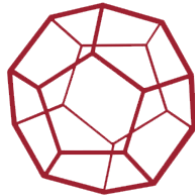


The Karma of Untruthfulness

Secret Societies, the Media,
and Preparations for the Great War

GA 173 & 174



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and Preparations for the Great War

GA 173 & 174

by

Rudolf Steiner

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Terry Boardman



The Kaiser's Dream from the British periodical *Truth* published in 1890.

Portions of the image are featured on the covers of Volume I and II of *The Karma of Untruthfulness*, 2005 edition.

Preface

Although these lectures were given in 1916, they have much to teach us about today's political spin, media distortions, propaganda and downright lies—all delivered by the media on a daily basis. Rudolf Steiner's calm, methodological approach penetrates the smokescreen of accusations and counterclaims, illusions and lies, surrounding World War I. From behind this fog and under the guise of outer events, the true spiritual struggle is revealed. Steiner's words give the reader a deeper understanding of the politics and world conflicts that confront us today through the filter of popular media.

Amid the turmoil of World War I, Steiner spoke out courageously against the hate, lies, and propaganda of the time. His detailed research into the spiritual impulses of human evolution allowed him to reveal the dominant role that secret brotherhoods played in events that culminated in that cataclysmic war. He warned that the retarding forces of nationalism must be overcome before Europe can find its true destiny. He also emphasized the urgent need for new social structures in order to avoid such future catastrophes.

Political and social changes around the world are moving at a breathless pace, hurtling us all toward an uncertain future. These lectures illuminate much of what lies behind today's turbulent events and the scenes played out on the nightly news.



Introductions

These are the introductions from Volumes 1 and 2 of the 2005 edition. They were written by Terry Boardman. ~Anthony

The Karma of Untruthfulness, Vol 1

GA 173

Introduction by Terry Boardman

*[edited by Anthony]
[no content has been changed]*

Bolded emphasis *is mine.*

Rudolf Steiner gave the lectures here to audiences of anthroposophists in Dornach, Switzerland throughout the months of December 1916 and January 1917. The lectures were taken down by a professional stenographer, Helene Finckh, who was solely authorized to do so, and as a result there is only one of the frequent gaps in the shorthand reports that mar transcriptions of Steiner's lectures in the early years of the century. These lectures are not easy, but Steiner never wanted his work to be easy; he wanted people to work at it in full, active, wakeful consciousness.

Publication History

Given the importance of the content for the understanding of the events surrounding the First World War, it is significant that these lectures 'were not made accessible, even in the Dornach archive', until 1948 and even then Marie Steiner 'decided to bring out a restricted mimeographed edition which was handed out on a personal basis only'. The first German edition in book form did not come out until 1966 and a second edition appeared in 1978 (GA 173). Vol. 2 (GA 174) was not available to the public until 1983. The first English translation of Vol. 1 was only published in 1988, 72 years after the lectures were given, and Vol. 2 did not appear in English till 1992. The two English language volumes contain *all* the lectures contained in GA 173 and 174; none are omitted.

The Uniqueness of *The Karma of Untruthfulness*

We are approaching the centenary of the terrorist assassination at Sarajevo in 1914 that sparked the Great War, which ultimately led to the Second World War and the Cold War. Thus the Great War could be said to have shaped the whole twentieth century. By 2014 there will be no one left who fought in the war. Many might think, "What's the point of dwelling on such an unattractive conflict in the past that has little relevance to the modern world?", until it is pointed out that the Israel-Palestine problem, the development of Iraq, Fascism, Nazism, Communism, Maoism, national self-determination, the centralization of society and economic organization in the West, women's rights, the rapid and radical development of aircraft, military technology, and the arts, the end of the old British Liberal Party and the rise of the Labour Party, the break-up of Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union, the decline and fall of European empires and colonialism, the movement for European unity, the United Nations and the emergence of the United States as a world superpower — all these were to a greater or lesser degree rooted in or made possible by the Great War. That titanic struggle was a caesura between two ages; it did so much to define and shape the modern world. Its consequences are still with us — many of them in the form of still unresolved problems. It could even be said that with the outbreak of war in 1914, western civilization somehow failed to maintain its progress and has been treading water ever since — despite space rockets, the Beatles, the Pill and the Internet. Fundamental issues such as the use of energy, the grip of a narrow materialism on intellectual life, relations between the sexes and classes, the problem of nationalism, the nature of architecture and music — all of which were teetering on the edge of new creative solutions in the decade prior to 1914 — were either sidetracked, put on hold or else diverted to wholly unhealthy directions by the catastrophic shock of the War, so that we are still faced with those issues today. If we look attentively, we shall see that the terrorist's shots that echoed round the world from Sarajevo on that summer's day in June 1914 are still echoing to much greater effect than, say, the shots in Dallas, Texas, of the destruction of the Berlin Wall.

While a consensus has been relatively easy to reach about the Second World War, opinions remain divided as to an understanding of the First. We still need to gain a clearer picture of what that awesome conflict was about and how the cataclysm broke upon western civilization.

Although some of Rudolf Steiner's thoughts about the war and what was behind it had been available to English-speaking readers in other lecture cycles such as *The Challenge of the Times* (GA 186, given November to

December 1918 and first published 1941, Anthroposophic Press), *The Occult Movement in the Nineteenth Century* (GA 254, given October 1915, published 1973, Rudolf Steiner Press), *Secret Brotherhoods* (GA 178, given November 1917, first published in English translations of various cycles and as a complete set by Rudolf Steiner Press, 2004), and *The Destinies of Individuals and Nations* (GA 157, given *passim* (here and there ~A) from September 1914 to July 1915, published 1986 by Rudolf Steiner Press and Anthroposophic Press), in no other lectures currently available in English does Steiner go so deeply into the nitty-gritty details of political and media events as in this course of lectures (GA 173 and 174), later titles *The Karma of Untruthfulness*. Nowhere else does he lay bare so clearly the secretive and sometimes occultly inspired machinations that lay behind what erupted in the July Crisis of 1914; nowhere else does he describe with such directness the all-too-human failings that caused a whole generation to be herded to the abyss of culture and civilization by unscrupulous or ignorant politicians, writers, propagandists, military men and academics. And for his own and subsequent generations, including our own, which is often said to be adrift in an ocean of information of which we cannot make sense, nowhere else does he describe so usefully and helpfully the methods, techniques and signposts needed to be able to cleave to the truth in the miasma of public lying and untruth that pollutes society and politics in the modern world.

In our time, amidst the ocean of information of which we scarcely can make sense, we have become so overwhelmed to the point where we feel we cannot but trust others — politicians, writers, propagandists, military, academics i.e. so-called "experts" — to guide our lives and provide the answers to the questions that plague us on a daily, minute-by-minute basis. This can be characterized as a type of schizophrenic response to being so overstimulated that we turn inward to the realm of desire for pleasure stimulus in an attempt to offset the struggle of everyday life and leave the structuring and management of daily life to these others, which if one were to be honest, are all too often unscrupulous or simply ignorant. ~Anthony

The Karma of Untruthfulness as a Media Course

Many have felt these lectures constituted a kind of intensive course in applied media studies for his listeners. In his time, "media" meant predominantly newspapers, magazines, journals and books — the printed word — whereas today we have to make sense of information not only from these but also from radio, TV, DVDs, cinema, not to mention the already enormous World Wide Web, which had not even been invented when the first English edition of these lectures came out in 1988. Steiner was clearly making strenuous efforts to wake people up to the dimensions of the catastrophe engulfing them and their civilization. Not only were his listeners, like so many of their generation, inclined to be swayed by waves of patriotism and other such partisan emotions, many of them — incredibly — had to be convinced that it was worth him discussing details relating to the war; their heads were, as before the war, still inclined towards the more theosophical planes of 'higher spheres'. He clearly feels he has to justify his focus on the murky political events of the earthly plane but does not apologise for it, telling his audience in no uncertain terms that one of the reasons the catastrophe occurred was because people were too much preoccupied with their own personal worlds and not enough with the greater affairs of mankind in general; they had paid little or no attention to world events and as a result had allowed themselves to be manipulated into the war.

