intellect and the attacks of Ahriman. And if the materialistic tendencies, which are fully described in these lectures, have the upper hand in our time, we must not forget that they originate in the confusion which Ahriman strives to promote in the human intellect.

What is the real significance of these things? As already mentioned the process of breathing is subconscious, but that to which I have just referred; i.e. man's connection with the Angeloi, is not conscious either. That however lies *above* our consciousness. What happens in our breathing lies *below* our consciousness; what happens within us through the interaction with the spiritual world nearest to us lies above our consciousness. Within this process above our consciousness is actively working the force that entered the world through the Mystery of Golgotha, whereas earlier it was the force of Jehovah that worked in man. If we deepen our insight into the spirit — I say expressly into the spirit — of a writing such as the Book of Job, and realize how graphically it depicts the sway of the Jehovah force in human evolution, it gives us a picture of how the force worked which gave man life through the breath. As described there it worked in the forces of heredity down to the third and fourth generations.

In order to discover the corresponding force at work after the Mystery of Golgotha we must turn to the Christ. Just as the force of Jehovah is related to man's process of breathing so is the force of Christ, indeed the whole Mystery of Golgotha, related to that process I have just described as lying above man's consciousness. One could say that man's breathing has been deprived of consciousness through the luciferic influence. In compensation man is given the possibility to attain that higher consciousness of which I spoke; this will mean for man to unite with the Angeloi through the senses and the intellect. To compensate as it were for that which was taken from him; i.e., cognition through the rhythm of the breath, man is to be given, through the impulse flowing from the Mystery of Golgotha, cognition through a higher consciousness. There were people of deeply religious natures in the Orient who strove, before the Mystery of Golgotha, to bring consciousness into their breathing. To imitate this procedure today is harmful. The aim of the breathing exercises, described in Oriental writings, was to irradiate the process of breathing with consciousness. But in regard to certain higher knowledge man's earthly consciousness is doomed to be

powerless. These ancient practices are being imitated today because it is not realized that through Lucifer man has been deprived of the possibility to irradiate his breathing with knowledge.

He is instead, since the Mystery of Golgotha, to attain a connection with the spiritual world through the development of a higher consciousness. If we were able to cognize; i.e. attain knowledge through our breath, then with every inhalation we would be conscious, not of inhaling air, but of taking in the force of Jahve; and with every exhalation we would know we exhaled Jahve. In a similar way man is now to become conscious that the beings of the Hierarchy of the Angeloi approach him and retreat from him rhythmically; that the spiritual world flows towards him and again ebbs away as it were. But man will attain this higher consciousness only if the impulse of the Mystery of Golgotha influences him more and more.

Fundamental issues can sometimes only be characterized by the use of strange words. In order to describe truth one must not shrink from using appropriate terms. Through Lucifer's influence the process of breathing became dulled as I have just described. True, it is meant pictorially, but if rightly understood one will feel the objective reality in the picture. Jahve's original intention was for man to be conscious of Him in every breath drawn into the body and conscious of His withdrawal with every exhalation. But Lucifer became Jahve's opponent and the consciousness, inherent in the force of Jahve, was shut off from man's consciousness. And now comes the point where one perforce must use strange, severe words in order to give a true description: Jahve had to forget human beings, insofar as their life on earth is concerned, because He could not enter their consciousness. It really did happen that the Being from whom the Jahve-force issued and other spiritual beings within the spiritual world forgot man, just as we may forget something. They forgot man, lost him from their consciousness. The consciousness was rekindled through the Mystery of Golgotha. If from primordial times, up to the Mystery of Golgotha, the tragic words were spoken: And the Gods forgot mankind; then since the Mystery of Golgotha we must say: And it is once more the Gods' will, by and by, to remember mankind. For the sake of human beings the Gods gradually will penetrate with their forces just that from which man otherwise would grasp none of the spirit: the wisdom connected with the human brain, the life of ideation connected with the human nervous system. Heaven wishes to behold the earth, to behold from above what is below. The necessary window was opened when the Being of Christ, through the baptism in the Jordan, entered the personality of Jesus. The words: "This is my beloved Son, this day have I begotten him" denotes the fact that what is above will once

more behold what is below, that the forces from above can now stream in and out of that which is below, not however through man's breathing but through his thoughts and ideation. The time, since the Mystery of Golgotha, has been essentially a time of preparation. We are now at the turning point when something else must come, than was previously in the working of the Mystery of Golgotha. That we should become aware of this is of immense importance.

Everything that has taken place so far has been in the nature of preparation. Up till now only exceptional individuals have been able — through spiritual knowledge — to draw near the Mystery of Golgotha. The time has come when a greater part of mankind, through spiritual science, must come to understand the Mystery of Golgotha. Why is this so essential?

Many secrets are connected with an understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha. People often ask: How can I find a relationship to Christ? Certainly it is a question that is justified. But anyone with insight will know that it is a question that cannot be answered just like that. Let me make a comparison: we see objects by means of our eyes, but the eyes we do not see. For the eyes to be able to see they must be unable to see themselves. They see mirror images but not themselves. That which does the seeing cannot itself be seen. Since the Mystery of Golgotha man must see the spiritual world through the impulse coming from Christ just as he sees external colors through his eyes. We do not see the eyes through which the colors, etc. are seen, nor do we see the Christ impulse through which we see the spiritual world. This is why the Mystery of Golgotha is veiled in mystery and the history of the event is also veiled. Since the Mystery of Golgotha the historical event associated with it cannot be discovered by historic means. To seek for Christ historically like any other event in history would be like trying to induce the eye to see itself. It is inherent in the Mystery of Golgotha that Christ Jesus cannot be found like Plato, Socrates or any other historical personality, through historical documents. It lies in its very nature that accounts of it are *not* historical, they were given by human beings who were inspired. Accounts of the Mystery of Golgotha can always be proved not to be historical records in the usual sense. We would become spiritually ill in the course of human evolution in the moment it became possible to include the Mystery of Golgotha among other historical events. Nor in that case would we be able to see it rightly; if we saw it historically it would be like an injured eye seeing itself. A healthy eye sees objects but not itself. If a chip has become embedded in the eye it will see a dark space before it and begin to perceive itself; but that is abnormal

perception. Similarly an abnormal perception of the Mystery of Golgotha would come about if it did not have an aspect which externally is imperceptible and therefore enables man to perceive spiritually. This is a secret connected with the Mystery of Golgotha. The remarkable thing is that this strange situation did not exist for man before the Mystery of Golgotha. In ancient times before Christ had descended to the earth man knew, through his atavistic clairvoyance, that Christ was there above in the spiritual world and that He would come. Hence there is remarkable prophetic evidence which shows there were human beings who were conscious, through direct personal experience, of the Christ who was to come. It is a paradox that man could know of Christ as long as He had not yet come to the earth. From the moment He had come man could no longer know of Him in the same way. Just as one experiences the eye when one perceives, so the Christ-event had to be experienced in the time after the Mystery of Golgotha, and not known historically.

It is interesting to see how these things, which I am now explaining in the light of spiritual science, are dealt with in the Gospels. But we must leave that to some other occasion.

Thus it was inevitable that from early on, in the development of Christianity, faith was emphasized rather than knowledge. Christians were not to expect knowledge concerning the Mystery of Golgotha but experience it inwardly through faith. Yet the Mystery of Golgotha is meant to illumine our world of concepts, for ideas born of faith are also concepts, are also our mental pictures. Furthermore, that is the realm in which the impulse from the Mystery of Golgotha meets all the attacks of Ahriman. Our intellect is the arena where the impulse of Christ fights the impulse of Ahriman. Man's evolution, his purely external evolution on earth, will take its course and Ahriman will not be as fettered as he is now. The "Thousand Years" will elapse and man will need a different force, he must have something over and above mere faith with which to establish the Christ impulse in his earthly consciousness. What is this different force?

This different force is spiritual knowledge through which man spiritually should make his own what we call the impulse of Christ. It will enable him to find within himself the strong force with which to protect the Christ impulse in his consciousness against the attacks of Ahriman. The Christ impulse is established in the world and Ahriman cannot abolish it. That is beyond his strength. Ahriman cannot alter the fact that Christ came into the world through the body of Jesus of Nazareth. But what he can do is so to transform the concept, the mental picture of Christ in the human

intellect that man experiences a pretense, instead of the Christ impulse. This means he creates a false picture of Christ. Man is exposed to the danger that while he may talk about Christ his intellectual picture of Christ is inspired by Ahriman. Those who are able to review modern cultural developments in their true forms seldom find any accurate picture of Christ in men's mind; more often than not they are distorted by Ahriman. By no means is it always the real Christ whom the adherents of Christianity call Christ. Ahriman clouds and confuses the human intellect in many ways in order to attain his goal, not least in those places where men are apt to seek religious counsel. There one can encounter peculiar views. Suppose one asks a Catholic theologian about his real opinion concerning the Virgin Mary. Certainly most would only give the reply he had been instructed to give, but let us leave that aside. There are some who have developed theological cognition beyond the level of mere instruction. In such cases one invariably finds a strange similarity between the cosmic picture of the heavenly church and the earthly woman Mary. This view comes about because for the Catholic theologian the Virgin Mary is identical with the symbolic woman in the Apocalypse who has the moon beneath her feet, the sun at her breast and the seven stars above her head. Thus, in order to visualize the meaning of the spiritual concept it is transposed into an earthly reality. Certain passages in Catholic writings demonstrate that Catholic theologians still look upon the Virgin Mary as identical with the woman in the sun with the moon at her feet and the stars above her head. Here the spiritual, the cosmic-spiritual is seen completely in terms of the earthly; and in fact the cosmic aspect is disappearing more and more through Ahrimanic influence. Nowhere does it disappear more thoroughly than from man's conception of Christ. There is very little inclination today to acknowledge Christ as the Great Cosmic Spirit who descended from cosmic heights to dwell in the human body of Jesus of Nazareth. Many people have an aversion to admit it; they believe it truly Christian to bring as little as possible of a cosmic aspect into the concept of Christ. This attitude would have been quite impossible for a theologian in the 14th century. This fact may not be demonstrated by history because external history is itself distorted.

Ahriman's whole interest lies in diverting man away from the spiritual, towards the material. What is material is indeed also spiritual but its spirit lies hidden within the earth. Ahriman does need much cunning and the use of many a trick in order to prevent man from seeing any cosmic aspect in the personality of the Christ. Nevertheless one finds descriptions of Christ which are strikingly ahrimanic; they are bereft of everything supersensible

and are deliberately made to appear purely human. Particularly in social-democratic literature is this very common; not to mention painters who have done everything possible to eliminate every suggestion of a cosmic quality from their figure of Christ. Some years ago there was an exhibition here in Berlin of paintings of Christ, a whole series of ahrimanic paintings one after the other. And then there are all the self-appointed preachers who officially or unofficially speak in a sectarian manner about the Christ with no awareness that Ahriman has them by the collar and induces them to present *his* version of the Christ impulse and not one in which the true impulse of Christ is effective.

The true and therefore effective Christ impulse can in our time be presented by no other means than spiritual science. For spiritual science is concerned with spiritual perception which is attained outside the body and therefore where the possibility exists of beholding again the Christ in His true form. As long as one is within the body the eye can indeed behold colors but it cannot behold itself. When one betakes oneself out of the body in spiritual perception one beholds the impulse of Christ through the Christ impulse itself; just as when one sees oneself from the outside one sees the eye. What man can find in spiritual science he cannot find in any historical account to be a description of Christ in His spiritual form. Just as spiritual science can describe a faculty of sight which is on a level higher than that of the eye, so it can describe the Christ impulse through which the spiritual world becomes visible. It is therefore possible to attain insight into the Christ impulse, but insight does not prevent attacks from Ahriman. They must be met with courage. The reason people do not want to know about the concept of Christ attained through spiritual science is because of a subconscious fear that as soon as the Christ impulse is understood it will arouse Ahriman's opposition. How can this ahrimanic opposition be recognized at the present time?

In the future it will take other forms. Today it comes to expression in the fact that we have a natural science and accounts of history both of which are ahrimanic and they consequently present cultural development and historical events *their* way. The very nature of concepts developed on this basis excludes the Christ impulse. In these concepts Ahriman must inevitably work because he works in man. With concepts such as these it is indeed possible to evolve a philosophy of life which includes a general concept of God but they can never lead to an understanding of Christ. Christ may be spoken of but is not understood. That is the case even in a philosopher like Lotze. (Rudolf Lotze 1817–1881 German Physician and Philosopher) And Harnack, (Adolf von Harnack 1851–1930 Professor of

Theology) having no ideas of his own on the subject, mentions the name of Christ only because it appears in religious documents in the Bible and so on. Other theologians fail to speak of the real Christ for similar reasons. Thus Harnack's Christ has no other attributes than those applicable to a universal Godhead; or he may go to the other extreme and simply describe the man Jesus.

To understand Christ through spiritual science it is necessary to grasp the spiritual-scientific concept of Christ in the full awareness that all external knowledge — whether in the form of natural science or history — far from leading to an understanding of the Christ impulse actually opposes it. This opposition is there in anti-Christians today who, in contrast to mere belief, attempt to apply natural-scientific or historical concepts to the Christ event. It is essential to understand that there has to be an inner opposition because here two worlds are in conflict. We must enter courageously into the conflict between Christ and Ahriman. A comprehensive view of life will accept that the conflict exists and expresses itself for example in the fight between Christ and Ahriman.

I have often said that Lucifer acts in partnership with Ahriman. They work together. They both have great interest in deluding man concerning the necessity of this inner conflict. They therefore go all out to eliminate the realm that opposes them. To this end they conjure up in man's mind ideas such as: "In tune, in harmony with the infinite." Why do such mental pictures arise in man? They do because he is inwardly too much of a coward to face the conflict and much prefers Lucifer-Ahriman to invent "harmony with the infinite" for him. However it is an attitude that is the equivalent of going through life blindfolded, seeking only appeasement. Modern man shrinks from the many-sided battle to attain spiritual insight; this attitude is bound to call up opposing forces just as they appear when something right, which ought to be furthered is left neglected. It is because man, during recent centuries, has endeavoured to avoid the inner battle between powers which must of necessity oppose one another, that this battle assumes such a terrible form in the external world today. This consequence is as inevitable as the expulsion from Paradise was a consequence of the luciferic temptation. We see man today, in all spheres of life, being satisfied with creating a mere semblance of inner peace for himself. It is an inner peace which has a meaning only between birth and death. In so doing he prevents one side of the inner conflict to come to expression, of course that to which he prevents expression is always the Christ impulse. Thus the natural conflict has to find an outlet some other way. Now, when you find in various publications descriptions of the so-

called contradictions supposed to exist in my writings you will now be able to view these with deeper insight and recognize the ahrimanic impulse in them.

Instead of overcoming the forces he necessarily must overcome, by facing them, man tries to avoid the conflict. This has all kinds of adverse effects. If one tries to avoid the conflict it will make its appearance in a different form. Nothing pleasant is prepared by those who strive to do away with the conflict. Working with spiritual science one continuously meets people who, out of their deepest needs, ask: Why is there evil, why is there pain in the world? These questions are often asked in an attempt to grasp how it can be that a good God allows evil to exist. In an attempt to answer such questions one may draw attention to the fact that no one will deny that all the good in the world, all that is excellent and full of wisdom is a manifestation of the Godhead. Thus if it is felt that God's goodness must be vindicated then we already stand on the premise that wisdom is to be ascribed to a good God. But why does a good, wise God allow evil to exist? To this the following may be said: Begin by visualizing a minute pain, let us say you cut yourself and feel a slight pain. Every pain arises when something is exposed to any kind of destruction. It is just that it is not always so obvious how the pain first came about. Let us now imagine that it is not a question of a cut by a knife but that a particularly sensitive spot on the body is exposed to very hot sun rays. This may not at once result in actual blisters but the beginning is there. Therefore a change in the tissue has occurred which is felt as a slight pain. If now the heat of the sun acted more strongly on an even more sensitive spot a greater injury would result. And now imagine that two particularly sensitive places in our head were, aeons ago, exposed to the rays of the sun. Man at that time had not the faculty of sight but the two places in his head became painful whenever the sun rose. At these places the tissue was injured and pain arose in consequence. This process went on for long ages and the healing resulted in the formation of the eyes; they came into being as a result of injury. True as it is that the eyes convey to us the beauty of the world of color so is it also true that they could only come into being through injury caused by the heat of the sun to places particularly sensitive to light.

Nothing in the way of joy, happiness, blessedness has come about except through pain. To refuse pain and opposition is to refuse beauty, greatness and goodness. Here one enters a domain where one can no longer think as one pleases; here one is subject to what in the Mysteries was called "iron necessity." True as it is that great harmony exists in the world, true as it is

that the present harmony had of necessity to arise through pain, it is equally true that the Christ impulse cannot be attained through painless, sensuous feelings of well-being such as those conveyed by the idea of being "in tune with the infinite." The Christ impulse can only be reached by courageously facing the conflict that plays itself out in our intellect — or in our consciousness in general — between the Christ impulse and the ahrimanic impulse. It is a conflict we cannot lightheartedly distance ourselves from by saying "without harmony we remain unfulfilled; in order to attain the Christ impulse we must rise above the conflict in our understanding." This can be seen quite concretely in the most diverse instances. For example someone may strive to understand the world through natural science; as a consequence he fails to find the Christ impulse. He may later learn to understand the world through spiritual science and as a consequence he now does find the Christ impulse. In such a case it is essential to recognize that one is faced with a contradiction, but in the very contradiction there is also agreement. Contrary to the belief of many it is not a question of adhering solely to one or the other science, nor can one be substituted for the other. Rather could they be compared with the right and left ear; both are necessary for proper hearing for the very reason that the hearing in one ear does not coincide with that of the other ear. What matters is not whether two things can be made to agree but in what sense there is harmony between them.



4 Spiritual Courage Versus Indolence

21 August 1917, Berlin

During these last days we have taken leave of a dear friend and loyal collaborator who has left the physical plane, *Herman Joachim*. He could be seen here in our circle practically every week during the war years. When we contemplate the event of death of someone near to us — filled with sentiments engendered by knowledge which we seek through spiritual science—we may find through this event also our own relation to the spiritual world. We look back on the one hand to the time we were privileged to share with him, but we also look forward into that world which is receiving the soul of the one with whom we were together. We remain united with him, for the bonds that bind us together are spiritual and cannot be severed through the event of physical death.

The name Herman Joachim is like a beacon, throwing its light far and wide, ahead of the one we have lost as far as the physical plane is concerned. It is a name that is very much connected with the development of art in the 19th century; particularly in the sphere of aesthetic interpretation of music. Indeed there is no need for me to explain here what this name stands for in recent cultural achievements. However, if Herman Joachim — who has gone into the spiritual world with all his incomparable and beautiful qualities — had come among us as someone unknown, even then, those whose good fortune it was to know him and share with him their endeavours, would have counted him among the most valuable personalities of their lives. The strength of his personality, the greatness and radiance of his soul would ensure it.

There came to expression in his human relationships with others a cultural artistic quality of a high order, passed on to him from his father. One could say that on the one hand this artistic influence came to expression in everything Herman Joachim thought and did, but it was carried and enhanced by the spirituality of his own will, his own feelings and by his striving for spiritual insight. While his father's great influence held sway in the blood so was there something in Herman Joachim's spiritual makeup which had a beautiful beginning in his life by the fact that *Herman Grimm* — this distinguished and unique representative of Central

European cultural life — held his hand in blessing over him when a child. For Herman Grimm was godfather to Herman Joachim. I was very pleased to learn this as you will understand after the many things I have said, especially in this circle, in appreciation of Herman Grimm's contributions to cultural life in recent times. When a dear friend of his, the unique personality *Walter Robert Tornow* died, Herman Grimm wrote: "He departs from the society of the living and is received into the society of the dead. One feels one ought to announce to the dead just who it is that joins their ranks." Herman Grimm did not intend these words to apply only to the one for whom he spoke them. He meant them in the sense that they express a feeling which is present in human beings in general, when someone near departs from the physical into the spiritual world.