How true this remains today when the distractions and temptations of our personal worlds are all the greater, and the results have been Bosnia, Kosovo, Rwanda, 9/11, Afghanistan and Iraq. Again and again, he tells his listeners that to extricate themselves from feelings of ethnic partisanship is a requirement of the times; we must become aware of our membership of mankind. At the same time, he tries from innumerable angles to illuminate the different natures of various cultures so that understanding can spread of where foreigners are coming from, as we would say today. The inability to put oneself in the place of others, to try to feel as they do, was a major cause of the one-sided nationalistic prejudices that were so common in his day.

The Russian anthroposophist Andrei Bely, who was in Dornach in 1914, gives a vivid picture of what Steiner was up against:

The outbreak of the war brought Steiner new, special problems; he had to guide the outbreaks of nationalistic sentiment into sensible directions. Three weeks [after the outbreak of the First World War] the first momentum of our

spontaneous solidarity was quite evidently broken. All through September and through all of October the storms in the canteen did not abate: the British and the Russians gathered together in little groups, the Germans insisted very tactlessly that the war had been instigated by the provocative attitude of England; the Russians countered with the statement that a breach of neutrality amounts to barbarism. Soon, theoretical debates changed to concrete incidents and endangered the whole life of Dornach. [Edouard] Shuré's withdrawal from the Anthroposophical Society, the nasty rumours that filtered out of France via the French part of Switzerland, the duplicity of some Poles — all this had very negative effects. All eyes were on the Doctor; one secretly hoped that he would at least state: 'Germany is in the right!' or 'Germany is to blame for all the catastrophes!' However he did not accuse a single country, only the mendacity of the press... The Doctor ... succeeded in smoothing the waves of nationalistic passion by pointing out the unity that all great culture has in common. In light of his words we once again turned to one another; the oppressive atmosphere was transformed. [Andrei Bely, Assya Turgenieff, and Margarita Voloschin, Reminiscences of Rudolf Steiner, Adonis Press, New Your, 1987, pp. 55-6]

The Karma of Untruthfulness and the British

The fact that it took so long for these lectures to appear in English had its consequences for an older generation of British anthroposophists who had been brought up to think that Britain, led by the noble and fair Sir Edward Grey, went to war in 1914 to save gallant little Belgium from the jackboots of a brutal Prussian militarism. Some had not managed the (admittedly difficult) extrication Steiner was calling for and were shocked by the claims he makes in the lectures about Britain's part in the war and its preparation. The karma of materialism in British history, Steiner says, led inexorably to 1914. In the crisis of that summer, he insists, just one sentence from Foreign Secretary Sir Edward Grey could have prevented the World War. Equally, he says, one sentence from the Russian Foreign Minister, Sasonov, would have done just as well. Sometimes ethnic conditioning runs so deep that one does not see the more subtle skeins of materialism that can warp one's thinking and stretch it on a sense-based loom. "If I do not see it in front of me, it does not exist." Therefore, there are no conspiracies. History

is regarded as a succession of cock-ups, coincidences, and ideas passed, almost randomly, from one person to another. Such is a common English habit of regarding history.

Or at least it was, while professional historians controlled the flow of historical information and research. With the World Wide Web, we have seen a revolution in access to information as significant as the development of printing in the 15th century. AS reading the Bible for themselves changed ordinary people's ideas about religious truth — often in a confused and chaotic, even destructive way, but was nevertheless a crucial step on the path of individual spiritual freedom — so being able to access information from almost anywhere about almost anything at the click of a mouse has opened many people's eyes to the ways in which they have been manipulated in modern society. The assassination of Kennedy, the Vietnam War, the Wars against Drugs and Terror, the exploitation of developing countries, the New World Order, the European 'project', AIDS, global warming and the ecological crisis (and now Covid and lockdowns ~A) — all these are subjects about which citizens no longer have to be dependent on mainstream media or public library selections for the information which helps them to form judgements. It is easier for us now to have the wider view that Steiner was calling for back in 1916. Drawing attention to this very point of manipulation, he said (in lecture 11):

What is essential is to develop the will to see things, to see how human beings are manipulated, to see where there might be impulses by which people are manipulated. This is the same as striving for the sense for truth ... One who possesses the sense for truth is one who unremittingly strives to find the truth of the matter, one who never ceases to seek the truth and who takes responsibility for himself even when he says something untrue out of ignorance ... One cannot claim there is no way of getting to the bottom of these things ... if one seeks honestly, there are many ways of finding out what is going on.

The Context of These Lectures: Rudolf Steiner in 1914–16

Before these lectures Rudolf Steiner had not made much explicit comment on the details of the War. In the years immediately before 1914, he was busy developing anthroposophical work on Chistology and the arts (Eurythmy, Speech Formation and the Mystery Dramas in particular), and starting the construction of the Goetheanum building in Dornach — his contribution to a new path for architecture. On the day of Franz Ferdinand's assassination, he was lecturing in Dornach on 'Ways to a New Style in Architecture'. As the July crisis unfolded, he lectured on architecture, colour, and the question of anthroposophy and Christianity. During the period in the early years of the century when he had been seeking to establish a relationship with the Freemasonic tradition, although under no illusions as to the remaining vitality of Freemasonry, he spoke positively about it (*The Temple Legend* lectures 1904–6, GA 93, Rudolf Steiner Press, 1997), and there is nothing about the dark side of the western brotherhoods that we hear in the lectures of 1916. However, after the outbreak of war in 1914, Steiner never again had anything really positive to say about Freemasonry as a spiritual stream and it could be surmised that the outbreak of war made him turn his attention to the role that western Freemasonry (French as well as British) and occult groups had played in bringing about the war.

On 1 September 1914, as the colossal Battle of the Marne was about to begin, he gave his first lecture about the war itself (in GA 157, *The Destinies of Individuals and of Nations*, Rudolf Steiner Press, 1986) in which he spoke more about the general spiritual background to the tragedy that was unfolding; the mood was very empathetic, urging spiritual solidarity with all involved. Thereafter, he continued with anthroposophical themes and at the end of the year was again lecturing about art, maintaining the importance of continuing constructive work for the future in the face of the insanity of war (31 December, Dornach; *Art as Seen in the Light of Mystery Wisdom*, Lecture IV, Rudolf Steiner Press, 1996). Occasional lectures (included in GA 157) about the war followed in 1915 but on the whole he continued to work with other anthroposophical themes.

As the waves of hatred against Germany and specifically against what was condemned in the West as German 'Kultur' mounted ever higher, he published *Thoughts During Wartime. For Germans and those who do not believe they have to hate them* (July 1915, Berlin). This was a defence of German spiritual culture against those who wished only to calumniate (malign) it by associating such spirits as Goethe and Fichte with the use of poison gas in war (April) and the sinking of the *Lusitania* (May). The text

also dealt with the question of who had actually wanted the war by showing that it was France's hatred of Germany since the defeat of 1871, Russia's determination to dominate Eastern Europe and take Constantinople, and England's will to continue her hegemony over the world trade and finance that provided the best answers to that question. For these observations, Steiner was castigated as a 'German chauvinist and apologist', not least by British theosophists. He continued with his anthroposophical work in 1915, but in October (10–25) gave a course of lectures, later published as *The Occult Movement in the 19th Century* (GA 254, Rudolf Steiner Press, 1973), which lifted the lid on the struggles among esoteric groups, especially those around the figure of H.P. Blavatsky. In this context, it may well be that Steiner was familiar with lectures given in 1893 by a little known and seemingly independent English esotericist, C.G. Harrison, to a group called the Berean Society. This obscure group may have been associated with the High Church group of theoretical occultists to which Harrison later claimed to belong and which actively opposed what it considered the 'decadent' doctrines of reincarnation and eastern teachings espoused by the theosophical followers of H.P. Blavatsky. In these far-reaching and quite profound lectures, Harrison lays bare some of the knowledge possessed by the western brotherhoods in relation to their understanding of septenary historical cycles and the role of ethnic groups within those cycles, especially as regards the Latin and Russian peoples. Twenty-four years before the Russian Revolution, he speaks of the 'experiments in Socialism' which would have to come about in Russia because Western Europe was not suited for them (C.G. Harrison, *The Transcendental Universe*, Temple Lodge Publishing, 1993, lecture 2). This experiment got underway in December 1916 with the assassination of Rasputin, the last representative of native opposition to western esoteric plans for Russia. He was murdered by Prince Yussopov, a Freemason initiated in Oxford; the murder was assisted by the British Secret Service.

In a series of lectures in Dornach in September 1916, Steiner dealt with themes more obliquely but nevertheless related to the terrible events of the war: *Inner Impulses of Human Evolution: The Mexican Mysteries and The Knights Templar* (GA 171, Anthroposophic Press, 1984). Here aspects of British and American evolution in relation to Asia are discussed, and one can sense a groundwork being laid for an understanding of what would transpire the following year with the entry onto the world stage of America

and the Bolsheviks in Russia. After a series of lectures on psychology and Goethe, he then gave the course of lectures collected in this volume, beginning on 4 December.

The Context of the Lectures: The Events of 1916

In the year 1916 those European nations involved in the war plummeted into the most dreadful slaughters in the bloody history of their continent up to that time, and sustained scars on their national life which would last for decades. To anyone with an interest and a concern for European cultural life, it must have seemed like an unending nightmare. Both sides waged a war of attrition (or *Materialschlacht* in German) in which generals did not hesitate to throw the lives of hundreds of thousands into what soldiers referred to as 'a mincing machine'. In February the appalling Battle of Verdun opened, where the German supreme commander von Falkenhayn set out to bleed the French army white. The French did not yield but it was a pyrrhic victory; the battle, which lasted for most of the year, did succeed in draining the energy from the French army, which by the end of the year was exhausted. The French general Nivelle's spring offensive in 1917 ended in ignominious failure and the first large-scale mutinies in the French military. The British were hard-pressed in May, first by the Easter Rising in Dublin and then on 31 May when the Royal Navy's High Seas Fleet, which could 'lose the War in an afternoon', almost lost the Battle of Jutland (the British lost more ships but retained control of the seas; the German navy never reappeared in force). In June the Russians seemed on the verge of a major breakthrough in the Brusilov Offensive, which took hundreds of miles from the Central Powers but eventually petered out later in the summer. It was effectively the imperial Russian army's last gasp.

June 1916 saw the death of Helmuth von Moltke, Chief of the German General Staff when war broke out. He was replaced by von Falkenhayn after the failure of the Battle of the Marne in September 1914 and effectively retired. His wife Eliza had long been a faithful pupil of Rudolf Steiner's and after his dismissal he himself drew close to anthroposophy and Rudolf Steiner personally in the last two years of his life. Steiner spoke at this funeral and later maintained for some years a post-mortem communication with the soul of the dead man. (See *Light for a New Millennium — Rudolf Steiner's Association with Helmuth and Eliza von Moltke*, ed. T.H. Meyer, Rudolf Steiner Press, 1997.) It was as the awfulness of 1916 deepened and von Moltke passed over the threshold that Steiner began to speak more directly than ever about the nature and causes of the war.

After Verdun, the British High Command felt obligated to launch its own major offensive — on the Somme — on 1 July. It turned out to be the black day of the British army as some 60,000 casualties were sustained in the vain effort to achieve a major breakthrough in the German front line. The British used tanks for the first time in warfare, but ineffectually; they achieved little. By the time the 'battle' ended in September, allied losses were 650,000 while German losses amounted to 400,000. The experience of the Somme seared itself into Britain's national psyche for a generation. By the autumn the Triple Entente was reeling from the blows the Germans had given it in both East and West. Their discomfiture was compounded when Romania, rich in oil and wheat, whose entry into the war on their side in the summer had cheered them, was swiftly overrun by the German army under von Mackensen. By this point von Falkenhayn, whose Verdun strategy had ended in failure, had been replaced by Hindenburg and Ludendorff, who dominated the military councils of the Central Powers until the end of the war. As this truly appalling year approached its close, in November President Woodrow Wilson was re-elected in the USA and Emperor Franz Josef of Austria-Hungary, who had ruled since 1848, died. An effective coup d'état took place in Britain in early December when a cabal around Lord Milner managed to oust the Liberal leader Asquith and his Foreign Secretary Sir Edward Grey and install themselves in the Cabinet with new Prime Minister Lloyd George as their front man. These were hard men, determined on victory at any price. On 12 December the Germans, feeling their situation in the war, though critical, had improved since the defeat of Romania, put forward a serious peace proposal. Though vague and self-justificatory in tone, it was nevertheless the first major peace proposal since the outbreak of war. Throughout the Christmas period, therefore, the world waited with bated breath to see how the Entente and the neutral Americans would react to the German offer.

It is against this terribly fraught background that the urgent tone of Steiner's lectures in *The Karma of Untruthfulness* must be seen, and also the palpable bitterness with which he greeted the news (30 December) that the Entente had rejected Germany's peace proposals. He must have guessed what this would ultimately mean for Central Europe and the world. On that very day Rasputin was murdered by Yussopov. Within five months, unrestricted submarine warfare had been resumed at the insistence of Hindenburg and Ludendorff; the Czar had abdicated; America had entered the war against Germany; the German High Command had facilitated Lenin's return to Russia, while the Americans and the British allowed Trotsky to join him.

The Question of War Guilt and Steiner's Contribution to the Understanding of the Great War

Essentially, Steiner is saying in these lectures that the catastrophe (he always denied that it was just a 'war') happened for two broad reasons: firstly, because the lack of consciousness and attention on the part of so many people in Europe allowed the war to happen; Europeans were too lazy to seek for truth, either of a spiritual or of an earthly (political) nature and so became paralysed with the fear that resulted from their failure to see the truth of the situation. This fear created the poisonous climate into which the spark of war could be thrown. That spark, however, was thrown consciously, and it is here that Steiner makes a key contribution to the understanding of the Great War.

The world is in the state it is in today due to a lack of consciousness and attention on the part of so many people. We have become too lazy to seek for truth, either of a spiritual or of an earthly (political, social, industrial, etc.) nature and have therefore become paralyzed with fear that has resulted from the failure to see the truth of things. Such fear has created a poisonous climate whereby the slightest spark of unbalance throws the general public into a panic, further paralyzing their ability to think for themselves.

Since the victorious Entente and its allies branded Germany with sole responsibility for the war by forcing her to sign the infamous War Guilt clause Article 231 of the Versailles Treaty on 28 June 1919 (five years to the day after the assassination in Sarajevo), argument has never ceased among historians as to whether that verdict was justified. This is no mere academic dispute; our whole understanding of the 20th century and the modern world can be said to depend on its outcome. Between the Wars, the German guilt thesis was less heard of as the iniquitous consequences of Versailles became evident, but World War II and the crimes of the Nazis, notably the Holocaust, tended to reinforce the earlier notion that the Germans must have been guilty because there was something intrinsically not right about them as a people and as a culture. Younger German historians, notably Fritz Fischer, joined in this castigation, portraying post-1870 Germany as the seedbed of an inevitable Nazi totalitarianism. Other western historians went rummaging in the distant past of German history

looking for the antecedents of Nazism: the Romantics, the Holy Roman Empire, the Saxon Emperors, Charlemagne, the Germanic barbarian tribes...

In the 1970's and 1980's the balance was redressed, and the war came to be seen more as a 'Gallopig Gerte', a collective insanity of western civilization in which no one nation was 'to blame', a complex socio-cultural reaction to the challenges of industrialization that had gotten out of hand. With the end of the Cold War and in the mood of Anglo-American triumphalism as the millennium dawned, there was a further shift, at least among English-speaking historians and a revisionism took hold that was reminiscent of the attitudes and judgements of 1919: Britain had been right to fight Germany after all; German militarism had indeed been threatening either Britain or Europe. The Entente had been caught unprepared by the devious plans of the German militarists to use the July crisis to force the war they had been wanting since at least September 1912 and perhaps for decades. British generals had not been donkeys leading lions. The war, though a severe trial, was after all a victory for democracy over autocracy and militarism.

This has been the majority view since the mid-1990's and has been reinforced in the English-speaking world by innumerable TV documentaries, books, magazine articles and even examination papers. The British *GCSE Modern World History* textbook of 2001 (for the OCR, AQA, EDEXCEL, CCEA, WJEC examining bodies) for high school students, for example, focuses almost exclusively on the question of German guilt. It starts by asking: Who should bear the blame? then moves to Anglo-German naval rivalry and asks: Did Germany cause the war? It sets up a law court scenario in which Germany is in the dock and pupils are invited to come to a verdict.