When we look back to characteristic experiences which we were privileged to share with someone who has died, then these experiences become windows through which we can follow the further life of a now infinite being. For every human individuality is an infinite being and the experiences we shared can be compared to windows through which we look out on an unlimited landscape. However there are moments in a human life which are of special significance, it is then possible to look deeper into a human individuality. In such moments the secrets of the spiritual world reveal themselves with particular power. It is also in such moments that much of what in ordinary life is the goal of noble, intense striving, is revealed in comprehensive thought pictures permeated with feeling.

I venture to describe a moment of this kind because I consider it symptomatic of Herman Joachim. He had been connected with our movement for years when in Cologne, not long after we had become personally acquainted, we had a conversation. During this conversation it was revealed to me how this man had related his innermost soul to the spiritual powers which live and weave through the cosmos. — Perhaps I can put it in these words: I was able to recognize that he had discovered that there is an important link between responsible human souls and those Divine-spiritual powers whose wisdom governs worlds. In significant moments of his life an individual may come face to face with these powers. In such moments when he puts to himself the question: How do I unite with the world-guiding spiritual powers that are revealed to my inner sight? How can it become possible for me to think of myself as a responsible link in the world's spiritual guidance which, in my innermost self, I know I am meant to be? — Thus it was revealed to me what Herman Joachim

consciously felt and experienced with all the deep seriousness of his being in such moments when man's relation to the spiritual world becomes manifest to him.

Herman Joachim had gone through many difficulties. When this endless calamity under which we all suffer broke out (The first World War) it brought him great hardship. He was in Paris where he had lived for years and where he had found his dear life companion. But now his duty obliged him to return to his former profession as a German officer. Nevertheless it was a duty with which he also had a deep inner connection. He had already fulfilled his task as officer on important occasions, doing his duty not only with expertise but with compassion and self-sacrifice. There are many who have grateful memories because they have benefitted from the true humaneness and social friendliness with which he fulfilled his calling. For myself I often remember the conversations we had during these three years of grief and human suffering, conversations in which he revealed himself as a man who was able to follow with far-reaching understanding the events of our time. There was no question of his objective judgement being clouded by thoughts of either hatred or love for the one or the other side. His intelligent assessment made him fully aware of the gravity of the situation facing us all. Nevertheless, because of his trust in the spiritual guidance of the world he was full of hope and confidence.

Herman Joachim belongs to those who accept spiritual science in a completely matter-of-fact way as something self-evident; while at the same time this matter-of-factness protects them from superficial surrender to anything of a spiritualistic nature. Such souls are not easily led astray into what can be the greatest danger: fanciful illusions and the like. After all, such illusions have their roots in a certain self-indulgent egoism. Herman Joachim had no inclination whatever towards egotistical mysticism but all the more towards great ideals, towards powerful, effective ideas of spiritual science.

He was always concerned about what each individual can do in his own situation in life, to make spiritual science effective. As a member of the Freemasons he had looked carefully into the nature of masonic practices and had resolved to do all he could to bring the life of spiritual knowledge into masonic formalism. His high position within Freemasonry enabled him to make his own, to an exceptional degree, all the profound but now formalized and rigidified knowledge accumulated over centuries. Just because of his high position he saw the possibility to bring the life and spiritual power which can only come from spiritual science into this

rigidified knowledge. His aim was to enable it to enter rightly into the stream of human culture. Anyone who is aware how hard he worked towards this goal during these difficult years, how he pursued it with earnestness and integrity; anyone who realizes the strength of his will and the volume of his work in this sphere will also know how much the physical plane has lost with Herman Joachim. — I am often reminded in cases like this of someone, regarded as belonging to the intelligentsia, who is recorded as saying: No man is irreplaceable; if one goes, another steps forward to take his place. It is obvious that such an expression reveals a gross ignorance of real life; for real life shows in fact the opposite. The truth is rather that in regard to what a man accomplishes in life no one can be replaced. This truth strikes us all the more in exceptional cases such as the present one. The death of Herman Joachim strongly reminds us of the working of karma in human life. Only an understanding of human karma, the comprehension of the great karmic questions of destiny, enables us to come to terms with the death of someone, at a comparatively early age, leaving behind an important and necessary life task.

I have followed day by day the soul of our dear friend slowly leaving this realm, in which he was to accomplish so much, and entering another realm where we can find him only through the strength of our spirit, a realm from which he will be an even stronger helper than before. During this time of taking leave I was strongly aware of something else; namely, that human beings themselves demand the necessity of karma; demand it with all their inner courage and strength of spirit. It becomes evident to one's inner sight when experiencing a death of this kind. In these circumstances things must often be spoken of which can be spoken of only in our circles, but then, it is also within our spiritual movement, that human beings can find the great strength which reaches beyond death, the strength that encompasses both life and death.

Herman Joachim's soul stands clearly before me. So it stood clearly before me when, out of his own free will, he took on a spiritual task. And it comes vividly before me how he is taking hold of this task *now*. His death is revealed to me as something he freely chose because, from that other world his soul is able to work more actively and with stronger forces; forces more appropriate to what is necessary. Under these circumstances one may even speak of the death of an individual as a necessity, as a duty, at a quite specific moment. I know that not everyone will find what I am saying a consoling or a strengthening thought; but I also know that there are souls today to whom these thoughts can be a support when they are faced with the kind of difficulties which in our time must be endured with

pain and sorrow, difficulties that one comes up against when trying to solve important and necessary tasks, difficulties that arise from the fact that we are in the physical world, incarnated in physical bodies in a materialistic environment. Yet in all our pain and sorrow we may gradually come to value the thought that death, as far as the physical plane is concerned, was chosen by someone in order to be better able to fulfill his task.

We may balance this thought against the pain which our dear friend, the wife of Herman Joachim, is suffering. We may balance it against the pain we ourselves feel over our dear friend, we may attempt to enoble our pain by thinking of him in the light of a sublime thought such as the one I have just put before you. This thought may not ease or tone down the pain, but its spiritual insight can shine like a sun into the pain and illumine our understanding for the necessity that governs man, the necessity of human destiny. Thus the event of the death of someone near to us can become an experience which brings us into contact with the spiritual world. For if our thoughts about him strengthen our soul's propensity towards the realms in which the departed sojourns then we shall not lose him; we shall remain actively united with him. Furthermore, if we grasp the full implication of the thought that someone who loved his life more than most, nevertheless accepted death because of an iron necessity, then that thought will truly express our spiritual-scientific view of the world. If we honor our friend in this way we shall remain united with him. And his life companion, left here on the physical plane, shall know that we remain united with her in thoughts of the loved one; that we, her friends, remain close to her.

The death of our dear friend Herman Joachim is one of several bereavements suffered within our society during this difficult time, one which was for me especially sad, one I have not yet been able to speak about. The great personal loss and close involvement prevents me from touching on many aspects of this bereavement.

A great many of those present will remember with love a dear and loyal member whom we have also lost from the physical plane in recent months, *Olga von Sivers*, the sister of Marie Steiner. She was not a personality one would come to know immediately at first encounter; she was a thoroughly modest and unassuming person. But my dear friends, setting aside the pain Marie Steiner and I suffer over this irreplaceable loss I venture to say something else about Olga von Sivers. She belongs to those among us who, from the beginning, went straight to the root of our anthroposophically oriented spiritual science. She took it up with deep

understanding and warmth of soul. When Olga von Sivers devoted herself to such matters she did so with her whole being for that was her nature. And she was indeed a human being in the fullest sense as everyone connected with her will know. She strongly rejected everything which nowadays, as a kind of mystical Theosophy, distorts man's inner path and leads spiritual life into wrong channels. She had a keen sense of discernment when it came to distinguishing between those spiritual impulses which belong to our time and advance man's inner progress; and others which arise from quite different impulses. The latter are often disguised as theosophical or other mystical striving. Olga von Sivers is an outstanding example of someone taking hold, in a fundamental way, of the spiritual truths which we in our movement especially strive to attain. Despite her full participation in our work it was not in her nature to neglect or disregard in any way the many and often difficult duties imposed upon her by external life. She absorbed the content of spiritual science from the start with complete understanding and was able to pass it on to others. Whenever this was granted her she undertook the task in exemplary fashion. She knew how to endow the ideas she conveyed to others with the kindness and enormous good will of her nature.

Her work continued also when she was separated from us by the frontiers which today so often and so cruelly come between human beings who are close to one another. But no frontiers prevented her from working for our cause also in regions which are now, in Central Europe, considered to be enemy country. She knew tragic experiences, all the horror of this frightful war in which she carried out truly humanitarian work right up to her last illness. She never thought of herself but was always working for others whom the horrors of war had brought into her care. She carried on this Samaritan work in the noblest sense, permeating all she did with the fruits of what she herself had accomplished within our spiritual movement. Although she is closely related to me I venture to speak with deep feeling about this aspect of Olga von Sivers, who, ever since the founding of our movement was a self-sacrificing member. To Marie Steiner and myself it was a beautiful thought that she should be physically with us once more when better times had replaced our bleak present. But here too iron necessity decided otherwise.

This again is a case when death of someone near can clarify and illumine life if we seek to understand it with spiritual insight. Certainly there are things in our society which are open to criticism, often they are things which the society itself brings to light. But we also see all around us other things which are direct results of the strength that flows through our

Anthroposophical Movement, things which belong to our most beautiful, loftiest and significant experiences. Today I venture to speak of examples of this kind.

Many of you will also remember someone who, though she did not belong to this branch, I would nevertheless like to remember today because, together with her sisters she often did appear here and will be known to many of you: our *Johanna Arnold* who not long ago went from the physical plane into the spiritual world. One of her sisters who was equally a loyal and devoted member of our movement died two years ago.

I have in these days been working on a pamphlet to answer the spiteful attacks on our movement by professor Max Dessoir, and I constantly come across statements to the effect that I know nothing of science and that my supporters have to renounce all thoughts of their own. — Well, a personality like Johanna Arnold is a living proof that such statements coming from this ignorant professor are utter lies. Johanna Arnold's deep devotion to spiritual science contributed to the nobility of her life and also to the nobility with which she died. She is indeed a living proof that the most valuable people are among those who recognize and cultivate spiritual science. Her life brought many trials but it was also a life that developed strength of personality and brought out all the greatness of her soul. During the years in our movement she was a vigorous supporter in her branch and neighbouring circles. She did in fact, together with others, a most valuable work throughout the Rhine region. One of the others was *Frau Maud Künstler* who also died recently. She too was much appreciated and was also intimately connected with our movement.

Not only in her work within our movement did Johanna Arnold give evidence of her strong vigorous character. At the age of seven she, with great courage, saved her older sister from drowning. Part of her life was spent in England. She gave ample proof that not only is life a great teacher but it can also make a soul strong and powerful. Moreover in her case life revealed to her the divine spiritual for which the human soul longs. Through her inner mobility and strength Johanna Arnold became a benefactress to the Anthroposophists whose leader she was. To us who saw the extent of her commitment to our movement she became a dear friend. During these last years since the beginning of this dreadful war — in her attempt to understand what is happening to mankind — Johanna Arnold would ask me significant questions. She was constantly occupied with the thought as to the real meaning of this most difficult trial of the human race and concerned about what each one of us can do in order to

go through it in a positive way. None of the daily occurrences of the war escaped her notice. But she was also able to see them in their wider context, bringing them into relation with mankind's spiritual evolution in general. In her attempt to solve the riddle of mankind she made a close study of Fichte, Schelling, Hegel and Robert Hamerling.

There are indeed many examples in our movement which can show how spiritual science affects man's whole life, his way of working, his inner development. And Johanna Arnold is a living proof, if such is required, that it is a blatant lie to say that individual thought must be renounced in our movement. She was looked up to as an example by those who knew her, not only through her devotion and loyalty to our spiritual-scientific movement but also because she sought through earnest independent thinking, to fathom the secrets of man's existence.—I am personally grateful to all those who so beautifully expressed their appreciation at the funeral of our friend. Her sister who is with us today has witnessed within a short time the death of Johanna Arnold as well as that of another sister; to her we would say that we shall remain united with her in loyal thoughts of those who have gone from her side into the spiritual world. We shall cherish their memory and retain a living connection with them.

These thoughts concerning departed friends, linked as they are with sorrowful experiences, also belong to our studies — using the word here free from all pedantry. We know that for the human soul there is survival and new beginning, but does the same apply to the many hopes and expectations we witness that come to nothing especially in our times? Why is it, we may ask, that even those who have a measure of insight into mankind's evolution nurture unjustified hopes and expectations? The answer is that we must nurture them, for they are forces, effective forces. Any doubt we may have as to whether they will be fulfilled should not prevent us from cherishing them because while we do they act as forces and produce effects whether they are fulfilled or not. We must accept it if, for the time being, they come to nothing. How gladly we set our hopes on many a person when he shows the first signs of warm understanding for the spiritual world. One has such hopes despite the fact that in our materialistic age they are often shattered. In recent lectures I have described deeper reasons as to why such hopes are shattered.

In this connection we must be clear that what we call human courage, which we see today in such abundance in many spheres of external life, is very seldom found in relation to spiritual life. This is why the personalities I spoke of today are really models even in regard to more external aspects

of our society and movement. It is dawning on many people today that materialism will not do. But what I have often referred to as man's love of ease prevents them from committing themselves to spiritual science. Yet nothing else can save human civilization from plunging into disaster. There are people who are often quite near the point of crossing the threshold into spiritual science; that they do not is basically due to indolence. It is love of ease that prevents them from making their soul receptive and pliable enough to grasp ideas that quite concretely explain the spiritual world. There are many today who enthuse in general about the mystical unity of worlds, vaguely declaring that science alone does not explain everything; faith must come to its aid. But the courage to penetrate earnestly into the descriptions and explanations of the spiritual world that lies at the foundation of the sense world, that courage is greatly lacking.

Last winter I spoke about *Hermann Bahr*, about his path of knowledge. His latest books, "Expressionism" and the novel "Ascension," suggested that he was at the point of becoming conscious of the spiritual world. There is no doubt that despite his vacillations and changes of direction he was at last striving towards the spirit. But his very latest writing which he has just sent me is very curious. Its title is "Reason and Knowledge" ("Vernunft and Wissenschaft") and it deals with the way modern humanity, in contrast to former times, relies more on reason when seeking spiritual insight, when trying to understand the World Order. Hermann Bahr begins by asking what reason has achieved. In the 18th Century, striving to develop reason was synonymous with so-called enlightenment which also played a decisive role in the 19th Century. He begins by saying that: "Before the war the West imagined that its peoples shared a feeling of community. They were cosmopolitans or else 'good' Europeans. There was the glittering world of millionaires, there were the dilettante and the aesthetes and also the international set, the uprooted vagabonds, spending their lives in sleeping cars and in grand hotels by the sea. And there were the proud communities of scientists and artists. Furthermore we had people's rights, we had humanitarianism. Internationally we shared the fruits of industry, commerce, money, thoughts, taste, morals and humour. All the nations in the West had aims and goals in common. They even thought they had also a means in common by which to attain these shared goals: the means of human reason! The hope was that, through united effort and human reason, mankind would attain what was perhaps beyond the reach of single individuals: ultimate truth. We have been robbed of all this by the war; it has all vanished."

Thus Hermann Bahr, looking at the state of the world, concludes that modern man places a one-sided emphasis on reason. He recalls an interesting episode in Goethe's life. In Bohemia Goethe observed a strangely shaped mountain, the Kammerbühl and he concluded that the mountain must be of volcanic origin. He was convinced it had been formed in an ancient volcanic eruption. But others did not share his view; they presumed the mountain had originated through sedimentation which had been driven upwards by the force of water. Goethe was unable to convince these people that his assumption was the right one. He felt an inner impulse which convinced him that the mountain was of volcanic origin. The others were equally certain it had come about through sedimentation. This argument suggested to Hermann Bahr that impulses, quite different from reason, influence man's judgments; he saw them as impulses at work behind reason. Hermann Bahr concedes that not everyone is a Goethe; nevertheless, it seems to him that while people think they are following reason they are in fact determined by impulses. Earlier, in the Middle Ages, people were exhorted to have faith, to base their thoughts about the world on faith. But faith has become a mere phrase, it has lost its influence except in aspects of life in which science plays no role. Thus to Hermann Bahr man seems to be determined by his impulses. He asks: What kind of impulses are at work in modern man? He goes on to enumerate some impulses and emotions which delude people into believing they are following solely their reason. He says that Americans for example have a particularly strong impulse towards pragmatism. They want what is useful and practical, hence the famous pragmatism of William James. (William James 1842–1910 American Philosopher, founder of Pragmatism) However Hermann Bahr now asks: What has come of this urge toward the useful? He is of the opinion that: "there are two main urges in Western man." He then points to the much quoted expression that in the Middle Ages science was the handmaid of Theology; looking at modern culture he concludes that reason is certainly not the handmaid to Theology, rather has it become the handmaid of Greed. He then goes into still deeper problems; the individual, he says, cannot exist by himself, he must live in a community. This community is the State in which the individual has his place. This observation inevitably leads Hermann Bahr to ask if, here again, are not emotions the determining factors within the various States? At this point he attempts to link a spiritual element to the individual human soul. This spiritual element he tries to find first in Goethe and Kant; and he finally comes to the following thought: We see inner impulses at work in our lower life, impulses which draw reason along with them. It is therefore not reason which proves to us whether something is true or untrue. We judge

things according to our inner impulses, according to what we want them to be. Thus Goethe wanted the Kammerbühl to be of volcanic origin while his opponents wanted it produced by sedimentation. Hermann Bahr came to the conclusion that there must be impulses in man other than those which stem from the lower nature. This thought brings him to the idea of Genius. What is done by a genius is also done out of impulse, but not a lower one. A genius is someone who is influenced by an element of a cosmic nature. However, the word genius almost makes Hermann Bahr split hairs. He consults Grimm's dictionary to get to the bottom of what the word Genius means; he familiarizes himself with what Goethe, Schiller, the Romantics and others, meant by it. He comes to see that the word genius cannot be applied indiscriminately. For example, if it is used to denote the highest impulse in the pursuit of knowledge then all professors would claim to be geniuses and there would be as many of them to venerate as there were professors. Hermann Bahr had no wish for that, so he looks for another way out. He comes to the conclusion that Goethe was quite right in applying the word genius only to a few special individuals. If applicable only to a few then it cannot be considered as an impulse for scientific endeavour. In short Hermann Bahr reaches a point where he senses that the soul of man has a connection with the spiritual world. He says: "You may tear me to pieces but I cannot explain the logical connection between the impact on the human soul of the hymn: 'Veni Creator Spiritus' ('Come Holy Ghost') and the meaning of genius in the Goethean sense. The connection is there and is sublime, powerful and real, yet I cannot explain it."

However, there is one thing that Herman Bahr does want to explain; namely, that relying merely on reason does not help; reason as such, he says, does not lead man to truth. He rejects what in the age of enlightenment had been seen as the supremacy of reason, had been seen as reason's ability to explain everything observed and investigated. He wants to dethrone reason for in his view it has become subservient to external trade and technology and it simply follows man's impulses.

One thing these inner impulses of man do demonstrate is how a man like Hermann Bahr is able to reach the portal of spiritual science and then, because of lack of initiative to get to grips with spiritual science he holds back. He remains at the point of view that reason on its own is helpless, faith must step in to guide it. Thus the impulses that are to guide man must come, not from his lower nature but from God. He must receive them through faith. Knowledge must be guided by faith, reason alone can attain nothing. Hermann Bahr makes great effort to find confirmation of this idea.