Rudolf Steiner's approach challenges this view head-on. First, he showed how it is only necessary to use common sense in looking dispassionately at the evidence available and to develop a nose for truth, half-truths and lies in the public arena; one's motto, he said, should be that 'wisdom is to be found solely in truth'. Second, he provided an understanding of the broad spiritual streams behind current events, without which one just gets lost in details. Third, he discerned characteristic elements crucial to understanding events on the physical plane — a technique of historical illumination he would later (1918) develop into what he called historical symptomatology (See Rudolf Steiner, *From Symptom to Reality in Modern History*, GA 185, Rudolf Steiner Press, London, 1976). What is important in history is to

point out what is *characteristic* about facts, not just to list them one after the other. Fourth, he showed how various broad spiritual streams work in different geographical locations and through secretive brotherhoods, groups and individuals. He emphasized, for example, that the events of the war could not be understood without taking into account the existence and activities of elite brotherhoods in the West — mostly of a Masonic or semi-Masonic nature — with a deep occult knowledge of the human being and of the evolution of consciousness. They abused this knowledge and put it at the service of special interest groups, one-sided national egoisms, in order to bring about far-reaching historical aims. These brotherhoods were masters at the grey (the media) and black (ceremonial magic) arts of manipulation, at long-range planning, networking of all kinds and, above all, ensuring the right people were in the right place at the right time.

Skeptics, especially those who have not managed to extricate themselves from their own ethnic conditioning (as was mentioned earlier), will immediately retort: 'So Steiner was just another conspiracy theorist!' Simplistic conspiracy theories, however, invariably end up positing an egotistic desire for power on the part of some individual or group. Steiner goes far beyond this, concretely indicating how the profound efforts of such brotherhoods are bound up with the course of human evolution. He speaks, for example, of plans laid for the Great War back in the 1880's when a new era in human evolution had opened. His indications in this regard are similar to those of western esotericists such as the shadowy C.G. Harrison, who in 1893 also drew attention to the long-range plans — notably for Russia and the Slavic peoples — that would materialize as a result of the intended Great War.

One of the most important keys to understanding the activities of these western brotherhoods, Steiner pointed out, was that 'the whole of recent history [since the 16th century] has to do with the struggle between the ancient Roman-Latin element and *that element that has to be made out of the English people if they fail to put up any resistance to it* (lecture 11). Benjamin Disraeli, twice Prime Minister of Great Britain under Queen Victoria, also spoke — even in the House of Commons — about the networks of Masonic monarchies and the Church (*Hansard*, House of Commons debates, III series, cxliii, 773-1, 14 July 1856). The death of Pope John Paul I, the P2 scandal in Italy, the pontificate of John Paul II, as well as the worldwide publishing success of *The Da Vinci Code* and other books by Dan Brown, and a host of similar books in the last 25 years — such as all those that have followed in the wake of *The Holy Blood and the*

Holy Grail (1982) by Gaigent, Leigh and Lincoln — have not a little to do with this ongoing occult struggle between Anglo-American brotherhoods and the champions of the Roman-Latin stream of culture.

The Main Points of the Lectures in *The Karma of Untruthfulness*, Vol. 1

What kind of phenomenology (study of the development of human consciousness ~A) of world events does Steiner outline in these lectures? In lecture 1 he urges his listeners no to take things at face value but to examine them, look at things side by side and wait for them to speak. They should prepare themselves by looking at things from many different sides, keeping in mind motivation and perspective and remembering that clarity is the fundamental prerequisite for the formation of any judgement. It is of great importance always to look for people in public life who seek to understand and interpret things clearly, people with voices that speak with insight and authority. In lecture 2 he outlines some of the methods of the brotherhoods, indicating that they reckon with long periods of time and a certain cold-blooded detachment that is necessary to work with spiritual forces on the physical plane. They often make use of intermediaries to achieve their ends, pulling strings and obliterating their tracks; sometimes, in a kind of pseudo-Hegelian dialectic, they even deliberately set up counter-strategies that appear to cross their own paths, i.e. the opposite of what their representatives and puppets say they want. Through their direct or indirect control of the media they create thought 'environments' or atmospheres into which ideas can be seeded. They exploit to the full the fact that most people are inattentive most of the time. Conventional historians, busy with their chain-logic amassing of facts, rarely even notice what is going on. Much therefore depends on the historian's karma leading him to the right information at the right moment. One should be alert for the single phenomenon that can illuminate decades, trying not to generalize in an abstract manner but always looking for individual situation.

In lecture 3, in discussing the Austrian writer and social commentator Hermann Bahr, Steiner shows how occult ideas slip or are slipped into society by means of popular literature; today of course, this happens to an enormous extent through films, for example *The Matrix*, *X-Men*, *Revelation*, *Donnie Darko* and *Constantine*. **He continually interweaves descriptions of outer events with warnings of how we have to change our inner states in order to observe events correctly and**

points to the difficulty of working with our sympathies or antipathies when faced with obvious contradictions in current events.

In lecture 4 he warns his listeners against forming judgements about nations on the basis of criticism of representative individual of those nations, a way of thinking he characterises as 'pitch darkness'. Criticism of George W. Bush, for instance, should not lead on to criticism of the American people as a whole. He develops the previous theme of how brotherhoods work in underhand ways, pitting streams against one another to achieve results, working with contradictions. The two presidential candidates of 2004, Bush and Kerry, are both member of the same highly influential American secret society, Skull & Bones; whichever man won, Skull & Bones would be in the White House. But the media paid more attention to their golf memberships and their wives' wardrobes than to this fact (yet as of June 2005, there were 53,500 web pages on Bush & Kerry's membership of Skull & Bones!).

Using the example of Serbia in the 19th century, Steiner shows how those whom a nation loves are destroyed by setting up hate figures that associate with them or by creating 'counter-loves'; one can think of the media manipulation of Posh and Becks vs. Charles and Diana. One has to be aware of a person's standpoint when they express a view (what stream are they standing in?) and also of the significance of well-placed women who may operate behind the scenes with great charms and skill; historians have tended to underestimate the influence of salon hostesses, for example. Though outwardly, situations or individuals may look trivial or comic, one needs to see through them to discern whether something deeper is at work; one has to develop an eye for all kinds of details and pay attention to politicians' expressions and gestures as much if not more than their own words; indeed the media often report these better than their words. Obviously a keen sense of discrimination is called for here. In the same lecture, in connection with the question of a possible localization of conflict between Austria-Hungary and Serbia in 1914, Steiner poses what is today modishly called a counterfactual, a what if...? as a method of historical illumination. In his day historians would have turned their noses up at such a method; today, it is not unusual.

Discussing the book *The Law of Civilization and Decay* (1895) by the American writer Brooks Adams, an important member of the American East Coast Establishment, Steiner tells his listeners in Lecture 5 to notice which companies publish books, what interests they serve, and what streams

they stand in. Kites are flown by occult groups to gauge reactions; they work by releasing bits of occult knowledge (not wholes) that they use to serve their ends when needed. Detailed comment on Sir Thomas More's *Utopia* (1515) in lecture 6 reveals the deeper spiritual principles at work in history and also points to the control of the destiny of Britain by certain oligarchical families since the time of Henry VIII. Analysis of key elements in Italy's history since the days of Dante and Venice's glory are brought in to show how not coincidence but systematic driving forces were at work in the events of 1914–15. The example of Dante shows how blood functions in karma; mixed, not 'pure' blood is needed for advanced individualities. Occult groups have knowledge of historical epochs and genetics and this knowledge is taught in western groups. British politics in particular are 'totally under the influence' of what lies hidden. In Britain especially, the key is to put the right man in the right place. Criticism of the seed someone sows is not to criticize them personally but merely to point to objective relationships between cause and effect. Again Steiner insists that judgements cannot be made on the basis of sympathies and antipathies. Karma brings us to places where we can sniff out knowledge if we are awake to the surroundings.

In lecture 7 Steiner shows how we have to see how individuals stand with regard to their own country; what is their inner attitude to it — embedded in it or independent from it? Tracing certain historical processes from the Middle Ages up to the 20th century, he describes how they grow out of each other and gradually take shape; the Great War was in preparation in Europe for a long time before 1914. It was untruths, he said, that had caused the damage; **the truth can never be as damaging as an untruth. One should have courage for truth and stand on the foundation of truth even if it is harmful or embarrassing.** Words, illusions and empty phrases are worth nothing; instead, it is necessary to look at what people want and actually carry out. He called his listeners to stand up for those who were clear about what they wanted, even the ones who clearly hated others; at least you knew where you were with them rather than those who were slippery and full of hot air. Finally, there was an urgent need for ethnic self-knowledge — to understand something of the essence of what was actually living in British, German, French and Russian culture, right down to the relationship between thoughts and words in the various languages; these too are deeply conditioning forces in cultural life. Without this ethnic self-knowledge there could be 'no real healing'.

Lecture 9 deals with the need to be aware of rhetorical devices in the media and by public figures, their pictorial descriptions, use of images, intensifications and comparisons. We should pay attention to the significance of names chosen by people for certain purposes and take note of what is done on particular days and under astronomical constellations which echo similar configurations in the past, calling forth unconscious or semi-conscious reactions in people. One needs to be aware that brotherhoods reckon with long periods of time; they set things going and leave them to develop. New leaders emerge to carry on predecessors' impulses. Egotistic esoteric groups reckon with:

- individual's gifts (how, where and when to manipulate them);
- long periods of time (timing);
- people's disinclination to pay attention to wide contexts.

Under certain circumstances something undesirable can be made to fade out by treating it well for a while, the more easily to engulf it later; the history of the Seven Years' War (1756–63) showed how a great deal can be achieved in one place by bringing about events in another.

In the last lectures Steiner emphasizes that what people think is far more important than what they do, as thoughts become deeds in the course of time. We live today on the thoughts of past times, which are fulfilled in the deeds of today. We need to remember that *states* wage war, not peoples or nations, and this means that essentially just the few individuals on the bridge of the ship of state are the ones making the decisions for war — which is hardly a democratic process, even in democracies.

Finally, on the last day of 1916, with the bitter knowledge that the Entente governments had rejected the German and American calls for peace negotiations made earlier in the month, Steiner spoke about disease and poison, first in the human body and then in the social organism. When a diseased form of any kind comes into being, evolution is advancing too fast. Cancer occurs when a part of the organism excludes itself and grows faster than the rest. This, he said, also applies socially. Whereas 'poisons' can be introduced into the body by doctors with the intention of healing, so can they also be led and guided into the social organism to bring about sickness — this is what he calls 'the grey magic' of the Press (today, 'the Media'). In view of his statements that nothing is better for a person than real insight into how things work in the world, and that what people think

is far more important than what they do, the Media can with justification be called the real 'drug dealers' of the social world as they form and influence so many judgements on the basis of untruth, lies, sensationalism, distortion and prejudice.

Conclusion

The First World War as the crucible of today's world, and the month of these lectures, December 1916, was the turning point of the war, the point of no return when the decision was made in the West to plunge the world into the bottom of that crucible. With its terrible violence and force and its totalitarian centralist imperatives, the war transformed the neurotic but complacent *laissez-faire* society of the 19th century with its appalling extremes of rich and poor into the depressingly regimented and bureaucratic consumerist society of the 20th century. It changed the world of the arts, science and technology beyond recognition from what they had been just 20 years before, and revolutionized relationships between the sexes. It destroyed three European empires, radically redrew the map of Europe, signalled the end of colonial rule and drew the curtain on European world hegemony, as the peripheral superpowers of the USA and Soviet Russia pushed their way onto centre stage in 1917. It gave birth to two unprecedented monsters, Bolshevism and Fascism, and ultimately two more appalling world wars — the Second World War and the Cold War. Its beginnings, development and conclusion buttressed entirely by lies and untruth, the Great War was, in short, as Rudolf Steiner described it, an utter catastrophe for the world — a catastrophe which, given the state of spiritual culture in Europe in 1914, was almost inevitable. Ninety years on, are we really any the wiser? If we are to answer in the affirmative and avoid more such catastrophes that occur due to laziness, inattention, gullibility and devious manipulation by secretive cliques, then we can do no better than to make careful study of these valuable lectures of that critical month of December 1916 and apply to our own time the subtle and infinitely helpful lessons they teach.

Terry Boardman
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The Karma of Untruthfulness, Vol 2

GA 174

Introduction by Terry Boardman

*[edited by Anthony]
[no content has been changed]*

Bolded emphasis *is mine.*

No true anthroposophist can allow himself to be deafened to current events by all those methods used by the powerful to distract us from seeing 'what they are really playing at'.

Rudolf Steiner, 8 January 1917 (lecture 17)

By December 1916 the slaughter of the conflict that was already being called the Great War had become truly monumental. Hundreds of thousands had been killed in the mobile campaigns of August and September 1914, but whereas Napoleon would have recognized the nature of the fighting in those months, even he would surely have recoiled in revulsion at the unending hells of Verdun and the Somme as something utterly inhuman. A threshold was crossed in 1916 into the new age of mechanized warfare, completely devoid (except perhaps in the air) of any notion of traditional military concepts of chivalry, honour and glory. The first tank attacks and air assaults on cities made their appearance, but the crossing into this new 20th century world was perhaps most aptly symbolized by the fact that all armies on the Western Front, now clothed only in dark and sombre colours, were issued with steel helmets in 1916 in response to the appalling numbers of head wounds sustained, mainly due to shrapnel from the overwhelming artillery fire. Such wounds were also symbolic, since in truth it could be said that the catastrophe of the war had broken out because European civilization was wounded in the head — in its ability to think in terms of reality, and a civilization thus wounded would inevitably produce a culture of untruthfulness that was ultimately bound to lead to catastrophe. Such is the message of these lectures given by Rudolf Steiner in January 1917 in Dornach, Switzerland, to members of the Anthroposophical Society.

The Historical Context: Christmas 1916–17

The Christmas period 1916–17 was the turning point of the First World War, the moment where Europeans were faced with the choice either to end the nightmare or to plunge ever deeper into it. We now know what they chose, but on 1 January 1917 the issue still hung on a thread. The Germans, feeling themselves to be in a slightly stronger military position than twelve months earlier, had offered peace negotiations on 12 December, and eight days later President Wilson of the USA offered to mediate between the belligerents. The Entente allies (Britain, France, Russia and Italy) reacted indignantly, fending off Wilson while condemning the German proposal as insincere, deceptive and vague. The new British Prime Minister Lloyd George, only two weeks into the job, replied to Woodrow Wilson by quoting Abraham Lincoln:

We accepted this war for an object, a worthy object, and the war will end when that object is attained. Under God, I hope it will never end until that time.

He called for 'complete restitution, full reparation, effectual guarantee', and added that 'without reparation, peace is impossible'. Rudolf Steiner clearly hoped against hope that, as he put it in his Christmas lecture of 21 December in Basel, the Christmas call for peace and goodwill would not be 'shouted down'. On 16 December he said,

We must not lose courage, so long as the worst has not yet happened. But the spark of hope is tiny. Much will depend on this tiny spark of hope over the next few days. [...] What happens now is crucial for the fortune or misfortune of Europe.

The Entente's initial response to Germany's peace proposal, on 30 December, made it clear that it was not interested in any peace negotiations but preferred to fight on to achieve *a peace on its own terms*. These terms were then spelled out in a letter to Wilson on 10 January 1917. They were completely unrealistic and called in effect for the break-up of Germany's ally Austria-Hungary and the cession of Alsace-

Lorraine to France, neither of which points had even been issues in the crisis of 1914 that had sparked the war. On 12 January, the Foreign Minister of Austria-Hungary, Count Ottokar Czernin, replied to Wilson, denouncing the Entente governments for seeking 'the annihilation and spoliation of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy' and blaming them for the continuation of the War. The Entente responded in similar fashion, though the governments of the Central Powers had simply refused to sign their own death warrants. In his post-war memoirs, *Twenty-Five Years* (Hodder & Stoughton, London 1928), Sir Edward Grey (later Viscount Grey of Falloden), whose decisions on 2–4 August 1914 in committing Britain to the conflict guaranteed that a short continental war would become a long world war, also castigated the Central Powers for spurning the chance of peace. On 22 January Wilson publicly set out the terms under which the USA would be prepared to mediate and called for a peace 'without victory':

Victory would mean peace forced upon the loser, a victor's terms imposed upon the vanquished. It would be accepted in humiliation, under duress, at an intolerable sacrifice, and would leave a sting, a resentment, a bitter memory upon which terms of peace would rest, not permanently, but as upon quicksand. Only a peace between equals can last.