For example he makes an interesting reference to Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi (Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi 1743–1819 Philosopher and Novelist.) who in a letter once expressed the perceptive idea that when it comes to the human soul's ability to grasp truth it is as if it were capable of elasticity, of expansion. This is a very ingenious idea of Jacobi's. I expressed the same thing somewhat differently in my *Philosophy of Freedom* where I spoke of an organism of thought, wherein one thought grows out of the preceding one. Whenever one arrives at the "elasticity" of man's inner nature, thinking continues, through its own power, the line of thought. When this happens one is experiencing the power of the spirit in one's own soul. Both Jacobi and Hermann Bahr point to the fact that something of a spiritual nature lives and acts in the human soul. What is so remarkable about Hermann Bahr is that he attempts to find in man the higher, the divine man, by demonstrating that reason is subservient to faith. In so doing he denies validity to the very impulse, i.e., reason that governs modern scientific endeavour.

One impulse Hermann Bahr does not discover: the Christ impulse which lives, or at least can live, in modern man. He points to Christ in only one place — two other places where he mentions Christ have no significance — and what he says there does not come from him but is a quotation from Pascal. (Blaise Pascal 1623–1662 French Natural Philosopher) It comes from Pascal's "Pensus" when he says that "we human beings only know ourselves through Jesus Christ; that we know life and death only through Jesus Christ; through ourselves alone we know nothing either of our life or our death; nothing of either God or ourselves." — Here Pascal is pointing to an impulse that comes from within man yet does not stem from himself; i.e. the Christ impulse. To understand it a sense of history is needed, for it has only been on earth since the Mystery of Golgotha.

Thus Hermann Bahr gets no further than Harnack and others. He comes as far as the idea of a universal God who speaks through nature, but not to a living understanding of Christ. This, once more, is an example of someone who is striving for truth yet cannot find the Christ and is unaware that he does not find Him. Hermann Bahr is at pains to show that throughout the evolution of the world man's striving is in evidence. He says beautiful things about Greek and Roman culture and even about Mohammed. The only thing he leaves out is the Mystery of Golgotha. He speaks of Christianity only in a reference to St. Augustine. But no amount of preoccupation with reason and the like can lead to Christ; it can lead only to a universal God. Christ, the God who descended from cosmic heights into earthly life, lives in us as truly as our own highest being lives

in us. As Pascal indicated, we can attain knowledge of life and death; of God and ourselves only through being permeated by Christ. This truth can be recognized and understood only through spiritual science.

Goethe did pave the way to spiritual science. But when Hermann Bahr — in order to justify why he finally turned to faith — tries to explain the value of all kinds of statements by Goethe, all he says is: "It will not be necessary for me to testify that I acknowledge the teaching of the Vatican and the views of Goethe and Kant." Here we see the influence of an external power which at present clearly indicates its intention to increase that power. Yet people remain deaf and blind to the signs of the times; they let what can explain the signs of the times pass them by. Hermann Bahr in his own way is well able to read these signs. He knows of the many things that induce modern man to say things like: "It will not be necessary for me to testify that I acknowledge the teachings of the Vatican and the views of Goethe and Kant." It is a supreme example of how indolence can make a man come to a standstill in his endeavour. I love Hermann Bahr and have no wish to say anything against him. I only want to indicate what in such a characteristic way can influence a talented and significant personality of our time.

It is easy enough to blame reason, much can be said against it. It can be accused of not leading man to truth. However, blaming reason simply shows that the matter has not been thought through. Sufficient exploration will reveal that it is only when reason is permeated by Ahriman that it leads away from truth. Similarly if faith is permeated by Lucifer it also leads away from truth. Faith is in danger of being saturated with Lucifer, reason with Ahriman. But neither faith nor reason as such lead to untruth or error. In the religious sense they are gifts of God to man. When they follow their rightful path they will lead to truth, never to either error or untruth. Deeper insight reveals how Ahriman comes to insinuate himself into reason and bring about confusion. This knowledge can be obtained however, only by penetrating into the actual spiritual world. To do this requires one to make the effort to grasp the ideas, the descriptions which depict the spiritual world. If man persists in living in arid abstractions he sins against reason and remains ignorant of the fact that through the development of reason in the fifth post-Atlantean epoch man's 'I' is to enter the consciousness soul. People talk about man's relation to the spirit like the blind talk about colors. However, no matter how much the ignorant accuse one of contradictions — when speaking from the point of view of spiritual science

— it is essential, as already explained, to stand by the results obtained when the spirit is investigated by spiritual means. One has a personal responsibility for the spirit.

This is the kind of responsibility I was able to speak about earlier in connection with special personalities whose example illustrates man's greatness when he feels responsible, not only for his actions, but also for his thoughts and feelings. By contrast you here have someone with no feeling of responsibility; without trying to discover what the present needs, he links onto influences in man's evolution which belong in the past. Consequently Hermann Bahr can say: "If anyone is interested in the path that led me to God, he may refer to my publication 'Taking Stock' and 'Expressionism' but I must ask the reader not to generalize my personal experiences; they have helped me but may not necessarily help others" and "Should the reader come upon any passage which deviates from the fundamental issue I must ask him to balance it against my good intentions. Any unfortunate ambiguous phrase caused by negligence is against my will and to my regret." In other words if one simply accepts whatever decree that goes out from the Vatican there is no need to be personally responsible for one's actions.

It may be a good thing when someone openly and sincerely makes such a confession. However what it implies could not be further from the attitude of anthroposophically orientated spiritual science. What Hermann Bahr is confessing actually expresses a fundamental condition demanded by that spiritual stream which is again trying to assert itself. A condition one could sum up by saying: "The authority of the Vatican decrees what the world in general should believe and profess. And I concede from the start that what as a single individual I hold dear, my belief, my view of things are not the concern of the world in general. I may add my voice but only to the extent it finds approval with the Vatican."

I do not know to what extent it is still fashionable to make confessions of this kind. What I do know is that spiritual science must rest on its own independent research and take full responsibility for that research. It must also accept disillusion and shattered hopes no matter how often they occur, also when they are, as in the case of Hermann Bahr, completely unexpected.

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5 Christ and the Present

28 August 1917, Berlin

How can one approach the Christ impulse, how does one come near the Being of Christ? In one form or another this question is asked again and again — and rightly so. People feel a need to ask this all-important question which must be approached from many aspects as we have done in our anthroposophical studies. Just as a photograph of a tree taken from one angle does not convey its full shape, so one aspect or indeed several do not exhaust the many-sidedness of a spiritual reality. All we can hope is that we shall come near it by approaching it from as many aspects as possible.

It is essential to realize that seeking Christ is deeply connected with the nature of the human 'I' and is therefore something inward and intimate. The special nature of the human 'I' comes to expression in the way we use the word 'I.' All other words are applicable to other things whereas the word 'I' can never refer to anything except to the one who speaks it. Because of the inner relationship between the Being of Christ and the human 'I' the Christ Being has for us the same intimate character as our own 'I.' All the impulses of feeling and will which stir within us when we contemplate the Mystery of Christ are actual means by which we draw near the Christ. It is through feeling- and will-filled contemplation of Christ that we have reason to hope we may find Him. At present it is of particular importance to pay attention to mankind's historical evolution especially in relation to the Event of Christ. Historically, the present is a significant moment in time. Few are aware of its full implication; it is therefore all the more important to be mindful of man's historical development in relation to every issue of significance.

We know that man's inner development, the whole configuration of his soul life was different before and after the Mystery of Golgotha. Various aspects of this difference have already been described. Some fifty or sixty years ago there was more feeling for spiritual knowledge, more people concerned themselves with higher questions. The inclination to do so has since waned. To illustrate this we can turn to the writings of a psychologist such as Fortlage (Arnold Rudolf Karl Fortlage 1806–1881 German

Philosopher) who, up to the sixties of the 19th Century practiced in Jena and other cities. We still find in his writings a remarkable description of human consciousness to which, I may add, modern philosophers take great exception.

Fortlage said, in (1869), that human consciousness is related to death, to dying, and as we, in the course of life, develop consciousness we are actually slowly and gradually developing those forces which, at the moment of death, confront us all of a sudden. In other words Fortlage sees the moment of death as an immensely enhanced act of consciousness. One could say that he sees consciousness as life which gradually develops into death. It is not life as such which develops death, but the consciousness in man develops death forces and death itself is enhanced consciousness compressed into a moment. This statement by a psychologist — condemned as I said by modern philosophers as unscientific — is immensely significant.

It is important to realize that despite the significance of this statement in relation to man's present soul life, that is his present consciousness, it is not true for every period of man's evolution. If we go back thousands of years before the Mystery of Golgotha no one with deeper insight would have spoken like that. Our present consciousness, which is normally devoid of all former atavistic clairvoyance, does owe its existence to slow death. But this was not the case at the time of the ancient atavistic clairvoyant consciousness which disappeared as the time of the Mystery of Golgotha approached. Words are always inadequate for describing such matters. Nevertheless it can be said that this ancient consciousness was engendered by a surplus of spiritual life over man's organic life. Now we find ourselves within a surplus of organic life which is gradually dying. Our consciousness at present is due to the fact that, in returning to the body upon waking, we are overwhelmed by a body which is subject to death, which is progressively dying. The fact that we are overwhelmed by it enables us to develop our present day-consciousness which is an object consciousness.

In ancient times before the Mystery of Golgotha things were different. Man then had a surplus of spiritual life which was not altogether extinguished when, on waking, he returned to the body. This surplus of spiritual life expressed itself as atavistic clairvoyance. But as the time of the Mystery of Golgotha approached this surplus decreased ever more. At the time of the Mystery of Golgotha, in the case of most people, a balance had been reached between man's inner life of soul and the organic life of his body. After the Mystery of Golgotha the organic life gradually gained the

upper hand. One can also express it by saying that *before* the Mystery of Golgotha man gained knowledge through the forces of birth; *after* the Mystery of Golgotha he gains knowledge through the forces of death. This again illustrates the significance of the Mystery of Golgotha as the turning point in human evolution.

The ancient clairvoyant consciousness; i.e., the consciousness related to birth began to wane. Slowly and gradually man lost the spiritual world from his consciousness. Whereas formerly everyone was able to experience the spiritual world a time began, about a thousand years before the Mystery of Golgotha, when gradually only those who were initiated in the Mysteries were able to do so. This explains a remark made by Plato, referred to in my book *Christianity as Mystical Fact*. Plato who knew of this secret, declared that only those initiated in the Mysteries were humans in the true sense, all others were souls submerged in mire. — Rather a horrible statement but not an arbitrary one: it refers to the situation I have just described which arose out of necessity in human evolution.

Let us for a moment imagine what would have happened had the Mystery of Golgotha not taken place: Evolution would have continued the way it was before, which means that more and more human beings on the earth would lose all direct connection with the spiritual world. Eventually humanity would no longer be able to incorporate the spirit; man's body would become larva-like consisting only of organic and etheric members. A long time ago men's souls would have been incapable of living in the bodies available; they would have hovered above them in the spiritual world. Only those souls who, in an earlier epoch had reached higher development, would be able to inspire their bodies from above. Consciousness of the spiritual world would have been possible only in the case of individuals receiving inspiration in the Mysteries. The human spirit itself would not inhabit the earth. In the mystery centers it would be possible to receive inspiration but Ahriman would battle against this. He would distort the inspirations thus preventing the larva-like human bodies from carrying out what was intended.

Because the human body, during its life between birth and death, overcomes a now comparatively weaker life of soul, it had to be made possible for the human soul to live again in a body which is subject to birth and death. This became possible only because a Being from the spiritual world, the Christ Being, united Himself with those earthly forces which came to dominate man's consciousness. What kind of forces are they? They are death forces, the very forces to which man now owes his

consciousness! You will understand the far-reaching meaning of the Rosicrucian saying: In Christo Morimur, in Christ we die. These words express in a sense the very meaning of man's existence. They express what entered human evolution through the Mystery of Golgotha. They express what united itself with the death-bringing forces enabling them to become henceforth the basis for man's consciousness.

It may be asked why in these circumstances such a great number of people still do not acknowledge the Christ? All one can say about this is that so many and so far-reaching secrets are connected with this question that at present it is not yet possible to speak about them in a general way. But what I have just described is a fact of human evolution.

Let us now connect what has been said with the Mystery of Golgotha: Christ had incarnated in the body of Jesus of Nazareth; i.e., in a body subject to the same conditions as those to which human bodies in general were subject at that time. As a result of the pure hereditary conditions the body of Jesus of Nazareth was subject to conditions in which consciousness was gradually to emerge from the forces of death. What had to happen to give evolution so mighty a jolt that it would cause an equally mighty impulse to stream as a force into mankind's evolution, making consciousness arise from forces of death? The Christ-being, that lived for three years in and through the body of Jesus of Nazareth, spoke the secrets connected with human consciousness to this body. This could be done only at the moment of death, for it is only then that the entire secret connected with human consciousness is drawn together. Did not the Christ have to lead Jesus through death in order that this whole impulse of consciousness could stream into mankind? Indeed, it did! And death is also that moment when we too may hope to attain an intensified comprehension of Christ. This is because at that moment all the forces are present which have sustained our consciousness throughout life. We are adapted at the moment of death to absorb what is in fact the secret of our consciousness and to absorb with it the Christ Impulse. We are preparing ourselves to receive it when we seek not only to understand but to experience the reality of the Christ Impulse. However what meets us at death we can understand only when our organ for understanding is set free. That means that while the moment of death does indeed provide the condition for union with Christ, it is only when we are free of the etheric body that the astral body and 'I'— the organization for understanding — can actually perceive this union.

Something else had to take place at the Mystery of Golgotha to bring about these conditions: After Christ had — in dying on Golgotha — entrusted to Jesus as it were the secrets of man's future consciousness, a momentous event had to occur: Jesus, in whom the Christ dwelt, rose to new life through the force of death. In other words, the Resurrection had to occur in order that we could understand that Resurrection when, a few days after death, we experience our ether body separating from us as explained by anthroposophical science. In this more inward death — i.e., the separation from the ether body a few days after death—we relive in a certain sense the Mystery of Golgotha. For it was life, that is, consciousness, which rose out of death: a living consciousness. At no time before the Mystery of Golgotha had this ever happened; life had always risen from life. Never before had there been a necessity to understand how life can come from death, only how life comes from life. — This is one of many approaches to the Mystery of Golgotha.

The fundamental issue of Christianity is the Resurrection. Anything calling itself by that name without having as its center a living concept of the Resurrection is no true Christianity. It is absolutely essential to understand that Christ, who united Himself with the forces of death, is the living Christ. Nothing else provides a true understanding of Christianity. Modern so-called Christianity which avoids the concept of the Resurrection is not Christianity. The essential need in mankind's evolution was the Death and Resurrection. The other events which took place at the Mystery of Golgotha are all an integral part of what has just been described.

One thought which is always problematic concerns the circumstances which led to the death of Christ Jesus. — I have often touched on this problem — on the one hand there is the feeling that the people must be condemned who brought death upon someone without sin, on the other there is the fact that if this death had not occurred Christianity would not exist. This means that Christianity with all its values has come into existence through a misdeed. The contradictory thought constantly forces itself upon man: If there had been no one criminal enough to put Christ to death there would be no Christianity. Yet we need Christianity!

Here we are touching on one of those issues in relation to which appeal must be made to understand what I recently termed "iron necessity." During his earthly life man's thinking is adapted to the way he looks at things and he arranges life accordingly. All civic, political and other arrangements are based on human views. We live as a matter of course in conditions created by human beings, unconcerned as to whether the

thoughts on which these arrangements are based come from God or from the devil. Whereas if we look back to conditions, as they generally were a long time before the Mystery of Golgotha, we find that in those ancient times man's thoughts, concerned with social arrangements, were received through atavistic clairvoyance. As we have seen, when the time of the Mystery of Golgotha drew near, man's body became more and more larval-like and as a consequence more and more accessible to ahrimanic influences. Therefore social and political institutions become more and more saturated with ahrimanic forces. It was inevitable for instance that the code of law should eventually become as it is now. It was also inevitable that an ahrimanic code of law should be particularly in evidence and concentrated, so to speak, at one particular spot on the earth at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha. Such circumstances did not prevail everywhere, but in one place the social structure was completely ahrimanic. Therefore the appearance of its very antithesis, the appearance of a God was for this society the most hateful thing that could happen, it had to be eliminated. This phenomenon, of necessity, accompanies all the others connected with the Mystery of Golgotha.

Two things in particular brought about this social structure. First, the kind of thoughts that had evolved out of Judaic law, were so saturated with ahrimanic forces that by means of them there was no possibility of grasping the fact that a God could come so close to man as was the case of Christ Jesus. This was something Judaic law had of necessity to reject. Secondly, the Romans were also responsible for the death of Christ Jesus; they were a powerful and efficient force in establishing the external side of the social structure. One cannot imagine a more powerful example than the social structure created by Roman Imperialism, particularly at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha. Yet at the moment the Mystery of Golgotha is enacted, Pilate, the representative of the strongest earthly power, proves a weakling when faced with spiritual power. He is incapable of coming to any insight or to make any decision about what is to happen.

So you see this is also a phenomenon connected with the Mystery of Golgotha — I have mentioned it before — that it took place at a time when mankind was least able to understand. In ancient times it would have been understood, but when it actually happened it was not. It must be realized that to understand this event a different approach is necessary.

One comes to realize that one must bring to the Mystery of Golgotha all the depths of one's thoughts and feelings; for example when one attempts to relate the Mystery of Golgotha to the secrets of human death and man's

subsequent awakening in the astral body and 'I.' It is through thoughts, through contemplation that one draws near to this Mystery. It is of no use to express through empty words a general wish to reach union with Christ; what is needed is a concrete understanding of what the actual appearance of Christ in earth evolution means for one's own life. It is not without meaning that the same time span elapsed between the death and the resurrection of Christ Jesus as the one that elapses between our leaving the physical body and our leaving the ether body in death. There is an intimate bond between Christ's life on earth and the man of today living after the Mystery of Golgotha. It is now possible to say with greatest conviction: Christ came in order that man should not be lost to the earth. Had the Mystery of Golgotha not taken place man's body would have become larva-like, directed from above by his soul. Death would gradually have removed man from the earth altogether. Through the Mystery of Golgotha man's connection with the earth was restored. Through the Mystery of Golgotha the possibility of consciousness arising from death was created.

These things can be understood today, they are revealed to contemplation of the spiritual world; making them our own deepens our inner life. When we are faced with crucial events we are not helped by knowing in a general way that we are connected with something called "the Christ," whereas our inner life is deepened and strengthened when we know quite concretely that we are intimately connected with that Being who actually experienced earthly life and went through the Mystery of Golgotha. In contemplating these things we feel our innermost being intimately connected with the historical events of Golgotha.

At the present time man is going through a crisis as far as understanding the Mystery of Golgotha is concerned. Last week I attempted to illustrate this crisis by means of a specific example. I wanted to show how a human being may make a thorough study of Christianity yet fail to find Christ. At present it is possible to belong to established Christian communities, perhaps to one which at present has an ever-increasing influence, without approaching Christ. This is a phenomenon which spiritual science must emphasize again and again. What must also be emphasized is that it is modern man's task to call up the inner forces of his soul which enables him to grasp spiritual-scientific thoughts. A certain power of soul must be called upon in order to make these thoughts inwardly living. Unless we do we shall make no progress, for it lies in the nature of present-day man that he should call upon this soul-force. A force which ought to be used, but is not, produces sickness in some form. Illness is caused not only through lack of

something but also through overabundance of something. Numerous people who appear weak are in reality strong. Paradoxical as it may seem they are strong inwardly. Many who go about like weaklings dissatisfied with life, not knowing how to be — as they put it — "in tune with the infinite" are actually strong, but subconsciously. However, they are incapable of bringing their subconscious strength into consciousness because they have no inkling of what it is that clamours for recognition within them. As a consequence the subconscious rebels and causes instability. The aim of spiritual science is to make man conscious of what is stirring within him, of what is in fact striving to become conscious. A true and satisfying understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha is what above all wants to become conscious, a fact which often expresses itself in remarkable ways.