Ironically, this was to be exactly the kind of victorious peace his own government, together with the British, French and Italians, would force upon Germany at Versailles, two and a half years later. By 10 January then, Germany and Austria-Hungary knew their enemies were determined to fight on to their destruction. The Germans responded with the desperate gamble of unrestricted submarine warfare in February. It failed and only served to provide the excuse that highly placed pro-British circles in the USA needed to edge Wilson into declaring war against Germany (6 April). Meanwhile, with the assassination in Russia of Rasputin on 30 December, in which a British secret service agent fired the coup de grace (BBC documentary *Timewatch*, 19 September 2004), the last Russian support of the imperial family and significant Russian opponent of the war was removed. As Rasputin had predicted, the end of the monarchy came soon after his murder, and the revolutionary provisional government took over. Under strong pressure from the Entente, this government tried to continue the war against the Central Powers in 1917, but the Russian people, desperate for bread and peace, responded to the Bolsheviks who promised

them both. The German High Command had facilitated Lenin's return to Russia; the British and US governments had done the same for Trotsky. By the end of 1917, the Bolsheviks were the government in Moscow, and the USA was the effective controller as well as creditor of the western allies. The world's power balance had shifted; it was the beginning of the end of the European era of domination, which had lasted for 300 years; leaders of anti-colonial movements all over the world looked on at Europe's insanity and weakness took heart. The year 1916 was the last of the old world, 1917 the first year of 'the new'. Such was the context in which Rudolf Steiner gave these lectures in neutral Switzerland, an island of peace surrounded by nations at war.

Lecture Topics

The subjects Rudolf Steiner deals with in the lectures in this (the second) volume are:

14. Poison in the social organism
15. Real ideals and the British empire
16. Blood attachment and blame culture
17. The events of 1914 and what was behind them
18. Truthfulness in the practice of history
19. The conscious manipulation of the subconscious
20. The relation between the war and general themes of the modern epoch. Europe: centre vs. periphery — materialism and imperialism
21. Living with the dead; abusing the dead
22. Changes in the relation between the living and the dead and the effects of modern materialism
23. Right and wrong ways of relating to archangels (folk spirits)
24. Spiritual ignorance of rhythm, time and archangels and cultural-political chaos

25. The need for thinking rooted in reality not abstraction

The Relevance of the Lectures

Much has changed since Rudi Lissau wrote his introduction in August 1991 to the first English translation of these lectures (this introduction was written for the 2005 translation published by Rudolf Steiner Press ~A). The Japanese economy still felt strong despite the stock market shock of 1989; China's economy had not yet taken off; the Treaty of Maastricht had not yet been signed; there was no NAFTA; Saddam Hussein was still in power, and the Soviet Union was still in existence — though in that very month of August Mikhail Gorbachev was temporarily ousted by an attempted coup d'état. Hardly anyone knew the name Osama bin Laden, and not many were seriously worried about global warming. The World Wide Web had not yet been invented, which meant that the great majority were still largely dependent for their information on the mainstream media, and had to sift the truth from amongst its many prejudices. In short, in August 1991 we were still in the 20th century. The following decade proved to be a transition out of that century and culminated in the events of 11 September 2001, when the pundits unanimously declared the 21st century proper — 'a new age' — had begun.

But the 20th century, as might be expected given its apocalyptic nature, died with no whimper. In that very year of 1991, the consequences of Sarajevo 1914 bit back — after 77 years. The 45-year-long division of Germany, which came to an end in 1990, the end of the Soviet Union and of the Cold War in December 1991, the first war against Saddam Hussein in the first two months of the year — all these events had their roots in what some have called the Thirty Years War of the 20th Century (1914–45) (E.g. former British Prime Minister John Major, in Berlin 1995). And then, as if to reinforce the fact, in 1991 the last act of the tragedy of the 20th-century humanity to resolve the consequences of what has always been called 'The Great War', the epoch-making event that gave birth to the 20th century.

The Balkan War and the sufferings of Sarajevo in the '90s rubbed our noses in the fact that we had learned little since that 19-year-old, sickly Bosnian terrorist Gavrilo Princip[†] pulled the trigger and killed Austrian Crown Prince Franz Ferdinand and his Czech wife Sophie. In this light it is particularly painful to have read these lectures that Rudolf Steiner gave in the critical month of January 1917 — the very turning point of the war. For, following on from the lectures he had given the previous month on similar

subjects, he sought, very directly and concretely, to open his listeners' minds to how they could train themselves to see through the outer events of the day — especially as they were presented by the media — to the real motivations behind them, and how these symptoms and motivations were related to the greater and wider cycles and rhythms of the evolution of consciousness, especially since the 15th century. However, Sarajevo 1992–95 and Rwanda 1994 showed that despite what we ought to have learned from the further catastrophe of the Second World War and then the M.A.D. insanity of the Cold War,* Steiner's advice had not permeated general culture to any significant effect: nationalism, tribalism and ethnic egotism still held sway; some 800,000 were savagely and frenziedly murdered in ethnic killings in Rwanda in 1994 while the Bosnian conflict was at its height.** As I write this in the aftermath of the bombings in London in July 2005, I hear British politicians echoing George W. Bush, saying that '*their* barbaric violence and ideology' represented 'an attempt to destroy *our* values, our democracy, our way of life, our civilization'. 'It is nothing to do with Islam; it is because they are evil men.' One is put in mind of what Entente propaganda said about Germans and German 'Kultur' in 1914–18.

† His very name means Gabriel Prince, or Gabriel Principle. It was in the Age of Gabriel (1510–1879) that nationhood and nationalism became such powerful driving forces in history. In 1914 the new Age of Michael had hardly began; the 'Gabriel Principle' was at full tide.

* M.A.D. 'Mutually Assured Destruction' was the official name given to the policy of mutual nuclear annihilation effectively practiced by the USA and the USSR for 20 years from approximately 1960–80. The term was first used by US Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara.

**Eighty years on, both Sarajevo and Rwanda echo the events of 1914. Britain's entry into the war, over Belgium, transformed the continental conflict into a world war. The Belgians occupied Rwanda, then under German colonial administration, in May 1916, and their subsequent rival policies until independence in 1962 did much to exacerbate the ethnic tensions between Tutsis and Hutus that exploded in 1994.

Things may have changed on the surface — the Cold War may be over and we may have the World Wide Web — but at the level where it really counts, they have not budged that much since 1914. The war, Rudolf Steiner insisted, erupted because mankind had not transformed the materialistic culture of the 19th century; the war was the karma of the poisonous untruthfulness of that century. Europeans had not understood how spiritual reality underlies all the phenomena of the world in which we live; moreover, they had turned their backs in fear and scorn against that

understanding. Central Europe, for instance, Steiner reiterated, had rejected its own cultural riches of 100 years before — the age of German Idealism — and instead had adapted itself to the culture of material power and commercial imperatives represented so strongly — and necessarily — by the English-speaking world. As a result of a widespread materialism that was almost wilfully ignorant of the nature of both life and death, a culture of untruthfulness and mendacity had pervaded public life, above all via the press and the world of publishing, what we today call 'the media'. This mendacity — or propaganda (both overt and subtle) — was used as a tool by unscrupulous and manipulative elite forces to lead both unthinking politicians and an unthinking public into unleashing and maintaining a war that was not a war like other wars but a veritable revolution in society and culture. Behind this revolution were conscious forces that had the *ultimate* aim of extirpating (wiping out) spiritual life altogether and of creating a hypermaterialistic society in which the lie becomes the truth.

The role of the media here is key, because it is through the media that people get their information and form their ideas, and it is ideas, as Steiner never tires of repeating in innumerable ways, that determine human action. Reaching back to the very beginning of his public life in *The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity* (1894), he shows how vital it is that we need to combine the correct thought with the object, that is, to find the concept that *truly* corresponds to the percept, as distinct from illusory or sentimental abstractions of the kind put forward by President Woodrow Wilson. If our ideas about the world are full of untruth, empty phrases and dead abstractions, Steiner maintains, we cannot but create a deeply sick society, and catastrophes like the wars of the 20th century are bound to recur. Although it was not 'cold' for those in the Third World, where it was fought out by proxy, the Cold War of 1945–91 followed the 'hot war' of 1914–45, and now the Cold War has been soon followed by the 'War on Terror' which already in the week of 9/11 we were told by the powers-that-be would last 'for decades'. Meanwhile, the media go on distracting us from awakening to the realities of world events by presenting an endless circus of celebrity, sport, sex and shopping. We are indeed still wrestling with the karma of the 19th century today as privatization and globalization, driven by huge economic interests, proceed apace in accordance with economic and political thinking that has not changed *fundamentally* since the days of Adam Smith and Edmund Burke 200 years ago. Americans wonder 'Why do they hate us?', oblivious to the consequences of their own government's foreign policy for the last 100 years, and westerners in general wonder

'Why are we having to work ever harder?' 'Why are our lives becoming ever busier and more stressful?' 'Why do we not manufacture anything anymore?' 'Should we be afraid of "the East"?''