As I have pointed out there is on the one hand a need to understand the spiritual world and on the other a shrinking away from such knowledge. Many things show that the longing is there to find again the spirit, which however, cannot be found today without an understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha. That the longing is present is often emphasized by writers who are themselves as remote as possible from any real comprehension. In order to understand present-day life we must acquaint ourselves with these matters of which there are plenty of examples in everyday life. Those who have developed interest in spiritual science have the task to recognize the spiritual knowledge which should be impartial at present; they must also be able to recognize where there is a shrinking away from such knowledge. One must especially learn to recognize where there seemingly is a striving for the spirit — which indeed there is, though unconsciously — but in a spurious form while genuine spiritual science is not approached. That is why I do not hesitate to point to such obvious examples in present-day life.

Recently I was sent another article in which the writer describes just such an example of so-called spiritual striving. Someone the writer knew well told him — the way such things are usually conveyed these days — that he simply must hear Johannes Müller (Johannes Müller 1864–1949 German Philosopher) speak. This gentleman felt that to hear *Johannes Müller* was an experience not to be missed. He further informed the writer that Johannes Müller is the principal of a psychiatric clinic and had founded what amounted to a new ethics, a new religion. However, at the word religion he suddenly plunged into a detailed Christology. At an incredible speed he developed his personal view of the life of Jesus after which he elaborated on liberal theology, the Warburg school of thought, and that of the Heidelberg school. He then went on to discuss Alexandrine poetry and

Hegelianism and so on. — This is a prime example of the folly of many people who take an interest in whatever crops up and at the slightest opportunity reel it off at breakneck speed. The writer, listening to all this, thought no one could speak that fast except perhaps >Kainz (Josef Kainz 1858–1910 famous actor.) and then only if he had to catch the last express train to Berlin after a theater performance. Nevertheless after this experience the writer goes to hear a lecture by Johannes Müller about the purpose of life.

Listening to this lecture the writer felt that Johannes Müller spoke about life's purpose as would a saint. The lecture dealt with how one ought to sacrifice oneself, how one should live for others, not for oneself and so on. Only one thing bothered the writer: the conversation he had with the fast-talking gentleman had led him to form a picture in his mind of Johannes Müller. He felt that if only Johannes Müller had looked like this mental picture he could have believed in him. However, Johannes Müller was nothing like what he had visualized. He describes his impression of Johannes Müller which I shall not spare you as it demonstrates how one sets about judging things nowadays. This is the writer's description: "On to the platform came a medium-sized, thick-set man with a short neck, bushy moustache, fresh complexion; the archetype of a thoroughly healthy citizen of a German provincial town. I could not avoid the idea that this man would be perfect as manager of some large toy factory in Nuremberg. The way he dealt with the audience reinforced this impression. His way of speaking was lucid, definite, friendly, calm, yet expressing strong inner participation in what he said. Everything was explained in simple terms with many repetitions and he never stopped till he had said all he wanted to say. He kept to his subject, spoke to the point and was obviously filled with earnest desire to serve the good. In short, ideally a town council should be composed of people like him. Similar things could be said about his subject; basically, Johannes Müller expressed what good German citizens would think about on special feast days."

How does this impression compare with the writer's image of someone who spoke about self-sacrifice and living solely for others? He says: "The image I had formed of Johannes Müller had established itself so firmly in my mind that I was convinced he must be real. I had visualized someone with a pale face which he would support with a thin white hand, his sad brown eyes gazing into far distances. If this Johannes Müller had been on the platform saying in a soft voice: Believe me Ladies and Gentlemen, the purpose of life is sacrifice, then not only I, but everyone, would, at least for the moment, have had to agree."

In other words if Johannes Müller had resembled the writer's preconceived notion the latter would have believed him. Very interesting! And why would the writer believe him? The reason is simple. This writer, unlike most people in the audience, has a critical mind. He judges with a certain shrewdness that a speaker with a pale face, liquid eyes and a melting look would have a right to speak about sacrifice. One would believe in him, for it would be clear that for such a man self-sacrifice would be the joy of his life; therefore no real sacrifice. The external appearance of Johannes Müller obviously suggested none of this. The writer said to himself: the way this man on the platform expresses himself, the way he looks makes it obvious that what he says has nothing to do with sacrifice on his part. He speaks as he does because he enjoys it, to him it is a joke. — This is of course a paradox; what the writer felt was that a man like the speaker would always do just what he wanted to do, what would give him pleasure. He would never say so, for if he did he would have to tell his audience that the purpose of life is to follow whatever impulse one happens to have, to do whatever one has an urge to do. In fact he would have to speak like Nietzsche. He does not for he would always say what is opposite to his actual inclinations.

Nowadays there is often a longing to say things which are opposite one's inclinations. Let us be quite clear about what this implies. There is no doubt that just those who are least inclined to sacrifice themselves for others are the very people who love to say that the purpose of life is self-sacrifice, to live solely for others. There is a definite wish to say what is in absolute contrast to reality. — What is that?

When life is observed with a sense for reality it is very recognizable that what people like to speak about are impulses in complete contrast to their own. They deceive themselves about it of course, but it is a most conspicuous feature of life today. There is a desire for the sensation of something which is in contrast to the reality. It must be remembered that there is at present no great understanding for these matters. There is also the fact that so many possibilities exist which help to avoid coming face to face with them. For instance someone hearing Johannes Müller say that the purpose of life is to sacrifice oneself for others might tell a lot of people how he has heard a marvelous speaker say something very illuminating: "The purpose of life is to sacrifice oneself for others" and announce that henceforth he will live by that principle according to the way he sees it. Living by such a rule the way one sees it is of course an easy way to avoid

many of the more difficult demands made by life. At present it is a favorite way of doing just that; and confirms that for many people, indeed for most it is exciting to say the very opposite of what they are.

It is basically an expression of a longing many people have; they are dissatisfied with external life and want something different. There is a genuine longing to rise above external life but the longing finds unhealthy expression because people seek at all cost to avoid recognizing the reality of the spirit. Take the example of the writer I just mentioned; he will undoubtedly be suited better by Johannes Muller than by spiritual science — that is predictable. The reason is simple; Johannes Müller speaks of things like the purpose of life, of sacrificing oneself for others. This subject the writer can use for an article which he ends with the words: "What the great universal purpose of life is we shall never know, nor is it in the last resort necessary for us to know."— Thus the writer manages to appear high-minded and worldly while remaining a thoroughly ordinary philistine.

This is impossible when one strives to attain a world view which does not rely on mere phrases but recognizes the reality of the spiritual world and what is demanded of the present age. The individual who sets out on this path will develop a sense for what the spiritual world at this moment wants from him. He will discover for himself how his development ought to progress and to what extent his particular destiny requires him to sacrifice himself for others. There is no need for any phrase to be bandied about; what is needed is the development of that inner strength which eventually leads to spiritual insight.

Nothing can be said against the meaning of a sentence such as: "The purpose of life is to sacrifice oneself for others," but it remains a sterile phrase till one learns to bring spiritual reality into physical reality. That was the very reason why the Mystery of Golgotha was fulfilled. It entered evolution so that new life might spring from death. Or in other words, so that the living spirit might be born from our present death-related consciousness. In bringing to birth, within our death-related consciousness, the living spirit, we approach the Mystery of Golgotha. — There are indications which suggest that people are beginning to recognize the necessity of listening to what spiritual science has to say. We live in difficult times, fraught with problems and conflict. Everyone feels that it is essential to find a way out. However, it is inherent in the age that a way out can be found only through a real understanding of the spirit. All other attempts will prove illusory.

The first understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha came about through direct experience. At first people could speak of Christ because some had actually seen Him; later some had known others who had seen Him. There was still an echo of Christ's own words in those spoken by the first Apostles. Thus mankind's first experience of Christ was on the physical plane. Through the centuries this knowledge faded and had vanished altogether by the turn of the 19th and 20th Centuries. That the present situation should arise was therefore inevitable when there are people — as I described in the last lecture — who, though they want to be Christians, do not actually seek Christ. We must realize that we live in a time of crisis as far as understanding Christ is concerned. We can reach understanding appropriate to our age in no other way than through an ever-deeper understanding of spiritual science. Ahrimanic forces battle against this knowledge just because it is so essential in our time. However, this does not prevent those who recognize the task of spiritual science from seeing this task connected with the enormous world-historical events taking place in our time. The solution to today's great problems can only come from real knowledge of the present age. And it is not biased propaganda to say that only through spiritual science can a solution be found.



6 Reflections on the Times

4 September 1917, Berlin

It is especially important in our time that the reality of spiritual life is not confused with the way people interpret this reality. We live in an age when human understanding and human conduct are strongly influenced by materialism. However, it would be wrong to think that because our age is materialistic, spiritual influences are not at hand, that the spirit is not present and active. Strange as it may seem it is possible, particularly in our time, to observe an abundance of effects in human life which are purely spiritual. They are everywhere in evidence and, the way they manifest, one could certainly not say that they are either invisible or inactive. The situation is rather that people, because of their materialistic outlook, are incapable of seeing what is manifestly there. All they see is what is so to speak "on the agenda." When one looks at people's attitude to the spirit, at the way they react when spiritual matters are spoken of, it reminds one of an incident which took place several decades ago in a Central European city. There was an important meeting of an important body of people and the degeneration of moral standards came under discussion. Immoral practices had begun to have adverse influence on certain financial transactions. Naturally a large part of this distinguished body of people wanted financial matters to be discussed purely from the point of view of finance. But a minority — it usually is a minority on such occasions— wanted to discuss the issue of moral corruption. However a minister got up and simply tossed aside such an irrelevant issue by saying: "But gentlemen, morality is not on the agenda." — It could be said that the attitude of a great many people today in regard to spiritual matters is also one that says: But gentlemen, the spirit is not on the agenda. It is manifestly not on the agenda when things of importance are debated. But perhaps such debates do not always deal with the reality, perhaps the spirit is present, only it is not put on the agenda when human affairs are under discussion.

When one considers these things, and has opportunity to talk more intimately with people, a situation emerges which is very different from what is imagined by those who feel embarrassed by talking about things of a spiritual nature. When one comes to discuss how people got the impulse

to do what they are doing one finds again and again that they decided on a project because of some prophetic vision or because of some inner impulse. As I said, if one looks at these things and is able to assess the situation, more often than not things are done because of some spiritual influence, perhaps in the form of a dream or some other kind of vision. Much more than is imagined takes place under the influence of spiritual powers and impulses which flow into the physical world from the spiritual world. People's theoretical rejection of spirituality, based on present-day outlook, does not alter the fact that significant spiritual impulses do penetrate everywhere into our world. However, they do not escape being influenced by the prevailing materialism. There has always been an influx of spiritual impulses throughout mankind's evolution and one ought not to think that this has ceased in our time. But people responded differently when there was more awareness of the existence of a spiritual world than they do in a materialistic age like ours. Let us look at a particular example.

It is extraordinarily difficult to convey to the world certain facts concerning spiritual matters, the reason being that people in general are not sufficiently prepared; they cannot formulate the appropriate concepts for receiving rightly such communications from the spiritual world. Such communications are all too easily distorted into the very opposite. Therefore it often happens, especially at present, that those who are initiated into spiritual matters must remain silent in regard to what is most essential. They must because it cannot be foreseen what might happen if certain things were imparted to someone unripe for the information. Nevertheless certain situations do often arise. On occasions, in accordance with higher laws, discussions take place about spiritual matters. When it is difficult, as it usually is at present, to discuss such things with the living it can often be all the more fruitful to discuss them with those who have died. Seldom perhaps was there a time when conscious interaction between the physical plane and the spiritual world, in which the dead are living, was so vigorous as it can be at present.

Let us assume that a discussion takes place of a kind possible only between someone with knowledge on the physical plane and someone who has died. In this situation something very curious can happen, something that could be termed a "transcendental indiscretion" can take place. The fact is that there are those who listen at keyholes, so to speak, not only on the physical plane, but also among certain beings in the spiritual world. There are spirits of an inferior kind who are forever attempting to obtain knowledge of all kinds of spiritual facts by such means. They listen to what is being said between beings on the physical plane and those in the

spiritual world. Their opportunity to listen to such a conversation can arise through someone who, being especially passionate, in the grip of his passion is, as one might say, "beside himself." This kind of situation often arises through passion, through being drunk — really physically drunk — or through faintness. It gives the lower spirit opportunity to enter into the person with the result that the person either then or later has visions of some kind and can hear things he is not supposed to hear.

It is well known to those able to observe such happenings that countless things, obtained through indiscretion in spiritual communication, appear in distorted form in all kinds of literature, particularly those of a more dubious kind. Nothing is more effective than when some lower elemental spirit (Kobold) takes possession of the writer of a detective novel, especially if drunk and, entering into his human frailties, instills in him a particular sentence or phrase which he then introduces into his story. Later the novel reaches people through all kinds of direct or indirect channels; the particular sentence has an especially strong effect because, given the way people take these things in, it speaks, not to the reader's consciousness, but to his subconscious.

Another method which is very effective is when, in a spiritualistic seance, such a spirit may have the opportunity to insinuate, into what is related through the medium, the spiritual indiscretion he wishes put to effect. This is not to say anything against mediumship as such, only the way it is used. Many things occur in the course of human karma which, in order to come to light, need mediumistic communications. We are not dealing with this aspect today, however. The point I want to make at the moment is to emphasize that there are at the present time spiritual channels between the spiritual world and the physical plane. These channels are very numerous and far more effective than is supposed.—Having said this you will understand better when I now say something which may seem paradoxical but is nevertheless a reality.

The years between 1914 and 1917 will no doubt be written about in the future in the usual way of historians. They will scrutinize documents, found in archives everywhere, in order to establish what caused the terrible World War. On this basis they will attempt to write a plausible account of say the year 1914 in relation to events in Europe. However, one thing is certain: no documentary research, no report drawn up in the way this is usually done will suffice to explain the causes of this monstrous event. The reason is simply that according to their very nature the most significant causes are

not inscribed by pen or printer's ink into external documents. Furthermore their very existence is denied because they are not, so to speak, "on the agenda."

Just in these last days you will have read reports of the legal inquiries going on in Russia. The Russian minister of war Suchomlinoff, (Wladimir Alexandrowitsch Suchomlinoff 1848–1926 Russian General) the Chief of the Russian General Staff and other personalities have made important statements which have caused a great deal of indignation. Many feel moral indignation on learning that Suchomlinoff lied to the Czar; or that the Chief of the Russian General Staff, with the mobilization order in his pocket, gave the German Military Attache his solemn promise that this order had not yet been issued. He said this because he intended to pass it on to the proper quarters a few minutes later. Such things are certainly cause for indignation and moralizing but so much lying goes on nowadays that no one should be surprised that really fat ones are told in important places. But these incidents and what people say about them are truly not the real issue. That is something quite different. When one reads the full report carefully one comes across remarkable words which are clear indicators of what really took place. Suchomlinoff himself says that while these events were taking place he, for a time, lost his reason. He says in so many words: "I lost my reason over it." The continuous vacillation of events caused this state of affairs. He was not alone, quite a few others in key positions were in similar states.

Imagine a person occupying a position such as that of Suchomlinoff: The loss of his power of reasoning gives splendid opportunity for ahrimanic beings to take possession of him and instill into his soul all kinds of suggestions. Ahriman uses such methods to bring his influence to bear, especially when no importance is attached to remaining fully conscious — apart from sleep. When we are fully conscious such spiritual beings have no real access to our soul. But when our spirit; i.e., our consciousness is suppressed then ahrimanic beings have immediate access. Dimmed consciousness is for ahrimanic and luciferic beings the window or door through which they can enter the world and carry out their intention. They attack people when they are in a state of dimmed consciousness and take possession of them. Ahriman and Lucifer do not act in inexplicable terrifying ways but through human beings whose state of consciousness gives them access.

Those who in the future want to write a history of this war must discover where such dimmed states of consciousness occurred, where doors and windows were thrown open for the entry of ahrimanic and luciferic powers. In earlier times such things did not happen to the same extent in events of a similar kind. In order to describe the causes of events during earlier times what professors and historians find in archives will suffice, whereas in the case of present events something will remain unexplained over and above what is found in documents however well researched. This something is the penetration of certain spiritual powers into the human world through states of dimmed consciousness.

I spoke in an earlier lecture about how, in a certain region of the earth, conditions were prepared for decades so that at the right moment the appropriate ahrimanic forces could penetrate and influence mankind. Something of this nature took place in July and August of 1914 when an enormous flood, a veritable whirlpool, of spiritual impulses surged through Europe. That has to be rightly understood and taken into account. One simply does not understand reality if one is not prepared to approach it with concrete concepts derived from spiritual insight. To understand what is real, as opposed to what is unreal, at the present time spiritual science is an absolute necessity. Nothing can effectively be done in the political or any other sphere unless wide-awake consciousness is developed concerning events which must be approached with concepts and ideas gained from spiritual knowledge. Not that everything can be judged in stereotyped fashion according to spiritual science. But spiritual knowledge can stir us to alert participation in present issues, whereas a materialistic view of events allows us to sleep through things of greatest importance. A materialistic outlook prevents us from arriving at proper judgement of what the present asks of us.

A recognition of what here is at stake is what I so much want to be present as an undercurrent in our spiritual-scientific lectures and discussions, so that spiritual knowledge may become a vital force enabling souls to deal appropriately with outer life. It is essential to recognize not only the issues of spiritual science itself but also those of external life as they truly are. One must be able to arrive at judgements based on the symptoms to be seen everywhere.

I recently described the incredible superficiality with which a professor of Berlin University attacked Anthroposophy. I told you of the misrepresentations and slanders delivered by Max Dessoir. (Max Dessoir 1867–1947 Philosopher and Psychologist) That such an individual should

be a member of a learned body is part and parcel of the complexities of life today. Max Dessoir once wrote a history of psychology and mentions in the preface that he wrote it because the Berlin Academy of Science had offered a prize for a work on the subject. The history of psychology written by Max Dessoir is such a slovenly piece of work, containing fundamental errors that he withdrew it and prohibited further publication. Consequently not many copies are in circulation, though I have a reviewers copy and could say many things about it. For the moment I refer to it in my forth coming booklet concerned with attacks on Anthroposophy.

As I said Max Dessoir wrote a history of psychology and then withdrew it from circulation. But the fact remains that the Berlin Academy of Science did award it the prize. Such things should not be overlooked; they are symptomatic of what takes place nowadays. One must ask: who are the people who award such prizes? They are the very people who educate the younger generation; i.e., they educate those who will become leading figures in society. They also educated the generation which brought about the present situation in the world. It is necessary to see things in their true context and to recognize that all the symptoms reveal the need for that which alone can make our time comprehensible.

This again indicates what I wish so very much could flow as an undercurrent through our movement so that spiritual science would shake souls awake and make them alert observers of what really takes place in their surroundings. The occasion for sleep is in our time considerable and naturally ahrimanic and luciferic powers make use of every opportunity to divert the alert consciousness aroused by spiritual knowledge away from the real issues. The opportunities for dulling man's consciousness are plentiful. Someone who studies exclusively a special subject will certainly become ever more knowledgeable and clever in his particular field; yet the clarity of his consciousness may suffer as a result. — In speaking about these things one is skating on very thin ice.

While it is true that there are many things of which an initiate cannot speak at present because it could have terrible results, it is also true that there are things of which one can and indeed must speak. To give an example, there is a professor at a German university of whom much good could be said and I have no intention to say anything against the man. I want to give an objective characterization. He is a distinguished scholar of theology, has studied widely and his research in the domain of theology has made him very learned. Yet it has not made him awake and alert to what constitutes true reality. As professor of theology his task is to speak

about religion, scripture and also about veneration and supersensible powers. This, for a modern professor of theology, is a rather uncomfortable task. Such learned men much prefer to speak about experiencing religion as such, about how it feels merely to approach the spiritual. This professor, as others like him, has a certain fear of the spiritual world, fear of defining or describing it in actual words and concepts. I have often spoken about this fear which is purely ahrimanic in origin. This professor has an inkling that he will meet Ahriman once he penetrates the material world and enters the spiritual world. He would then have to overcome Ahriman.

Here we see someone who as a theologian looks upon the beauty and the greatness of nature as a manifestation of the divine. But this aspect of nature he will not investigate for it is the beings of the Higher Hierarchies who reveal themselves through nature and to speak of them is not "scientific." Nevertheless he does want to investigate the soul's religious experiences. However, in attempting investigation of this kind, without any wish to enter the spiritual world itself, one very easily succumbs instead to the very soul condition one is apt to experience when confronting Ahriman: the condition of fear. The religious experience of this theologian consists therefore partly of fear, of timidity in face of the unknown. The last thing he wants is to make the unknown into the known. He presumes that timidity and fear of the unknown — which stems from ahrimanic beings — is part and parcel of religious experience.

It is because he wants to describe the soul's religious experience but refuses to enter the realm of the Hierarchies who live behind the sense world that Ahriman darkens his comprehension of the spiritual world. Through the ahrimanic temptation the spiritual world appears as "the great unknown," as "the irrational" and religious experience is confused with the "mystery of fear." — Nor is that all, for just as Ahriman is waiting without when one seeks the spiritual world through external nature so does Lucifer wait within. The modern theologian of whom we are speaking also refuses to seek the Hierarchies within. Here again Lucifer makes the realm of the Hierarchies appear as "the great unknown" which the theologian refuses to make into the known. Yet he wants to know the soul's experience, so here he meets the opposite of the mystery of fear, namely the "mystery of fascination." This is a realm in which we experience attraction, we become fascinated. The theologian now has on the one hand the mystery of fear and on the other the mystery of fascination; for him these two components constitute religious life.

Naturally there are critics today who feel that it is a great step forward when theology has, at last, got away from speaking about spiritual beings; no longer speaks of what is rational but about what is irrational; i.e., the mystery of fear and the mystery of fascination, the two ways to avoid entering the unknown. The book: *über das Heilige* (About the Sacred) by professor Otto (Rudolf Otto 1869–1937) of Breslau University is certain to attain fame. This book sets out to derationalize everything to do with religious experience. It sets out to make everything vague, to make all feelings indefinite partly through fear of the unknown and also through fascination for the unknown. This view of religious life is certain to attract attention. People are bound to say that here, at last, the old fashioned idea of speaking about the spiritual world is done away with.

Anyone knowing something of Anthroposophy will recognize that in the case of this scholar there is a condition of dimmed consciousness. Such conditions frequently occur; philologists and researchers often fall into states of dimmed consciousness, especially when their investigations are within a limited field. In such conditions Ahriman and Lucifer have access to them. And why should Ahriman not prevent such a researcher from beholding the spiritual world by deluding him through the mystery of fear? And why should Lucifer not delude him through the mystery of fascination? There is no other remedy than clear awareness of the roles played by Ahriman and Lucifer, otherwise one is merely wallowing in nebulous feelings. Certainly feeling is a powerful element of the soul's life which should not be artificially suppressed by the intellect, but that is something different altogether from allowing a surge of indefinite feeling to obscure every concrete insight into the spiritual world.

One is reminded in this connection of something said by Hegel, (Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel 1770–1831 German Philosopher) though it was cynical and purely speculative. Hegel was referring to Schleiermacher's (Friedrich Schleiermacher 1768–1834 Theologian and Philosopher) famous definition of religious feeling which, according to him, consisted of utter and complete dependence. This definition is not false but that is not the point. Hegel, who above all wanted to lead man to clear concepts and concrete views and certainly not to feelings of dependence, declared that if utter dependence was a criterion for being religious then a dog would be the best Christian. Similarly if fear is the criterion for religious feelings then one need only suffer an attack of hydrophobia in order to experience intensely the mystery of fear.

What I am bringing up in these lectures must be considered, not so much according to its theoretical content but rather as an indication of the kind of inner attitude which is indispensable if one wants to observe the conditions in the world as they truly are. And it is so very important to do so. No matter where or how one is placed in life one can either observe appropriately or be inappropriately asleep. What surges and pulsates through life comes to expression in small issues as well as in big ones and can be observed everywhere.

We are at the beginning of a time when it will be of particular importance that things I have indicated in these last lectures are kept very much in mind. Many people do arrive at awareness of a universal Godhead or a universal spirituality. Yet, as I demonstrated when I spoke about his article "Reason and Knowledge," even someone of the stature of Hermann Bahr does not arrive at any real awareness of Christ. He allies himself with the most prominent Christian institution of the day, that of Rome. But despite all he says there is no sign in his "Reason and Knowledge" of any conscious search for the Christ Impulse. Yet the most pressing need in our time is to gain an ever clearer understanding of the Christ impulse.

In the course of the 19th Century there was a great upsurge of natural-scientific thinking and all its attendant results. One of the first results was theoretical materialism accompanied by atheism. It can be said that the materialists of the 19th Century positively revelled in atheism. But such tendencies are apt to reverse and the same kind of thinking which made human beings atheists — due to certain luciferic-ahrimanic impulses at work during the first upsurge of natural science — will make them pious once the first glow has faded. The teachings of Darwin can make people God-fearing as easily as it can make them atheists, it all depends which side of the coin turns up. What no one can become through Darwinism is a Christian; nor is that possible through natural science if one remains within its limits. To become a Christian something quite different is required; namely, an understanding of a certain fundamental attitude of soul. What exactly is meant?

Kant said that the world is our mental picture, for the mental pictures we make of the world are formed according to the way we are organized. I may mention, not for personal but for factual reasons, that this Kantianism is completely refuted in my books *Truth and Knowledge* and *The Philosophy of Freedom*. These works set out to show that when we form concepts about the world, and elaborate them mentally, we are not alienating ourselves from reality. We are born into a physical body to

enable us to see objects through our eyes and hear them through our ears and so on. What is disclosed to us through our senses is not full reality, it is only half reality. This I also stressed in my book *Riddles of Philosophy*. It is just because we are organized the way we are that the world, seen through our senses, is in a certain sense what Orientals call Maya. In the activity of forming mental pictures of the world we add, by means of thoughts, that which we suppressed through the body. This is the relation between true reality and knowledge. The task of real knowledge and therefore real science is to turn half reality; i.e., semblance, into the complete reality. The world, as it first appears through our senses, is for us incomplete. This incompleteness is not due to the world but to us, and we, through our mental activity, restore it to full reality. These thoughts I venture to call Pauline thoughts in the realm of epistemology. For it is truly nothing else than carrying into the realm of philosophic epistemology, the Pauline epistemology that man, when he came into the world through the first Adam, beheld an inferior aspect of the world; its true form he would experience only in what he will become through Christ.

The introduction of theological formulae into epistemology is not the point; what matters is the kind of thinking employed. I venture to say that, though my *Truth and Knowledge* and *The Philosophy of Freedom* are philosophic works, the Pauline spirit lives in them. A bridge can be built from this philosophy to the Christ Spirit; just as a bridge can be built from natural science to the Father Spirit. By means of natural-scientific thinking the Christ Spirit cannot be attained. Consequently as long as Kantianism prevails in philosophy, representing as it does a viewpoint that belongs to pre-Christian times, philosophy will continue to cloud the issue of Christianity.

So you see that everything that happens, everything that is done in the world must be observed and understood on a deeper level. It is necessary, when assessing literary works today, to keep in view not only their verbal content but also the whole direction of the ideas employed. One must be able to evaluate what is fruitful in such works and what must be superceded. Then one will also find entry into those spheres which alone enables one to stay awake in the true sense. The terrible events taking place in our time must be seen as external symptoms, the real change of direction must start from within.

Let me mention in conclusion that before 1914 I pointed out how confused were the statements made by Woodrow Wilson. (Woodrow Wilson 1856–1924 Professor of Philosophy, President of the U.S.A. 1913–

1921) At that time I was completely alone in that view. What I said can be found in a course of lectures I gave at Helsingfors in May and June 1913. At that time Woodrow Wilson had the literary world at his feet. Only certain writings of his had been translated into other languages and much was said about his "great, noble and unbiased" mind. Those who were of that opinion speak differently now; but whether insight or something different brought about the change of view is open to question. What is important now is to recognize that because spiritual science is directly related to true reality it enables one to form appropriate judgements. This is an urgent need in view of the empty abstraction on which most judgements are based at present. An example of the latter is *Der Geistgehalt dieses Krieges* (The Spiritual Import of this War) by George Simmel. It is an ingenious presentation and a prime example of ideas from which all content has been extracted. To read it is comparable to eating an orange from which all juice has been squeezed out. Yet the book was written by a distinguished philosopher and innovator of modern views. At the Berlin university he had a large following; the fact that he never had a thought worthy of the name did nothing to diminish his fame.



7

Luther I

11 September 1917, Berlin

When spiritual science investigates mankind's evolution it arrives at results which in many respects differ considerably from those presented by natural science. This applies more especially to the human soul. The view obtained through spiritual knowledge of the human soul's evolution during hundreds and thousands of years differs from the view that is possible merely through natural-scientific investigation. Looking back into earlier ages we recognize that man once possessed atavistic clairvoyance and that this made his consciousness different from what it is today. However, we must also recognize that a residue of this clairvoyance persisted right into later centuries to a far greater extent than is realized. It is particularly important to be aware of the fact that right up to the 14th, 15th, 16th and even into the 17th century a vestige of the ancient clairvoyance was still in evidence. Not with its former strength, it is true, but although weakened, it was clearly a remnant of the former atavistic clairvoyance and could be encountered over the greater part of the earth.

I have spoken in earlier lectures of the fact that even today there are people who possess atavistic clairvoyance. The reason not much is known about it is because people are usually too embarrassed to confess to their fellow men that revelations from spiritual realms enter their consciousness. I described some instances of this kind in the last lecture. However, the difference is very great between what people could still experience directly from the spiritual world in the 16th and 17th centuries and what is possible since then. And even in the 17th century most people would not have been able to describe what appeared to their clairvoyant vision to the extent of being able to say that they had seen such and such a being. Their consciousness in spiritual experiences was not strong enough to grasp the situation sufficiently to form mental pictures of it. But though the consciousness was subdued, spiritual beings did still enter into man's will, into his feeling and also into his conceptual life. This was the case to a far greater extent than is imagined today. At the present time it is really extraordinarily difficult for someone who is able to look into the spiritual world and is conversant with the nature of what is to be experienced there, to speak freely about it to his fellow men. As I have often mentioned, one's

contemporaries would receive too great a shock were one to describe certain, even elementary, facts concerning man's relationship to the spiritual world. Naturally it can cause clashes of views when an initiate, from his knowledge of the spiritual world, is obliged to say the very opposite to what his contemporaries, owing to their materialistic convictions, can accept as truth.

This situation had not yet arisen in the 14th, 15th, 16th or even 17th centuries. Much of the literature from this period is interpreted quite wrongly. This is not only because modern people think they know better than their predecessors, they also no longer understand their attitude to life. This fact comes to expression in curious ways. For example it is quite extraordinary to witness the way modern philosophers, in their writings or when lecturing, castigate the Scholastics of the Middle Ages. They go out of their way to demonstrate how far they themselves have advanced beyond what they see as prejudiced, pedantic and narrow ideas of the Scholastics. But in truth, compared to the Scholastics, the modern philosophers are incredibly ignorant and they completely misunderstand the Scholastics. What is not realized is that at the time of Thomism, when a philosopher was engaged in the subtle art of ideation, of defining and elaborating the finer points, he was in contact with the spiritual world. It must be realized that for example Thomas Aquinas, (Thomas Aquinas 1225–1274 Scholastic Philosopher) in the 13th Century, attained the concepts and ideas he elaborated in his writings in a completely different way from the way ideas are acquired today. One must think of his books as being inspired by a spirit from the Hierarchy of the Angeloi and that he recorded what came from a higher consciousness.

A modern philosopher would find dreadful the idea of having to sit down and wait till his Angel inspired him before writing what he was to communicate to the world; that with his Angel by his side he was to be the mouthpiece, the physical human mediator for what the Angel proclaimed concerning a higher world. Yet in no other way is it possible to understand what is coming into being, what is becoming. What I am now saying is of the greatest importance and I beg you to take special note of it. Only by listening to what is inspired into us or vouchsafed through Imagination can we come to understand what is coming into being. In our ordinary consciousness, since the 16th, 17th but especially since the 18th century, we have no relationship whatever to what is evolving, coming into existence. We look directly at things, but how much of what we see do we take into our consciousness? Let us say we look at a blossoming rose; in no instance, at no moment do we see the actual coming-into-being of the

rose. From the formation of the seed to the extinction of the rose what we see is the dying, the fading away. That we see the red rose at all is due to the fact that we grasp its dying aspect. The coming-into-being aspect of things can be grasped only if one is able to listen to higher beings or receive impressions from them. No one, except higher beings who at present do not incarnate in a physical body, can perceive the becoming of the rose. In the very lowest realm of perception, the subjective light, which is almost as dull as the old clairvoyance was and, when it occurs, still is, do we see something of the becoming of the rose. But not when we look at it with physical eyes and grasp what we see conceptually.

This illustrates that an essential characteristic of our materialistic age is that only what is dying, what is going towards extinction, enters our consciousness. That was not the case at the time of the Scholastics nor even in the 17th century.

In the early part of the 17th century a little-known philosopher, Henry More, (Henry More 1614–1687 English Philosopher.) born 1614, lived in England. When we look at his external life we see him as a living proof that man does not develop his individuality from inherited qualities alone. He brings with him characteristics, not found in parents or earlier ancestors, from former lives on earth. Henry More's parents and relations were all strict orthodox Calvinists, but already as a small boy he fought Zwingli's rigid teaching of predestination. Henry More rejected it emphatically although no one in his environment maintained anything contrary to this rigid doctrine. He had also another distinguishing characteristic. When one studies his writings, which are very interesting, one discovers the remarkable fact that he spoke of the inner presence of the spiritual world in human consciousness quite differently from the way people spoke of it later. He was a philosopher of the 17th century yet he knew that only through a more receptive consciousness than the ordinary one which only grasps the dying aspect, can man unite with that living reality which expresses itself in inspired consciousness as processes of becoming. In such inspired consciousness man can know about the processes of becoming whereas otherwise he can know only about what is connected with processes of dying. What is perceived everywhere through present-day consciousness is the dying aspects of things and even Henry More was not altogether clear that he had communed with spiritual beings. When he attempted to grasp his experiences in conceptual form; i.e. form mental pictures of them, these pictures would vanish in the very process of forming them just like a dream vanishes as we wake up. Thus he could not bring his experience of meeting spiritual beings into clear consciousness;

he would forget as we forget a dream. Only dimly was he aware of their presence in his inner life but the effect of these experiences remained with him.

A very interesting thought, well known to us, was expressed also by Henry More. The thought that if one wants to reach certain higher knowledge one must learn to regard one's whole being as a member of a higher organism. Just as a finger is a member of the hand and loses its existence if separated from the hand, so too is man nothing, if torn out of his organic connection with the whole cosmos. With the finger this is more obvious. However if the finger could walk freely over our body it might well also succumb to the illusion of being an independent organism. Certainly the earth is there for man, but man is equally, in the adjoining spiritual world, a member of the greater organism of the earth. Man cannot tear himself out of this connection anymore than the finger can tear itself from the hand. I have often expressed this thought as an antidote to man's misplaced and all too prevalent conceit. In Henry More it rose as a sudden revelation. The reason was because he did have a dim knowledge, like a half-forgotten dream, of man's interconnection with the whole cosmos although he could not bring it into conscious conceptual form.

When one tries to discover what helped Henry More to formulate what lived so beautifully in his soul one finds that he had been deeply impressed by a certain booklet. This small book: the "Theologia Germanica" had also made a great impression on someone else; namely Luther (Martin Luther 1483–1546 Inaugurator of German Reformation) who made it available to wider circles in Germany. Henry More became a student of the "Theologia Germanica" by "the man from Frankfurth." You will find more on this subject in my book "Mysticism at the Dawn of the Modern Age."

The question may have arisen in your mind why it should be that in the 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th and even 17th centuries people appear who know of the spiritual world through direct communion. The reason is the following: Those who in these centuries knew most about man's connection with the spiritual world had been on earth, if not in their last incarnation then as a rule in the last but one, at a time when preparation for Christianity was being made in the secret schools, in the Mysteries. Individuals such as Henry More were present on earth in the centuries prior to the Mystery of Golgotha. They then had an intermediate incarnation in the 7th, 8th or 9th century but this later incarnation had much less impact on them than that received in the previous one from the teaching in the mysteries. These teachings, preparing for the Mystery of Golgotha, made a deeper, more

intense, impression on their soul. That is why so much of great significance was said concerning Christianity during those later centuries. Through their communion with the spiritual world these individuals derived an insight into the world's coming-into-being which, since the 17th century has no longer been possible. From then onwards one had to draw ever more on external accounts alone; these accounts, however, only describe what is in the process of decline. Spiritual knowledge is needed to bring insight once more to what is in the process of becoming. The preparation for Christianity, which lasted more than half a millennium during the tragic centuries leading up to the Mystery of Golgotha, made an enormous impression on these spirits. What they carried over into the later incarnation was an impulse of feeling, an inner mood of soul which they were able to give conceptual form.

European cultural development, between the 14th and 17th centuries, takes on a deeper significance when studied with this background in mind. One comes to realize that very spiritual concepts and ideas concerning Christianity and the Bible are to be found in this period. These concepts and ideas often seem strange today because they originated from spiritual experiences. To turn his attention to the essential aspect of that period is of special interest for man today. The period between the 14th and 17th centuries is really like a mighty retrospect. Forces were still present in man's soul through which experience could arise of the surging weaving life of the spiritual world. We enter the minds of those who lived in that period when, in contemplating them, we do not forget this retrospective quality of their consciousness.

If for example we want to understand Luther it is essential to keep in mind what I have just said. Recently a very interesting book: *Luther's Creed* by Ricarda Huch (Ricarda Huck 1864–1947) has appeared. The reason why the book is so interesting is mainly because it is written completely out of present-day consciousness; that it is also inadequate makes it somewhat disappointing. The periodical: "North and South" contains in the July issue an article about this book entitled: "Ricarda Huch and the Devil." The article points out that with our consciousness as it is today we cannot really comprehend the way man's mind worked in an earlier epoch. This fact makes it all the more interesting to see how Ricarda Huch deals with Luther's belief in demons. Unlike those who, when requested for an opinion concerning Luther's belief in demons, are too cowardly to voice one, she tries to treat him fairly. Others usually dismiss

the issue by saying: Well, Luther was certainly a great man but his talk about demons, his belief in the devil stemmed from the fact that he shared the general superstitions of his time.

An opinion of this kind is just about as helpful as that of the honest professor who, reading with his students what Lessing had written about a drama performance, explained that Lessing had not really been able to think through what he had written; and the professor added: "Well, if only I myself had more time!" It is through this kind of superior attitude that it is concluded that Luther had shared in the superstition of his time. The fact is that no one can understand Luther who does not realize that what, out of the spirit and consciousness of his time, was called "the devil" — we would say Ahriman and Lucifer — was for him actual spiritual experience. When he spoke of these matters at Wartburg or anywhere else it was always from direct experience. Try to compare and bring together what Luther says and you will inevitably come to the conviction that only someone who has actually seen the devil, who has met him in direct experience, can speak as Luther did. Moreover he was well aware that: "Small folk never see the devil even when he has them by the collar." Ricarda Huch agrees, with much good will but purely theoretically, against the superior attitude of the academics who, in their cleverness, know that the devil does not exist. They conclude that Luther was superstitious as were others at his time and one must excuse and forgive the great man.

Ricarda Huch does not agree with those who hold such a superior view of great spirits of the past. However it is obvious that she has no personal experience of what the devil looks like. She does believe in him although she has never seen him; so how does she visualize the devil? She believes in his existence because she knows that there are things which neither natural science nor physiology can explain, things which must come from the devil. She too feels that some excuses must be made for Luther for she says: "One ought not to imagine that Luther believed the devil walked about the streets complete with horns and tail." However, like others, she sees what she calls the devil as a combination of certain evil traits and characteristics such as stupidity, pride, untruthfulness and so on. But these are mere abstract concepts and Ricarda Huch thought Luther used his pictorial expressions in that sense. Luther was obliged to use pictures because there is no other way to express spiritual experiences. Yet he was directly acquainted with the devil through the inner battles which unavoidably must be fought when man comes face to face with the devil.