The Purpose of the Lectures

Similar questions were posed in 1914–16 by Steiner's anxious audiences in response to the crisis of the war: 'What can we *do*?' 'How can we respond?' Indeed, he says that this was the reason why he gave this whole series of lectures: to illuminate what was going on from the spiritual-scientific viewpoint and to answer the question: 'What can we do?'

His answer was simple and direct: **Endeavor to understand! See through things! Thoughts are forces and have effects. It is not supposed to be easy for human beings to enter spiritual life. Crises are opportunities for change. Clear and proper understanding of what is going on is the only way — 'Nothing else is of any use'**. Steiner firmly rejected as anti-modern and harmful all forms of atavistic mediumism and spiritual practice that avoided the conscious mind. Wide-awake vigilance and discrimination in all things, the application of the true scientific approach, which is the fruit of the development of natural-scientific consciousness of the last four centuries but which need not be restricted only to quantitative analysis based on the five senses — this is what is required, whether in spiritual and meditative practices or in observation of world events. The term 'consciousness-raising' has been with us since the 1960s and that is what Steiner was referring to in 1917, but despite the 1960s, the growth of the Internet and the Web, consciousness has still not been raised enough to the point where sufficient numbers of people are able to see through the manipulative techniques of their would-be overlords.

To cite just a few of the practical indications Steiner gave to his listeners in this 'applied media course' to help them deal with misrepresentations of the truth and manipulation, firstly, he said that it is crucial to ask about those who make public statements not 'What does this person mean?' but 'Who is paying him?' In whose service is he? This does not mean that we become suspicious to the point of thinking that everyone is corrupt or that black magic is everywhere but that we must learn to recognize historical symptoms without passing judgement; just see the phenomena in their proper light. Secondly, one must not be dazzled by the empty phrases so beloved of politicians in democratic societies, who are accustomed to stroking their listeners' egos or collective personae; we need to be awake

enough to discriminate when ideas are arising normally from a person's consciousness or abnormally — when something has in any sense been 'planted', whether as a result of personal threat, membership of some special interest group, ritual or suggestions. Thirdly, a judicious combination of open-minded imaginative thinking that can relate seemingly disparate elements — in the way a keen police investigator might — and a simultaneous insistence and reliance on solid facts are what we need to see through the distractions and fog of untruth that is spread to confuse the unwary.

The Uses and Abuses of Dualism

Already in 1917 Steiner was telling his listeners that concepts applicable to individuals (such as freedom, justice etc.) could not be applied to nations. Sympathies and antipathies, particularly those related to ethnicity, must be separated from judgements if we are to act in a modern spiritual-scientific manner and avoid the perils of nationalism and chauvinism. We need to recognize how the practitioners of what Steiner calls 'grey magic' in the media and elsewhere work with the fact of dualism in life. For example, whatever takes place on *the material plane* needs two counterposed elements. History, as Hegel recognized, moves in a dialectical fashion — a force will be resisted by a counterforce. Thus, Steiner shows how egotistical elite forces divert their enemies' attention to other geographical areas where it is not wanted (e.g. Russia diverted from the Far East back to the Balkans after defeat by Britain's ally Japan in 1905) and one can even ally with the person or nation one considers to be one's real enemy if it serves one's short-term interest (e.g. Britain allied to Russian in 1914–17).

One of the keys for understanding the war, Steiner pointed out, was the way in which the new, *economic* impulse to World Empire stemming from Britain sought to create a bifurcated world, in which one half of the world would be the producers and the other half the consumers. 'To create this contrast,' says Steiner, 'is a conception of universal proportions, against which everything else pales into insignificance.' (Lecture 20) The bipolarity of the Cold War and the apparent split between *western* capitalism and *eastern* communism needs to be seen in this light. Admittedly, things may *seem* to have changed since his day in that he was pointing to the western plans, laid already in the 1880s and about to be realized in the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, to create a socialist state in the East (beginning with Russia) that would 'consume' western produce, whereas today it is nominally Communist China (with one sixth of the world's population) that

is producing so much and selling it to the West. The fact is, however, that the East — Russia, India, China and Japan — in the 20th century all became *consumers* of western ideas as well as *producers* of western products. First the Japanese and now the Chinese have become the economic slaves of the West, producing cheaply what the West wants in accordance with western economic thinking. (Steiner would have more to say on this theme in his lectures of 1918, published as *The Challenge of the Times*. Six lectures, November to December 1918, Anthroposophic Press, New York, 1941.) Another aspect of dualism to be aware of is the 'hen's beak principle': avoid investigating only one stream; remember that there is always a complementary at work and notice how the complementaries interact. In doing this, a careful differentiation of streams is needed in order to avoid nebulous jumbles in one's understanding.

The Living and the Dead

A central theme in these lectures is the relation between life and death, the living and the dead. As life bears death within it, so living truth bears within it its counter-image — the lie and the half-truth. The very best evolutionary impulses in our age, Steiner warns, are those most likely to be turned into their opposite. Evil and falsehood are the counter-image of the normal impulse to spiritual development in the modern epoch. Among the justified impulses of the age, for example, is the urge to peace and to solve differences peaceably rather than resort to war, as was so often the case in earlier times. But it is possible to appear to be peaceable by making suggestions for completely *unrealistic* peace conferences, as, Steiner indicates, Sir Edward Grey did in July 1914. One can then later smear one's enemies by declaring them to have been the warmongers. It is possible to appeal to the subconscious will for brotherhood and mutual assistance, which are also justified features of the modern epoch, by setting up organizations like the League of Nations — which President Woodrow Wilson sought to do from 1917 onwards — and the United Nations, and by using the media to draw popular support towards such organizations. Today, among many on the left of the political spectrum, for instance, support for the UN is almost an article of religious faith and many have been persuaded that only world government by the UN or something similar will enable us to avoid the global challenges that threaten to overwhelm us. But Steiner's realism draws our attention away from such illusory and sentimental abstractions that appeal to our subconscious will to the good and urges us to seek the facts behind the phenomena.* This was

sometimes difficult to elucidate in Steiner's lifetime, as ordinary citizens did not have easy access to the requisite materials; today, it is a much easier task — if one has the insight and the will to do it.

* In this case a study of *the facts* behind the establishment of such organizations as the UN reveals the extent to which the misguided idealism of many was abused and exploited by the egotism of the powerful few who sought to use these organizations to bolster and increase Anglo-American world domination in order to spread hypermaterialism more easily throughout the world. See lecture 20.

Occult Brotherhoods

One of the reasons why insufficient progress in consciousness-raising has been made is that those who would be overlords employ occult means to carry out their activities, and in these lectures Steiner goes into considerable detail as to how and why they do this. A key element here is the way in which ritual magic is used by occult brotherhoods to use the forces of the dead to strengthen their own power and to keep the dead bound to them. These are gruesome topics, which in the climate of the 1920s or even the 1950s would have been difficult to discuss but which since the 1960s, and the increasingly bizarre phenomena that have been coming to light since then, are no longer considered beyond the pale of intelligent discussion. In November 1917, at the time the Bolsheviks seized power — a development which can now be shown by exoteric historical research to have been guided and controlled by Anglo-American circles (Lenin's free passage through Germany notwithstanding) — Steiner gave a course of lectures on the secret brotherhoods which went into further detail about the way these groups worked. (See *Secret Brotherhoods and the Mystery of the Human Double*, Rudolf Steiner Press, Sussex, 2004).