Luther clothed his experiences in pictures in the way one otherwise clothes them in words. Only the most obtuse thinkers could possibly maintain that the words one uses to depict an event contain the event itself. Yet this is precisely the objection levelled against me by professor Dessoir when he says that I have derived the various stages of mankind's evolution, not from reality, but from mental pictures. Such things are rather prevalent; in this particular case it stems from lack of insight, from utter ignorance. In the second chapter of my forthcoming book, dealing especially with moral corruption in academic circles, you will see what kind of people are among those who teach in public places of learning. These people who help shape the present, contribute to its dreadful miseries. They also create a situation in which the Royal Academy of Science awards its prize to the shoddy history of psychology submitted by Dessoir. If you read what Dessoir's colleagues have themselves said about this slatternly superficial treatise you will get an idea of the kind of literature that circulates and even wins awards in the academic world.

Luther lived at a time when the possibility still existed to have awareness of the spiritual world. All the devilry of Ahriman he experienced directly; he could not put these experiences into ordinary words because words are designed for physical things. Spiritual experiences must be described in pictures, in Imaginations. However, Imagination does express the reality of what is perceived and experienced super-sensibly. This Ricarda Huch does not understand. She thinks that though Luther spoke of the devil one must not take it to mean that when someone with spiritual sight comes among people he will, in numerous cases, find Ahriman, hunchbacked and with horns, looking at him from where he sits firmly entrenched between their shoulders. But Luther's descriptions were based on experience, and the pictures he uses are his way of describing these experiences. His personality was not such a gentle one as that of Ricarda Huch who believes he merely used symbolic pictures for man's evil upsurging passions.

One can ask what it is that gives Luther's doctrine — as it is usually called — the power it has. The answer lies in the fact that it is no mere doctrine, it must be understood very differently if one is to do it justice. In one's imagination Luther, standing there in the 17th Century, must be visualized as looking back with inner sight to a time when communion was being cultivated with the spiritual world, to a time when he himself cultivated such communion precisely in the realm of the ahrimanic. To recognize Ahriman is to free oneself from him; the danger lies in *not* recognizing him — you can read more about this aspect of Ahriman in my *Four Mystery Dramas*. To come face to face with Ahriman, the way Luther did, is to set

oneself free. What Luther says can seem incomprehensible unless one recognizes that he is describing actual experiences; when it is realized then the power of his words is greatly enhanced. Even when we find certain aspects of what he said unpalatable his words strike us as genuine because he saw things in a much wider context than is normally possible today.

It is an interesting and highly significant phenomenon that Luther should appear, embodying the fruits of what was taught in the pre-Christian Mysteries. Luther was one of the greatest participants in those Mysteries that prepared the way for the founding of Christianity. What he absorbed in these Mysteries remained quite unimpaired by the later intermediate incarnation and was the source and strength of his power in his incarnation as Luther. But what was Luther's most significant revelation concerning his direct experience of Ahriman?

We must keep in mind that the essentially ahrimanic age begins only after Luther. Though people are not aware of it, present-day natural-scientific knowledge is saturated by Ahriman. The characteristic feature of today's materialistic outlook is that every concept is prompted by Ahriman. Luther was destined, at a significant turning point to make man aware of this fact. However when someone is able to look into the spiritual world he sees things in a different light from those who cannot do so. Furthermore the spiritual world affects man differently once he becomes conscious of it.

We begin to understand Luther's peculiar position once we realize that the powerful force he brought over from an earlier evolutionary stage could not be effective in later epochs. He was destined to rescue for mankind a view of Christianity before it had been weakened by unrecognized ahrimanic influences. That is the reason for the breadth of his vision and the strength of his consciousness of Ahriman.

Someone once wrote a book in which he had collected all the contradictions to be found in Luther's writings. Luther read the book and wrote a reply which is included in a letter to Melanchthon. Luther's comment was: "The silly ass only speaks of contradictions because he understands neither side of a contradiction, he does not understand that one can honour someone as a Prince yet at the same time speak of him as a devil and oppose him."— Luther's letter to Melanchthon, where he speaks of this, is most interesting, for it also reveals his relationship to his own time. He used other expressions which would not be used today but are entirely comprehensible in view of his acquaintance with the spiritual

world. These expressions are not, as historians suggest, merely a product of his time. Those who call Luther's expressions cynical or frivolous do so out of their own cynicism or frivolity.

What is important in relation to these things is to recognize that individual aspects of something may recur, although the greater issue itself is not repeated. This applies also to Scholasticism; people will only learn to relate to it when they rediscover in it the more subtly differentiated thinking than the one cultivated today. The way the spirit came to expression in Luther will never be repeated. He must be accepted just as he is, as a historical phenomenon. It would be a mistake to imagine that anyone could repeat Luther's life. What one should do is to make so thorough a study of Luther, as he appears in history, that one comes to recognize what it was that revealed itself through him in this particular incarnation. One must attempt to see beyond the individual who was active in the mysteries preparing for Christianity and then had an intermediate incarnation before appearing as Luther. We need to see that we are not dealing here only with a certain individuality but that in this one phenomenon the whole trend and law of mankind's evolution is expressed. It could happen because of his former conscious experience — even though as Luther this knowledge had become subconscious — of that realm where he encountered the devil; i.e., Ahriman.

In general Luther is seen the way academics see him: theologians are usually academics. His direct experience of the spiritual world is disregarded and his talk of the devil is seen as the weakness of a great man. But in truth the weakness lies in those who speak in this way about Luther.

Then came — and here we see how evolution runs its course — the time after Luther when Ahriman permeated the materialistic view of life. Though man was not conscious of it this was the case especially in the 19th Century. From the eastern part of Europe the possibility will first emerge for man to know once more the realm he enters when he attains insight beyond the physical plane. This seems a strange fact when we at present look towards the East. We see there aspects revealing both the baseness and the greatness of Russian nature. Over several years we have described what is preparing itself in Russia. It is indeed a remarkable experience to watch what takes place there; one has to say that these people are children still. They really are children and when they are not children they are possessed.

How can one escape the realization that Kerensky (Alexander Feodorowitsch Kerensky b. 1881 Russian Politician) is possessed? Naturally he considers himself far above such a superstitious idea that Ahriman has taken possession of him. But Ahriman has learned to produce from Western science a thinking which is utterly alien to the East, alien because it is a thinking related only to processes of dying. Not only does Western thinking understand nothing about the Russian people; Easterners themselves — that is, the leading people in the East — who try to judge Russians with Western thinking do not understand the Russians. There is in the Russian people still something childlike, something that points to the future. And in the future it is destined to develop into the ability to look once more into the spiritual world, to develop a relationship once more with the spiritual world.

What is preparing in Russia for the future is in complete contrast to the preparations that were made for our own epoch at the time of the Great Luther. Our age looks back, it makes manifest a force working from the past. We are looking at something very remarkable in the contrast between Luther's experience of his time and for example the childlike experience of a Russian like Soloviev (Wladimir Soloviev 1853–1900 Russian Philosopher and Poet) during the time leading up to the revolution. We are seeing two opposite poles which are related as North to South, or if an abstract comparison is wanted, as positive and negative electricity. Two opposite directions of thoughts and views; unable to understand each other. It is obvious from the way Soloviev speaks that he is remote from any understanding of Luther, and if we remain with Luther it is quite impossible to understand Soloviev. We must widen our horizon to encompass both positive and negative.

I wanted to place these important issues before you. When next we meet I shall attempt to present Luther as a self-contained individuality — not only as he appeared in his time but as he appears within mankind's evolution as a whole—from a point of view obtainable only through Anthroposophy.



8 Luther II

18 September 1917, Berlin

As a continuation of the last lecture I should like to draw your attention to certain matters which will throw light on Luther's place in history. From the outset I must make it clear that today's considerations of Luther will be from the point of view of spiritual science rather than that of religion.

What strikes one immediately when considering Luther in the light of spiritual science is the enormous importance the epoch itself had for his prominence and whole activity. The significance of the epoch is much greater in Luther's case than in the case of most other personalities in history. When we study Luther it is very important to be conscious of the epoch in which he appeared; i.e., the 16th century; which according to the spiritual-scientific view of history is very early in the fifth post-Atlantean cultural epoch. This epoch, as we know, began in the 15th century and the preceding Graeco-Latin epoch began some eight centuries before the Mystery of Golgotha. Thus Luther appeared in history soon after the thoughts and feelings, characteristic of the Graeco-Latin epoch, were fading in civilized humanity. To the unprejudiced observer Luther appears at first sight to have a dual personality, but one comes — as we shall see — to recognize that the two aspects meet in a higher unity. It must be realized that there is much more to the history between the 14th and 16th centuries than modern historians are inclined to admit. Great transformation took place, particularly in the human soul; this is something taken far too little into account. The people of the 13th and 14th centuries still had a direct relationship with the spiritual world through the very constitution and disposition of their soul. This is now forgotten but cannot be emphasized enough. When, at that time, man turned his gaze to external nature, to the sky, to cloud formations and so on, he would generally speaking still perceive elemental spirituality. It was also possible for him to commune with the dead with whom he had karmic links to a far greater extent than is believed today. In this period there was still, inherited from an earlier different consciousness, an immediate recognition that the world seen through the senses is not the only world. The transition in consciousness to later times was far more abrupt than imagined. Natural science, in itself fully justified, was then in its dawn, it

drew a veil as it were over the spiritual world behind the physical world. I can well imagine that a modern student of history, who is in the habit of accepting what is taught as absolute truth, will not believe such abrupt transition possible. He would find it neither historical nor substantiated by records. However, spiritual science reveals that at this time the human soul came completely within the confines of the physical world by virtue of changes in man's inner being.

We saw last time that woven into Luther's soul was the after-effect of what he had absorbed, in a former incarnation, in the pre-Christian Mysteries that prepared the way for Christianity. Nevertheless he was in the fullest sense a true man of his time inasmuch as in this, the fifth post-Atlantean cultural epoch, man's former connection with the spiritual world has grown dim. This is so even when the experiences had been as vivid as those of former initiates in the Mysteries. It must not be supposed however, that what has become dim, and therefore fails to become conscious knowledge, is not present and active. It has its effect when, as in Luther's case, the person concerned through his inner karma is sensitive and receptive to what wells up from the depths of his being without reaching full consciousness.

It is not difficult to recognize in Luther the effects of what I have indicated. They reveal themselves in the agonizing torments he went through. These inner torments, while being expressions of his own soul, assumed in his words and ideas the character of his time. They were in fact caused essentially by a kind of realization that man in the fifth post-Atlantean epoch, the epoch of materialism, would be deprived of contact with the spiritual world. All the deprivation a materialistic age would inflict upon the deeper strata of the human soul weighed heavily upon Luther. Today one has to use different words from those he employed to describe what he felt so strongly. It is therefore not Luther's own words that I use in characterizing his inner experiences. But what he felt may be expressed in these words: What is to become of man when his vision is cut off from the spiritual world, as he is bound to forget what he formerly received from that world? If you imagine this feeling intensified to its limit you have the keynote of Luther's inner suffering. But why was it Luther who in particular felt this so intensely?

The reason is to be found in what I mentioned as the duality of his nature. Luther was on the one hand very much a man of the fifth post-Atlantean cultural epoch. But because he was also inwardly very much a man of the fourth post-Atlantean cultural epoch he felt with great intensity

the deprivation which the people of the fifth epoch were already experiencing in his time, albeit not consciously. The duality in his nature was caused by the fact that — while being in complete accord with his own time, the fifth epoch — the teachings in the pre-Christian Mysteries had taken such deep roots in his soul that he inwardly felt as a man of the fourth epoch. He felt as related to the fourth epoch as an ancient Greek or Roman had felt. Odd as it may seem this had the effect that he could not understand the Copernican system of astronomy; i.e., a system based purely on physical calculations. This system, however, is in complete harmony with the outlook of the fifth cultural epoch but would have seemed meaningless in the fourth. This fact will seem strange to modern man whose view is that the apex of knowledge has been reached and that the Copernican system cannot be superseded. This is a shortsighted view as I have often pointed out. Just as today the Ptolemaic system is put to scorn, so will the Copernican be looked down upon in the future when it is replaced by another. However, in the fifth cultural epoch the very soul constitution of man enables him to have ready understanding for a system of movement of the heavenly bodies based entirely upon physical calculations.

Luther had no such understanding; to him the Copernican view seemed so much folly. He was little interested in the materialistic, purely spatial conceptions of the phenomena of the universe which occupied the human mind at the dawn of the fifth cultural epoch. Whereas the way man felt and experienced his place within that universe interested him greatly. However the relation to the world, which man perforce had to have, in the fifth cultural epoch was experienced by Luther with all the inner soul impulses of a man of the fourth-, the Graeco-Latin epoch.

Thus we see Luther on the one hand looking back at the way man was related to the spirituality of the Cosmos in the fourth cultural epoch. And on the other we see him looking ahead, being aware of the kind of experiences, feelings and conceptions to which man would be exposed by virtue of a relation to the cosmos which separates him from its spiritual reality. Thus Luther felt and experienced the fifth cultural epoch as a soul belonging to the fourth cultural epoch. The experiences man had to undergo in the fifth cultural epoch weighed heavily on his soul.

In order to have a clearer picture let us for a moment compare a modern man of average education with a man of the comparatively ancient time of the fourth epoch. The former's thoughts and feelings, his whole relation to the world is determined by the natural-scientific view of the world, whereas

the latter's thoughts and feelings were determined by the fact that he was still aware of his connection with spiritual reality. What we designate as Imagination and Inspiration were particularly vivid for man at that time. It was a common experience that colors are not seen only through eyes, or sound heard only through ears. Man was aware that by inner effort he received pictorial and audible revelations from the spiritual world. Everyone was aware that a divine spiritual-world lived in his soul. Man felt inwardly connected with his God.

In the fifth post-Atlantean epoch man is subjected to a test and his communion with the spiritual world has to cease. In this epoch he has developed, through special methods and a special kind of knowledge, the possibility to observe the external phenomena of nature and their relation to his own being with great exactitude. But he no longer has vision of the spiritual world; no longer is there a path leading from the soul to the spiritual world.

Let us visualize these two types of human beings side by side. As we saw in the last lecture, Luther's knowledge and religious feelings concerning the spiritual world were not abstract; the spiritual world was not closed to him. He had a living communion with the spiritual world, more especially with evil spirits of that world. But that in itself is not an evil trait. Thus he knew of the spiritual world through direct experience, but he also knew that for mankind of the fifth post-Atlantean epoch this experience of the spiritual world was fading away and would gradually disappear altogether. It became a great riddle for Luther how the human beings of the fifth post-Atlantean epoch would cope with the deprivation of not beholding the spiritual world. As he contemplated the man of the fifth epoch his heart was overflowing with impulses brought over from his incarnation in the fourth post-Atlantean epoch. These living forces constituted a powerful link with the spiritual world which caused Luther to sense its reality with great intensity. It made him feel that it was essential to awaken in man a consciousness of that reality. At the same time he was under no illusion that human beings incarnating during the coming epoch would lose all consciousness of the spiritual world. They would have nothing but their physical senses to rely on, whereas in earlier times knowledge of the divine-spiritual-world had been attained through direct vision and experience. All Luther could do was to tell mankind: If in the future you look towards the spiritual world you will find nothing, for the ability to behold it will have vanished. If you nonetheless wish to retain awareness of its existence then you must turn to the Bible, the most reliable record in existence, a record that still contains direct knowledge of the spiritual

world which you can otherwise no longer reach. In earlier times one would have said: besides the Gospel there is also the possibility to look directly into the spiritual world. This possibility has vanished for mankind of the fifth post-Atlantean epoch; only the Gospel remains.

So you see that Luther spoke from the heart and in the spirit of the fifth post-Atlantean epoch, but as someone who also belonged to the fourth post-Atlantean epoch. By means, still remaining from the fourth epoch, he wanted to draw attention to that which, because of his evolution, man in the fifth epoch could no longer reach. Luther may not have been conscious of these things exactly the way I describe them. However as things stood it is understandable that he, at the start of an epoch in which direct insight into the spiritual world would cease, pointed to the Gospel as the sole authority concerning the spiritual world. He wanted to emphasize that the Gospel was a special source of strength for mankind in the coming epoch.

Let us now turn our attention to something different. At the moment I am occupied with certain aspects of Christian Rosenkreutz and the "Chymical Wedding" by *Johann Valentin Andreae* and this brings certain things connected with the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries vividly before my soul. When one looks at those who during those centuries were engaged in science, one comes to realize that at that time knowledge of nature was alchemy in the best sense of the word. The natural scientist of today would have been an alchemist then. But to understand the spiritual aspect of alchemy it must not be thought of as connected with superstition or fraud. What were the alchemists attempting? They were convinced that there are other forces at work in nature besides those which can be discovered by external observation and experiment. They wanted to prove that while nature is indeed "natural" supersensible forces are at work in her.

To the alchemist it was obvious that, however firmly welded together the composition of a metal appeared to be, that composition could still be transformed into another. However they saw the transition as the result of a spiritual process, an effect of the spirit in nature. This is something that will be known again in future epochs, but in our time it is a deeply hidden knowledge. The alchemists were able to bring about alchemical processes which, if they could be demonstrated today, would greatly amaze modern scientists. In that earlier age it was part of man's knowledge that spiritual forces are at work in nature. The alchemical processes were brought about by manipulating those forces.

This knowledge inevitably had to be lost in the fifth post-Atlantean epoch. A reflection still exists in religious conceptions of the universe. In the earlier centuries, right up to the 13th and 14th, what was taught concerning the Sacraments was different from what could be taught in the following centuries, though for Luther it was still vivid inner experience even if not a fully conscious one. But the experience, that spiritual forces were directly active in consecrated substance, was lost to the faithful. Today the teaching of the Catholic sacrament is something quite different than it was, for example the doctrine concerning the sacrament at the altar, when bread and wine are to be transformed through a mysterious process into real flesh and blood. When one discusses this issue with Catholic theologians the usual answer to modern man's objection is: If you do not understand that you have no understanding whatever of Aristotle's teaching on substances. Be that as it may, one has to say that in the fifth post-Atlantean epoch no real meaning can be connected with an actual transubstantiation; i.e., with real alchemy. Today this process takes place above material existence. Today when man receives the bread and wine these are not transmuted. The divine-spiritual reality of the Christ Being passes into man as he receives the bread and the wine.

This metamorphosis of the concept of the sacrament is also connected with the transition in man's evolution from the fourth to the fifth post-Atlantean epoch. Luther, because of his very nature, had to speak out of the spirit of both epochs. He wanted to convey to man's soul the strength it had formerly gained from religious teaching. As the dawning natural science would never be able to acknowledge anything spiritual in matter, Luther sought to keep religious teaching aloof from the weakening effect of science. From the outset he kept spiritual issues strictly apart from physical processes. He thought of the latter, if not exactly as symbols, then at least as being merely physical. — It is not so easy to understand these things today but spiritual science must draw attention to them just the same.

We must envisage Luther turning his gaze, even if not fully consciously, towards the coming epoch spanning more than two thousand years, during which man would be able to experience something of the spiritual world only in exceptional cases and through special training. Historical personalities such as Luther must be seen in a wider perspective; their thoughts and actions must be seen as expressing the epoch in which they live. Luther as it were represented the human beings of his time, human beings to whom something was lost. What they had lost was caused by the fact that in the fifth post-Atlantean epoch human knowledge had assumed a form that made it impossible to strengthen the human soul, by means of

the power inherent in knowledge itself, so that it could look into the spiritual world and have its own spiritual cognition. It is not normal for people of the fifth post-Atlantean epoch to have spiritual cognition through their own initiative. In his ordinary life in the fifth epoch man cannot be conscious of freedom in the real sense, of real freedom of will which is the ability to act directly out of that deepest region of the human soul where it is united with the divine. Today both freedom and knowledge are theoretical. As the fifth post-Atlantean epoch progressed the theory that there are limits to human knowledge has frequently been proclaimed. To speak of limits of knowledge in the sense of Kant (Immanuel Kant 1724–1804 German Philosopher) or Dubois-Reymond (Emil Du Bois-Reymond 1818–1896 German Physiologist) would have seemed meaningless in ancient times, even by the sceptics.

As mentioned already one should take what is said by a historical personality such as Luther as expressing the spirit of his epoch, not as having validity for all time. What Luther recognized as the outstanding characteristic of mankind in the fifth post-Atlantean epoch he interpreted in the light of Christianity. He understood it in the Christian, or better said Biblical sense, as a direct effect of original sin. The fact that man, out of his own forces, cannot attain either freedom, or knowledge of the divine, in the fifth epoch Luther saw as a direct outcome of original sin. Thus when he said that man was so corrupted by original sin that by himself he could not overcome it, Luther spoke a truth that holds good for the fifth post-Atlantean epoch. The force in man most closely bound up with his nature is the force that expresses itself in his will, in his actions. What a man does springs from the very center of his being. What he knows or believes is much more dependent on his environment, the time in which he lives and so on. In the fifth post-Atlantean epoch, the epoch of natural science and materialism, man is not able to perform actions that spring directly from the spirit. That in fact is the essential characteristic of this epoch. In the sixth post-Atlantean epoch it will again be different. But that man in the fifth epoch, in his ordinary consciousness, had lost the link connecting him with the spiritual world was also Luther's conviction.

Yet Luther was also aware that it is essential for man not to be torn out of that connection altogether. He saw that as an inhabitant of the external physical world man, through what he wills and does, has no connection with the Divine. He can only attain it if he regards this connection as something separate and apart from his external physical existence. From this thought originated the doctrine of salvation purely through faith. A typical man of the fourth epoch would have regarded salvation through

faith alone as nonsensical. An ancient Greek or Roman would have found it meaningless if told that what he does, what he accomplishes in the world is not what gives him value in the eyes of the Highest Powers, but solely his soul's acknowledgement of the spiritual world. However, it is not meaningless to the man of the fifth epoch, for if his worth were dependent solely on what he accomplished in the physical world he would be in fact just a creature of that world. He would be more and more convinced that he merely represented the highest peak of the animal kingdom. Man had therefore to forge a link with the spiritual world by means of something that in no way linked him with the physical world. That something is faith.

What Luther thus impressed on his own and the following time could naturally not remain the only cultural influence in the fifth post-Atlantean epoch. One may ask who at the present time is a Lutheran? The answer is that, inasmuch as he is a man of the fifth post-Atlantean epoch, everyone is a Lutheran. Those with a sense for the subtle conceptual differences in world views will notice the enormous discrepancy between the views of a Catholic theologian in the 13th or 14th Centuries and those of his counterparts today. The reason is that the Catholic theologian of today is in reality a Lutheran, his outlook and impulses are those of a Lutheran. These are matters that go unnoticed because there is so little feeling for the inner truth of things, the attention is focused only on the external label applied to a person. It is after all merely an external matter that someone, because of family or some other connection, is entered in the Church register as Catholic or Protestant. What characterizes him inwardly is something quite different. The man of today who is truly of his time, who is stirred and influenced by what takes place, is inwardly a Lutheran. Like Luther he articulates the essence of the fifth epoch. Luther was especially suited to do so because of the characteristic duality of his nature. This made him question the fate of future mankind, but it also stirred in him an overwhelming impulse to speak to the people of the fifth post-Atlantean epoch with all the vigorous forces that he wanted preserved as they were in the fourth post-Atlantean epoch. That he was able to speak in this way was due to the higher unity of his dual nature. He spoke out of the very souls of the people exposed to the conditions of the fifth post-Atlantean epoch. He formulated and voiced the very concepts and ideas that stirred in them. But he also spoke so that everything he said was permeated with his impulse to preserve what had existed in the fourth post-Atlantean epoch. That was the higher unity. However, the sixth post-Atlantean epoch could not be prepared within the fifth had the latter not been influenced by other cultural streams.

Thus we see that Lutheranism, in the way indicated, is more particularly an impulse of the fifth epoch, but other cultural streams make themselves felt. The most important for us is the one that came to expression in the German classical period: from *Lessing* to *Herder*, *Schiller*, *Goethe* and others. A remarkable phenomenon is the fact that we have in the same period a thoroughly Lutheran philosopher in Kant, whose concepts represent the very essence of Lutheranism. Schiller had at one time an inclination to follow Kant but found that he could not; and indeed no philosophic work better illustrates the striving to get beyond mere Lutheranism than Schiller's *Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man*. These letters — which are too little appreciated today — and also Goethe's *Faust* constitute as it were the apex of that other cultural stream. Both works stress that man must turn, not only to the Bible, but to the world and life itself in order to strengthen the human soul so that it can find, through its own forces, the path to the spiritual world. The concluding scenes of *Faust* represent the complete contrast to Lutheranism. Only a contrived interpretation could possibly bring Schiller's aesthetic letters, Goethe's *Fairy Tale of the Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily* and the last scenes of *Faust* in line with Lutheranism. We see in these works the human soul attaining strength through an inner opposition to the natural-scientific interpretation of the world. And in this way it finds, through its own forces, the connection with the spiritual world.

Ideas concerned with the legend of "Dr. Faustus" emerged already in the 16th Century in opposition to Luther's strong proclamations, but these ideas could not yet gain ground... Luther's attention was focused on the man of the fifth post-Atlantean epoch who, though possessed by ahrimanic demons, yet refuses to acknowledge the, to Luther well known, devil. It is not really surprising that Ricarda Huch, after occupying herself so intensely with Luther, comes to place such great importance on his direct knowledge of the diabolical realm of the spiritual world. Bearing in mind the story of the expulsion from the Garden of Eden, it is indeed interesting that in our time it is a woman who has this yearning that man should again recognize the devil who — especially when his view of life is purely naturalistic — has him by the collar. In her book about Luther this longing comes to expression: that if only man could experience the devil it would awaken him to a consciousness of God.

This cry for the devil, expressed by Ricarda Huch lives in man's subconscious. It is a cry she wants mankind to hear. To understand Ricarda Huch is easy for someone who knows that in every laboratory, in every machine, in short in all the most important spheres of modern civilization,

the actual devil is present and active. I say this in plain words for it would be much better for people to be aware of the devil rather than, unknown to them, he should have them by the collar.

Luther's consciousness of the devil was for him a living reality mainly because he still experienced the spiritual world as would a man in the fourth post-Atlantean epoch. His vivid experience came to expression in his words, for he strove to make the man of the fifth epoch conscious of the devil by whom he was possessed without knowing it. Luther could not do otherwise than call up in the man of his time an awareness of the devil which differed from the way Faust experienced the devil. Faust deliberately sold himself in order to gain knowledge and power through the devil. Such a relationship to the devil was at first rejected in the 16th century. At that time only a negative submission to the devil could be envisaged. Goethe, and in fact already Lessing protested vigorously against that idea. One must ask why they had a different view of man's relation to the devil. It must be said that neither Lessing nor Goethe had the nerve openly to state their view of Faust's relation to the devil. Today it is much easier to speak openly of these things than it was at the time of Lessing and Goethe. An initiate may have wanted to tell his fellow men something different but if he had they would have torn him to pieces.

Let us attempt to understand Goethe's inner attitude to Faust. Goethe too had insight into the nature of man of the fifth post-Atlantean epoch. He knew of man's close relationship to the devil in this epoch. He knew that whenever man's consciousness is restricted to the material alone the devil; i.e., ahrimanic powers are always present. This state of consciousness constitutes for these powers a door through which they gain entry. Ahriman has easy access to man whenever his consciousness is limited to the purely material aspect of things or dimmed down below normal, as can happen through organic causes, agitation, rage or other uncontrolled behaviour. Goethe's insight made it impossible for him to adopt the materialistic view generally held. While he knew that ahrimanic powers are universally present he could not in all honesty represent them as something to be avoided or rejected. On the contrary what he wanted Faust to attain he had to achieve through direct contest with the devil. In other words the devil must be made to surrender his power, he must be conquered. That is the real meaning behind Faust's struggle with the devil, the evil Ahriman or Mephistopheles.

Now let us turn to Schiller who tries to adopt Kant's philosophy but comes to recognize the futility of doing so. In his *Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man* he distinguishes between mere instinctive craving—which according to Luther arises from man's physical nature — and the spirit which reveals itself within his physical nature. A true Lutheran would say that man is addicted to his cravings and he cannot, through his own power, rise above them. Only faith can enable him to do so. He will then have been purified and redeemed through an externally existing Christ. Schiller said: No, something else is present in man: in the craving for freedom lives the power of the spirit which can ennoble the bodily cravings of man's physical nature. Schiller distinguishes physical nature, ennobled through the spirit, from the spirit becoming manifest through it. He shows that man is indeed separated from spiritual existence through matter, but that he nevertheless, *out of himself*, strives to reach the spirit by transforming matter; that is, physical existence, through inner alchemy.

One recognizes the spiritual greatness that could have enriched Western culture in works such as Schiller's aesthetic letters and also Goethe's *Faust* which presents in dramatic form the overcoming of ahrimanic powers in external life. What could have been achieved through the strong impulse towards the spirit contained in these works has not come about. And it fills one with pain and despair to see one's contemporaries turn instead, for their spiritual education, to such trash as the American "In Tune with the Infinite."

I cannot refrain from repeating what happened to Deinhardt (Heinrich Mariannus Deinhardt 1821–1879) of Vienna who wrote a very beautiful essay on Schiller's aesthetic letters in which he discusses the marvelous perspective their content opens up. I do not think anyone knows about Deinhardt today. He had the misfortune to fall and break his leg; when the doctor came he was told that he could not be healed because he was too undernourished. And so he died. But this small book by Deinhardt of Vienna is concerned with one of the deepest spiritual impulses that have sprung from Western culture. If only people would recognize and investigate what has actually germinated in Western culture we would cease to hear the empty phrase, "the best man in the best place," and then people proceed, through lack of judgement, to select a nephew or a cousin as the best man in the best place. Continuously one hears it said that the right person for this or that position simply does not exist. That is not the case; what is lacking is rather people with judgement who know where to look. But that ability can only be attained through inner strength, developed by absorbing the spiritual impulses flowing through spiritual life.

There is nothing abstract about what can be gained from great literary works. Rather they fill the human soul with spiritual impulses which further its development along the path that Goethe strode with such vigour, and whose goal he depicted with dramatic artistry in the last scene of his *Faust*. It has no meaning in our time to preserve the old just because it is old; but we must find those treasures of the past which contain seeds for the future. Nowhere is this better illustrated than in the classic works of Goethe, Schiller and Lessing.

I wanted to show where Lessing, Goethe and Schiller belong in recent cultural development because it enables us to understand better their predecessor Luther. To understand a personality such as Luther it is necessary to understand what stirred in the depth of his soul and caused him to speak the way he did. I believe that if in the light of these thoughts you approach what, especially in our time, comes to meet us with such force in Luther, you will discover many things about him which I cannot go into now. I am convinced that it has a special significance to immerse oneself in Luther in the present difficult time. There is perhaps no one better suited to convey the many aspects of the fifth post-Atlantean cultural epoch than Luther. He spoke so completely out of the spirit of the fifth epoch even though his words had their origin in the fourth epoch.

When faced with the way events are depicted in history we should sense how necessary it is to rethink them. We ought to sense that the present difficult time which has brought such misery upon humanity is the karmic effect of distorted, superficial thinking. We should sense that the painful experiences we go through are in many respects the karma of materialism. We must have the will to rethink history. I have often pointed out that history as taught today in elementary and secondary schools as well as in universities, perhaps particularly in the latter, is a mere fable, and is all the more pernicious for being unaware that it is but a fable that aims to present only external physical events. Should the events of the 19th century be presented just once as they truly were—merely those of the 19th century! — it would be an immense blessing for mankind. Referring to history Herman Grimm once said that he foresaw a time when those, now regarded as great figures of the 19th century, would no longer appear all that great, whereas quite other figures would emerge as the great ones from the grey mist of that century.

Because of the way history has come to be presented in the course of time the human soul must undergo a fundamental change in order to understand it properly. I have often said this but it cannot be stressed

enough. Man's concepts nowadays lack the vigour and power required to cope with social needs, because they are based on such superficial views. This war is in reality waged because of shortsighted, obtuse and foggy ideas, and the men fighting it are in many respects mere puppets of those ideas. Today there is an incessant clamour for people's freedom, for international courts of arbitration and the like, all of which remains so many empty words because it makes no difference what is established as long as there is no deeper understanding of the real issues. Yet all these things could be achieved if, as is so greatly to be desired, spiritual science were able to rouse people to recognize the deeper impulses beneath the surface of ordinary life. But these things people today do not want to see. It is quite immaterial what is arranged whether in relation to war or to peace or whatever. What is needed is that our ideas, our understanding of the issues, cease to remain on the surface. One could wish that, just at this time, what Luther so forcefully proclaimed would be heard and understood. People would then come to recognize that in Luther spoke more than the man. In him the character of the epoch which began in the 8th century B.C. and ended in the 15th century A.D. united with the character of the epoch that followed; i.e., our own, which will endure for 2100 years.

In the true sense a historic personality is someone in whom there speaks a being from the Hierarchy of the Archai, a Time Spirit. Through such a personality the voice of the Spirit of the Time is heard. This must be recognized if one is to approach Luther with understanding.



9

Spiritual Science and Insight

25 September 1917, Berlin

A point has been reached in mankind's evolution when the riddle of existence becomes ever more significant for the human soul. Some are aware of the riddle but there is little inclination anywhere to seek ways and means of solving it.

Today I would like to point to an aspect of the riddle which many people come up against in everyday life. There are those who ask: Why is it that all over the world there is a discrepancy between man's intellectual and moral development? At present man's intellectual development expresses itself mainly in what could also be called, with more or less justification, scientific development. Most people's view of life is based on natural science. And what things has man not produced thanks to his intellect! I need not enumerate all the external products which make up our materialistic culture. When one thinks of all the ingenious means it has so far produced for destroying human life, for enabling men to slaughter one another, then, leaving aside all moral considerations, one must concede that the intellect has reached a certain high plateau in its development. Just think of all the scientific ingenuity necessary to produce all those instruments of death with which men mangle each other, causing untold suffering.

One can think of much that is negative and also of much that is positive in what has come about as a result of man's highly developed intellect. It has certainly progressed with unprecedented speed especially in the last centuries. Occasionally one comes across remarks made by the few who have noticed the glaring contrast between intellect and morality. Already years ago in his famous work *The Riddle of the Universe*, Ernst Haeckel (Ernst Haeckel 1834–1919 German Biologist) pointed out how man has progressed intellectually but in regard to morality he has in many respects remained at a primitive stage. There are also others who have remarked on this discord which tends to be noticed by persons who are awake and sensitive to what goes on in the world. However, due to modern man's lethargy and love of ease, people fail to become aware that only spiritual knowledge can throw light on these profound problems with their far-

reaching consequences for the human soul. If one is to find one's way through the complexities of present-day life no other possibility exists than to attempt to understand them in the light of spiritual science. Anyone with a feeling for reality finds it painful to witness the unease, the unwillingness that exists all over the globe to face openly and courageously the things that are happening both above and below the surface of events. Today people are apt to deplore immoral measures taken in the past. This seems strange in view of the fact that they fail to judge what goes on at present all over the world which is far worse than anything that has happened before in human evolution. Let us for once look at the relationship between man's intellectual and moral development in the light of spiritual knowledge.

Our first enquiry must concern what exactly takes place in the human being when he is engaged in intellectual pursuits. What aspects of our being is active when we formulate scientific thoughts; i.e., when we investigate external phenomena? We reflect on the laws of nature to enable us, through understanding them, to form appropriate mental pictures. This activity engages parts of man's being which are the most mature. When we look at what is today the foundation, the tool of the intellect then we are looking at those aspects of man which were developed and incorporated into his being in the course of the ancient Saturn, Sun, Moon and the present Earth evolutions. When on the other hand we seek to understand the foundation of man's moral development we cannot refer to such mature constituents of his being. In regard to his moral evolution we are dealing with comparatively much younger members of human nature. In actual fact only man's 'I' can be said to be moral in the true sense. But, as I have often said: man's 'I' is the baby among the members of his being. Even in regard to the astral body, incorporated into man's being during the ancient Moon evolution, one can speak of moral impulses only insofar as the astral body, being intimately connected with the 'I' during life, may receive moral impulses from the latter. It must also be borne in mind that the 'I' and astral body have a comparatively independent existence; every night when we fall asleep they free themselves from the physical and etheric bodies. They are then in a state of complete unconsciousness and therefore cannot receive moral impulses.

The following is of great importance but somewhat difficult for modern man to understand: Every time we awake from sleep we enter, with our 'I' and astral body, into our physical and etheric bodies; i.e., into the oldest members of our being. These members, having evolved through the Saturn, Sun and Moon evolutions have attained a certain degree of

perfection which makes them pre-eminently suitable tools for the intellect. Their degree of perfection is something that is inborn in them and manifests as intellectual proficiency. If the 'I' and astral body were not added to our physical and etheric bodies we would in a certain sense be thinking machines; we would be scientific automatons. In accordance with their nature our physical and etheric bodies do in fact act automatically in certain ways. It is only because the 'I' dwells in them that they are capable of further development on earth. But the 'I' could do little towards perfecting the physical and etheric bodies, even in regard to their intellectual ability, if it were not transported every night into sleep. We attain our best forces, also in regard to intellectual development, during sleep. It is because the physical and etheric bodies are perfectly developed tools that the already existing intellectuality can become further developed by what the 'I' has received from the spiritual world during sleep and bestows upon them on waking. During waking life we have in addition our consciousness which we attain by virtue of the physical and etheric bodies. We have at present no comparable consciousness as far as the 'I' and astral body are concerned. This should be kept well in mind. Man believes he knows his 'I,' but in what sense does he know it? If you have, say, a red surface and cut a hole in it through which you look into darkness; i.e., into nothingness, you will then see the red surface and the hole as a black circle. You look into nothingness. In your inner life you see your 'I' the way you see the black circle in the surrounding red. What man believes to be perception of his 'I' is in fact a gap in his soul life. Though nothing is there, or very little, man believes he perceives his 'I.' In actual fact all he sees is what his brain reveals to him through his etheric and physical bodies. In the present phase of evolution man has not come very far in perceiving his own 'I' while in a physical body between birth and death.

We are unconscious during sleep, but during the day, while awake, we are still unconscious as far as our 'I' is concerned. Yet morality must be implanted into the 'I.' So you see, as far as morality is concerned — compared with his intellectuality — man is very much a baby. That is the deeper reason why it is so difficult for man, during earth evolution, to advance morally, while intellectually he progresses with comparative ease.

In a periodical founded during the war entitled *The Bell* an article recently appeared discussing the discrepancy between intellectual and moral development. Despite its name, *The Bell* seldom rings out much sense; according to its opinion on this matter, the discrepancy can be traced to the fact that intellectual development has come about under capitalism, in other words during a time when rulership was in the hands of the few,

whereas moral development will come about only when socialism has been established. Well, idealists insist that the earth will become paradise when idealism gains the upper hand. Materialists make the same claim for materialism while, according to liberals, paradise comes about when liberalism is generally accepted. So naturally socialists see paradise as the realization of socialism. These views are all incredibly naive. They are in fact so many trite illusions all of which demonstrate that, while modern man is beset by problems, he still will not rouse his thinking — and on thinking it at first depends — to the irksome task of penetrating into the realm of spiritual experience. Anyone who will really think can penetrate to spiritual reality. Our age that prides itself in its thinking knows thinking the least.

The discrepancy between intellectual and moral development can only be explained when seen in the greater contexts just outlined. But the article in *The Bell* comes to the conclusion that as long as there are individuals who are intellectual, intellectuality will continue to develop, whereas moral life will reach a comparable development only when all people are merged within a socialist order. Thus capitalism is supposed to be favourable for intellectuals who are scientifically inclined, while socialism will be favourable for moral development. The reality however, is very different, for interest in the spiritual world must take hold of man if morality is to develop to the same extent as intellectuality has done. Men must become able actually to behold the spiritual forces and impulses that surge and pulsate through the world. There are many reasons why this is highly uncomfortable for modern man. For example, when someone embarks upon developing his thinking, in ways I have often described, his thinking becomes capable of functioning in the spiritual world. This means that in his thinking he experiences the spiritual world as a reality. This leads him of necessity to develop something else which has declined during our materialistic age, namely, an inner feeling of responsibility.

People whose view of life is based solely on their natural-scientific knowledge and observations are determined, in the way they think, by external events. Their thinking is as it were attached to the leading strands of the external phenomena and guided by them. The concepts they acquire enable them, up to a point, to understand external events. However, this kind of thinking in no way suffices to recognize moral and social issues in their reality; let alone find solutions to moral and social problems. In order to achieve this one must be in contact with spiritual reality, which however creates in the soul a strong feeling of responsibility for one's thoughts. One will not permit every arbitrary train of thought to go through the soul but

only such which are, as it were, fit to be seen by the Beings of the Higher Hierarchies. Proclaiming freedom for nations is not a concept fit to present to spiritual worlds; it illustrates the kind of mistaken concept, generally held today, concerning the individual's relation to his folk. We know from spiritual science that freedom is a concept which is applicable only to human beings as individuals; quite different concepts apply to nations with their group souls. Yet around the world today freedom of nations and the like is being proclaimed, giving voice to Woodrow Wilson's immature ideas. They are even taken seriously! In fact they are also taken seriously within Europe; though we, with centuries of experience should at least be able to produce a few enlightened ideas, ideas that could, in the sense of spiritual science, throw some light on the issues.

It is possible to feel responsibility, not only towards people, but towards concepts and ideas; if they are moral ideas they exist entirely in the spiritual world, for they arise in our T or possibly in the astral body. However, one does not have this feeling of responsibility if one lives exclusively in materialistic concepts and ideas; i.e., ideas that relate solely to external phenomena as often happens without awareness. One hears phrases such as: God sent us this war because of our sins and shortcomings. Uttering such phrases does not indicate moral or spiritual ideas; it indicates rather no advance beyond materialism. Such an advance only comes about when one is able to form mental pictures of spiritual reality. Plenty of phrases are coined these days which have no foundation in reality; it happens especially when it comes to discussing this or that political issue. On such occasions one often hears talk of a "new spirit" which does not mean in the least that the person concerned has the slightest inkling of the spirit.

If we are to extricate ourselves from the present devastating conditions, the spirit must not remain abstract; it must be grasped in its reality. As already mentioned it is possible to understand this or that external phenomenon with the kind of concepts engendered by simply following the leading strings of physical perception. They do not, however, have the power to influence the intricacies of human life; the latter require concepts and ideas derived from spiritual insight. You may ask how it then comes about that human life is after all influenced occasionally. It is because human beings still rely on old, even ancient ideas though they no longer fit the changed conditions. Our age demands new concepts, new mental pictures, derived from spiritual knowledge. Naturally, these ideas are new only in the sense that they are new to mankind.

However, these new ideas are at times found to be unpalatable especially when they relate to human morality seen in the light of spiritual knowledge. It is easy enough to say that good will is a virtue and should be cultivated, or that justice is moral and ought to be established. It is also easy enough to make laws and arrangements accordingly. One can even elect parliaments in which clever people come together to make all kinds of decisions based on good will and justice. But if things are handled the way they have been so far they will result in something similar to the situation we see spread all over the world today, if only people would have the courage to recognize that there is a direct connection between the terrible events taking place at present and the kind of concepts and ideas which preceded them.

Good will is certainly a virtue and one can even get a sensuous feeling of pleasure from practicing it. A kind of catechism of virtues could be devised: Thou shalt have good will, thou shalt be just and so on; one would then possess a list of virtues and no understanding of any of them. It would in fact be comparable to knowing that when a pendulum is at its highest point the law of gravity will bring it down to the lowest, but not knowing that in coming down the pendulum gathers a force that makes it swing equally far up the other side. In regard to physical phenomena these things are easy to recognize because the external phenomena themselves enforce one's thinking to be consistent, but in the sphere of morality there are no such leading strings.

If a person develops good will it is certainly an excellent thing. However, just as the pendulum in its downward swing gathers the force that will make it swing upwards, so there develops with the force of good will a tendency to its opposite, a tendency to prejudice, biased views and the like. No virtue can be cultivated without developing also a disposition towards the opposite vice. These truths are not comfortable but truths they are. In the individual they are less noticeable, but in public life they result in the kind of thing I have indicated. If people in one age one-sidedly cultivate some virtue and pride themselves over much in the fact, then people in the following age, although the connection is not recognized, will exhibit the corresponding vice. Seen in their true light these things point to a deep truth uttered by Christ Jesus but one which people will not acknowledge.

At the present time a strange current flows like a current through the world taking hold of souls like an epidemic. It is hard to believe that such views can be held, but they are. It appears that people have come to the

conclusion that this war must be continued until an everlasting peace can be won. The war must go on till the impact of the war itself provides an absolute guarantee that there never will be another. Obviously the best way to achieve everlasting peace is to let the war go on forever. Simply by striving, as is done at present, for the ideal of everlasting peace will ensure that the war never ends! We live in a physical body, on the physical plane and the physical plane is not and cannot be perfect. If at one time or another the most perfect conditions possible were established it would only be a matter of a few centuries and they would be imperfect; because evolution progresses in oscillations, not in a straight ascending line. As the pendulum swings up and down, so does evolution move in lines of ascent and descent. If one epoch has developed something perfect, it need only wait and people will come who know of things still more perfect.

What matters is not the perfection with which things are arranged on the physical plane, which in any case is an impossibility, an illusion. What matters is man's freedom. Liberalism, socialism, conservatism all want to create paradise on earth; i.e., they want to realize something perfect on the physical plane. Christ said: "The kingdom of God is within you." To want to make the physical world into a perfect paradise is to want something impossible, for in the physical world there is perpetual oscillation. The Christ Principle is understood rightly only when one strives to permeate the physical world with spirituality and recognizes that man is a participant of the realm of the Gods, the realm of the spirit. Those who want to turn the physical world into a paradise, whether in the socialistic or some other sense, know nothing about reality. If the present unreal ideas are to be replaced with ideas based on reality things must be seen in their wider spiritual context. This can be done only through spiritual science. Today people are apt to be scornful of the vistas opening up through knowledge of the evolutions of Saturn, Sun, Moon, Earth, Jupiter, etc. People are apt to ask why all that is necessary? Yet this knowledge is needed in order to understand even the tiniest aspect of life, for man is truly a microcosm. He bears within him the Saturn, Sun, and Moon evolutions, and if he does not want to know about them he places himself in a situation comparable to denying someone the use of his hands for life by tying them behind his back in early childhood. Similarly man does not make use of his capabilities if he refuses to turn his gaze towards spiritual reality. By this refusal he fails grievously in a sphere where he need not fail.

I would like to give you an example which may seem strange to some but which perhaps conveys more exactly what I mean by many of the things which I have only touched on today. I have recently spoken with various people about what is necessary to get mankind out of the present calamities and blind alleys. What must be done can be expressed in a number of practical ideas with which thinking must be quickened when it comes to questions such as — I cannot go into details now — answering the Papal note. Although these ideas are nothing but practical answers to immediate problems, they can neither be attained nor understood unless an impulse towards spiritual knowledge is present. They deal with the kind of thinking, the ways and means, necessary if man is to find a solution to the present confusion concerning how the various peoples and countries are to coexist. They concern arrangements to be made between peoples and countries and how to avoid resorting to illusory, abstract notions which only result in unrealistic declarations about people's freedom, peaceful cooperation between smaller nations and the like.

It is indeed possible to work out eminently practical ideas which can lead to salvation from the present miseries. But what kind of thing happens instead? Perhaps you have read in the papers about the new principal of Berlin University being installed. The new principal, Councillor Penck (Albrecht Penck 1858–1945 German Geographer) has been lecturing on political frontiers based on geological factors. It is impossible to convey the heaviness of heart such occurrences cause one. And why? Because at what should be the most enlightened places for present-day cultural life, the most unenlightened, elementary ideas are presented. If minds had been occupied instead with spiritual knowledge, then comprehensive ideas of truly practical use for life would have emerged. Just think of the present situation: we have on the one hand spiritual science which can work out ideas with practical application for the present problems, ideas of a comprehensive nature which would reveal connections of a higher order between the issues. On the other hand we have the recognized official enquiries, still groping tentatively in the most basic aspect of the problems with no prospect of getting any further. Those to whom people today look up and regard as highest authorities are far removed from any understanding of what is so desperately needed and attainable through spiritual science. That is what makes it difficult to explain what is necessary, especially in relation to the present situation. Official science is concerned with rudiments of a scientific investigation yet that in itself could lead to spiritual science if those concerned did not regard it as so much fantasy which they refuse to consider.

One is reminded, without presumption or lack of humility, of how the first Christians in early Roman times had to perform their religious worship down in the catacombs; while up above the old social order continued as before. But a few centuries later what had become of that old order whose treatment of early Christianity we learn from Roman history? Within a few centuries it had dissolved, and what had once existed down in the catacombs was now above and had spread far and wide. If only a sufficient number of people could understand that something similar must come about today even if not of the same magnitude as Christianity itself. What today dominates the world as the customary outlook based on official science cannot endure. It has the same relationship to the needs of the present as ancient Rome to Christianity evolving below in the catacombs.

This world issue, this world antithesis must be inwardly experienced. One must enter into it with thoughts and feelings in order to become fully aware of the shallowness, when at present there are declamations about a "new spirit." One must become aware of how futile are the unintelligible ideas about guarantees to be provided by international organizations and courts of arbitration, despite the fact that no one knows who would be able to arbitrate. The time has come when concepts and ideas connected with the great world issues must be related to those of everyday life. Mankind cannot simply say that such concepts and ideas are all very well when it is a question of grasping world events but they do not apply to everyday issues. Either they are so applied or these very issues become meaningless and lose all significance for practical life, not that of a decade hence but for today and tomorrow.

When difference of opinion is expressed usually a degree of objectivity is exercised, but not when the object of contention is spiritual science or Anthroposophy. When someone like Max Dessoir, a professor at Berlin University, attacks spiritual science, he regales his readers with misrepresentations and falsifications, as I have shown in my book that will be published shortly. What should be an honest objective discussion becomes a personal attack, personal vilification when the issue is spiritual science. And why? Not because people are able to refute spiritual science, but because they do not want it. The reason they do not is because modern man shuns the irksome task of seeking within himself for his true humanity. People like for example, to rejoice and take pride in their moral concepts, but this is no longer possible when one knows that virtues will of themselves turn into their corresponding vices unless a strict watch is kept over one's life of soul.

I have often drawn attention to the question of selflessness. Once in a public lecture I gave as a hypothetical example a society founded for the purpose of cultivating selflessness. The members soon formed the habit of turning to those who managed the society saying: I would like such and such but not for myself; it is for someone else; then the "someone else" would also ask for something not for himself but for the one who first asked. Neither wanted anything for himself! The essential thing is not whether one wants something for oneself or for someone else but whether the request itself is a selfless one. The truth is that when people try to become selfless then after a time the power inherent in selflessness makes them egoistic. The very striving for selflessness makes for egotism. One has to take care when "the pendulum swings down" not to rejoice in one's own selflessness.

Luther was very aware of these things, that is why we find in his writing many instances when he seemingly shows little respect for such virtues as selflessness and the like. He knew that selflessness is usually a mask behind which hides a hypocrite. Luther could often be blunt about such matters. For example, he advises Melanchthon not to try to be so frightfully selfless but rather do the bad he felt like doing. For it is better to do the bad when so inclined than be an insincere pharisee who ostensibly does the good while inwardly wanting to do the bad. Luther had a great deal of insight into this polarity in human nature because of his particular kind of spiritual experiences. For example he was in Rome in the year 1510; at that time it was considered virtuous to climb a very high flight of stairs — I do not know the technical Catholic term for so doing. For every stage climbed a certain number of days in purgatory were remitted, if the whole flight of steps were climbed on one's knees without getting up many days of purgatory were remitted. Luther took part in this, for at that period of his life he had the view that by such means one could further one's salvation. However as he was climbing he had an Imagination which conveyed to him: Seek righteousness in faith! It was this kind of experience that made Luther the man he was. He inwardly sensed the contrasting forces that were engendered in his soul by what he was doing.

What is needed at the present time above all else is a deeper insight into human life. This means among other things to have the ability to recognize that the repetition of a word does not necessarily mean one has the reality to which it points. Many utter the word "spirit" but it is possible to talk a great deal about spirit and not come anywhere near it. This is not generally noticed. For example there is a man who has written what amounts to a whole library; I should not like to have to count how many times the word

spirit appears in his library. People actually believe that this man, Rudolf Eucken, (Rudolf Euchen 1846–1926 Philosopher) is talking about real spirit. In this realm it is essential to differentiate between reality and mere appearance. To do this causes disquiet, it creates fear of spiritual life, even fear of thinking itself. The man of today wants to flee from thinking, he wants to find his own salvation as well as solutions to social and political problems by any means other than thinking.

The time is too serious, too grave not to take these things in deep earnestness. It will be a day of blessing when a greater number of people recognize the truth and reality of what I have indicated again today, unfortunately no more than indicated. To go into these things in greater detail would mean speaking about things which cannot be spoken of today. That is why it would be a good thing if you, especially after these lectures, would apply to them some real thinking that is as yet not censored. I said in the last lecture that today people would tear to pieces anyone who spoke openly about the immediate events as seen with supersensible vision. Certain things cannot be mentioned let alone done. Thus many opportunities are lost when one could illustrate how essential it is for present-day man to deepen and strengthen his inner life. Just imagine what would have become of the Lutheran movement had Luther not possessed far greater, stronger and more effective forces than those possessed by most leading figures today.

One may ask why people today show so little interest in spiritual knowledge. The real reason is, what I have often referred to, that man finds it disquieting, uncomfortable. The natural-scientific view of the world is based on concepts and ideas which are easier to digest. They are certainly to be admired but all one must do to acquire them is to look at the phenomena and allow the external facts to lead one along. One is not required to rouse oneself inwardly, one does not have to delve into the deepest recesses of one's soul in order to take the next step. Spiritual knowledge does indeed make such demands and one is bound to say that unless a human being is willing to make such efforts he is not man in the true sense. That is also a truth which is not pleasant to hear, especially by someone who, thanks to prevailing conditions, is in a position of authority. That a professor or a privy councilor is not supposed to be a human being in the fullest sense is naturally difficult to understand. However, it is the kind of thing that must be understood if we are to emerge from the miseries we are in at present.

In the year 1613 Johann Valentin Andrae (Johann Valentin Andreae 1586–1654 Theologian) wrote *The Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreutz*; the book appeared in 1616. During the years from 1614 to 1617 Valentin Andrae wrote other works in which he expresses the thoughts and feelings of his time. One of his books has as its subtitle: "To the Princes and Heads of States." Andrae wanted to show that what man believes himself to be and what he believes others to be is maya, is a great illusion. He wanted man to have the opportunity to learn to know his true self and that of others. He had in mind a great spiritual movement and had given much thought and preparation to its realization. Two outstanding events were in preparation at that time: the movement Valentin Andrae wanted, and the Thirty Years' War, lasting from 1618 to 1648. The events that led to the Thirty Years' War made impossible the movement which Johann Valentin Andrae wanted to bring about. Much would have to be said if one were to describe the various causes for this failure. Attempts are often made which fail but which later succeed. There was at that time a possibility that it may have succeeded but it did not. Today we again find ourselves within two streams, two possibilities, which must of necessity affect one another. On the one hand there is Anthroposophy with the impulse to further human evolution; on the other hand there is all that which has brought about events, similar in nature to those that caused the Thirty Years' War. It depends upon mankind whether once again what ought to happen is prevented from happening. Lethargy, love of ease might well paralyze the present attempt. Whether things would then take their course as they did when the attempt made by Valentin Andrae was paralyzed is another matter.

One should not ask a question such as: Why do the spiritual powers not intervene in the affairs on the physical plane and bring order about? That ought not to be asked because what human beings do is often in direct revolt against the spiritual powers. Very often those in revolt are the very people who are forever talking about spirit, spirit, spirit. I recently read on the cover of a magazine an advertisement of some kind in which the word spirit was repeated ad nauseam. These days spirit dominates everything, it is enough to make one despair! Spirit is supposed to manufacture the germs and gas masks and what not. Everything is called spirit. The question is: do people realize what spirit this is? As you know we distinguish between the spirit of normal evolution and the luciferic and ahrimanic spirit. I drew your attention to Ricarda Huch and how, in her book on Luther she expresses a positive longing for the devil, she means of

course for recognition of the devil. Concerning all the proclamations about spirit one could say that people never notice the devil even when they have him on the covers of magazines.

There are many things which today I could only hint at, and many I could refer to only in a veiled manner. They will become clear to you if you reflect on what has been said today. One thing you will have noticed: that I have spoken in deep earnest, in bitter earnest which is also the way I must, for the time being, bring these lectures to a close.

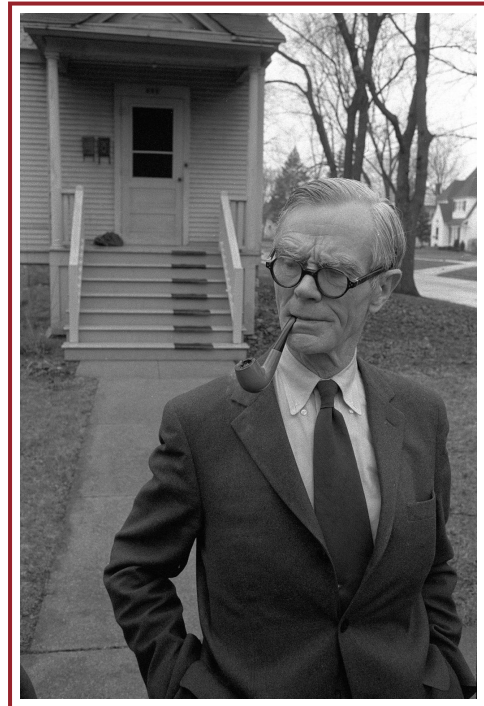


Owen Barfield

Owen Barfield (1898-1997) was born in London. He published numerous essays, books, and articles throughout his life. His primary focus was on what he called the "evolution of consciousness," which is an idea that occurs frequently in his writings. He is best known as the author of *Saving the Appearances: A Study in Idolatry* and as a founding father of Anthroposophy in the English speaking world.

Barfield has been known as "the first and last Inkling." He had a profound influence on C. S. Lewis and, through his books *The Silver Trumpet* and *Poetic Diction* (dedicated to Lewis), an appreciable effect on J. R. R. Tolkien. Their contribution, and their conversations, persuaded both Tolkien and Lewis that myth and metaphor have always had a central place in language and literature. "The Inklings work... taken as a whole, has a significance that far outweighs any measure of popularity, amounting to a revitalisation of Christian intellectual and imaginative life."

Barfield became an anthroposophist after attending a lecture by Rudolf Steiner in 1924. He studied the work and philosophy of Rudolf Steiner throughout his life, translated some of his works, and had some of his own early essays published in anthroposophical publications. Barfield's writing on Anthroposophy was not derivative of Steiner's work, it was profoundly original, but he did not see himself as having moved beyond Steiner, as, in his opinion, Steiner had moved beyond Goethe. Barfield considered Steiner a much greater man in possession of a greater mind than Goethe, and of course he considered himself very small compared to both of them.



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