In Conclusion

Finally, it would be remiss in the introduction to this new edition of these crucially important lectures to avoid commenting on Rudi Lissau's original introduction of August 1991. Rudi Lissau was a most sincere and conscientious pupil of Rudolf Steiner; indeed, he loved and respected the individuality of Rudolf Steiner ardently. However, it has to be recognized that he allowed certain personal characteristics to enter his assessment of these lectures. He felt a great debt of gratitude to the people of Britain among whom he had lived since coming to Britain as a refugee from Austria in the 1930s, and he wished to cushion British anthroposophists against what *he perceived* to be Steiner's sometimes critical words about Britain and about Sir Edward Grey in particular — a man considered by

most members of the upper and middle classes in his own time and in later decades as 'a thoroughly decent chap' — the best sort of Englishman.* Lissau believed British readers might feel 'baffled' by what they read about the First World War here — obviously because it differed so much from the view of the conflict with which they were familiar. But today, with our greater knowledge of the obfuscations of the British and American Establishments with regard to such events as the sinking of the USS *Maine* in Havana in 1898, the sinking of the *Lusitania* in 1915, Pearl Harbor, the assassination of President Kennedy, the events of 11 September 2001, and the weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, and with the knowledge available to everyone able to access the Internet, we are no longer 'baffled'. Lissau allowed his sympathy for the British to draw him into suggesting in his introduction that Rudolf Steiner may seem to have had 'pro-German bias', was 'emotional', 'partisan' and 'exaggerating', not always 'calm and collected' and that these lectures included 'cant' and 'smears'. Rudolf Steiner, however, in these lectures was at pains to show that he was not speaking out of partisanship but only seeking the truth of the matter. Rudi Lissau wrote that Steiner was 'a product of his age' whose 'prejudices [occasionally] become manifest' and implies that he was 'occasionally affected' by the 'nationalistic emotions' of his listeners, but no real evidence is adduced to support these statements. He says that in the 25 lectures of the cycle (Vols. 1 and 2) 'we find discrepancies and occasionally factual mistakes', but does not cite any apart from the long quote from the Austro-Hungarian ambassador to Germany, Szögyeny, which he clearly feels is at variance with Steiner's view of German foreign policy pre-1914. Interestingly, this quote — which might seem to be inimical (hostile ~A) to any pro-German position — is the longest in his introduction. Unfortunately, however, Lissau does not put it in context, apart from saying that it predates by five years the Anglo-French rapprochement. This would put it at 1899 — the time of the Boer War, when anti-British feeling and indignation at British imperial arrogance was indeed at its height in Germany — but also everywhere else in Europe!

* The present writer knows this to have been Rudi Lissau's feeling and wish because Rudi Lissau was honest enough to admit that this was the case in response to a question put to him by the writer at a meeting in early 1991, following articles written by Rudi Lissau in the journal *Anthroposophy Today* on the subject of secret societies.

As for disregard of the facts, certainly Steiner is in error when in lecture 23 he says that 'in the periphery [Britain, France, Russia] even language has *stopped developing* [emphasis — TMB], whereas in the German

language of Central Europe there still exists, in the sound shifts, the possibility of growing beyond the sounds and ascending to the next stage of sound evolution'. While it may be true to say, as he describes at some length in lecture 6, Vol. 1, of this cycle, that the consonants of German have advanced while those of English have remained at an earlier stage, to ignore the fact that German has retained basic grammatical elements that English has long since put aside * is to be oblivious to a key aspect of language development in English, one that has simplified English greatly and made it more accessible to foreign learners worldwide. While some purists may even deplore these particular simplifications of English over the past 1000 years, no one can deny that they are a significant *development* of the language.

* E.g. dropping of gender and declension of nouns and articles; simplification of personal pronouns address; simplification of past tense forms; maximal avoidance of inversion in sentences containing adverbial phrases.

Unfortunately, when it comes to facts, Rudi Lissau himself commits something of a howler when, in the penultimate sentence of his introduction, he states that the Sarajevo assassin Gavrilo Princip 'returned to Serbia and became a schoolmaster' after the war. In fact, Princip died from tuberculosis of the bone in the Austrian prison of Theresienstadt in April 1918. It was one of the other conspirators, Vaso Cubrilovic (1897–1990), who was released from prison in 1918 and later became a schoolteacher, then a leading member of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts and, ultimately, a Serbian government minister under Tito. His lectures and writings against the Albanians in 1937, calling for ethnic cleansing in Yugoslavia and Kosovo, are said to have had a major influence on Slobodan Milosevic's ethnic policies in the Yugoslavia of the late 1980s and early 1990s. From Cubrilovic to Milosevic — thus did the karma of Sarajevo 1914 come full circle.

Terry Boardman
July 2005



Lecture 1

Fundamental Basis for Forming Judgements: A Sense for the Facts

4 December 1916, Dornach

An unbroken thread has run through all the discussions held here over many years: It is vitally important that those who are moved by the impulses of spiritual science should develop a sense, a feeling for the extent to which this spiritual science enters into everything that mankind has brought to the surface during the course of human evolution — I mean to the surface of spiritual life or, indeed, all life, for it is absurd to maintain that spiritual life can exist in isolation. In fact, everything that seemingly belongs to materialistic life is nothing other than an effect of spiritual life.

To begin with, the connections between material life and spiritual life are little understood because spiritual life is frequently seen today as nothing more than the sum of abstract philosophical, abstract scientific, and abstract religious ideas. From what has been said on other occasions you will have grasped that religious ideas are today often most strongly afflicted by abstraction, by ideas and feelings which can quite well be developed without any direct, real spiritual life. An abstract culture of this kind cannot enter into material life; only a truly spiritual culture can do this, a culture whose source lies in the life of the spirit. If man's future evolution is to avoid being swept into total degeneracy, a true spiritual culture will have to enter ever more strongly into external life. Very few people realize this today because very few have any feeling for what spiritual life really is. I have stressed frequently that just now it is extremely difficult to speak about the position spiritual science holds in the many painful events of our time.

A number of years ago we chose as our motto these words by Goethe: 'Wisdom lies solely in truth'. Our choice was not dictated by the superficial whims that often govern such decisions these days. We chose this motto bearing in mind that the human being needs to be prepared in his entire soul, in his whole nature, if he intends to absorb spiritual science into his soul in the right way, making it the real driving force of his life. The wide preparation he needs if he wants to penetrate in the proper way into spiritual science today is encapsulated in this motto: 'Wisdom lies solely in

truth'. Of course the word 'truth' must be seen as something serious and dignified in every connection. Even superficially we find that the level of culture we have reached today — highly praised though it is — both in Europe and the world at large, shows how little souls are moved by what is expressed in this motto.

Please do not assume that I mean our anthroposophical circles in particular! This would be a total misunderstanding. Spiritual science, certainly to begin with, must, in an ideal sense, recognize its relationship to modern culture as a whole. Inevitably I have to mention many things belonging to today's culture which make it well-nigh impossible to relate in a proper way to spiritual science. But in this I refer least of all to our anthroposophical circle which seeks to penetrate consciously into the spiritual needs of our time, and endeavours to find whatever might bring healing to it without disparaging anything that it has brought into being.

There are, of course, fundamental inner necessities which were not unforeseen. But leaving these aside, we have outwardly entered upon a time in which, within that spiritual life which rises to the surface to the extent that anyone can see it in his soul, people are not in the least inclined to take truth in its truest sense, in its most fundamental meaning. In no way, not even for the sake of the inmost impulses of their soul, not even in those joyful moments of inner sensitivity, do people illuminate with the full light of truth what interests them most of all. Instead they illuminate it — especially at the present time — with the light that derives from their membership of a particular national or other community. Consciously and unconsciously people today form judgements in accordance with this type of viewpoint. The quicker the judgement, that is, the fewer the true insights that go to make up this judgement, the more comfortable it is for the souls of today. That is why there are so many utterly impossible judgements today pertaining both to the wider issues and to individual events. These judgements are not based on any kind of intimate knowledge; indeed there is no wish to base them on any such knowledge. People strive to distract attention from what is really at issue and look instead at some other matter which is not at all the point.

In this vein people speak today about the differences between nations; judgements are made about nations. Amongst ourselves this obviously ought not to take place, but in order to gain a proper yardstick we sometimes have to be clear about what is going on around us. So, judgements are made about nations, and yet there is no understanding for someone who does not make such judgements but, instead, judges what is

real. Those judgements about nations never touch on what is real. Yet when someone judges those things that are realities and in the course of doing so has to say one thing or another about some government or other, or about a particular person, or about something that has taken place in politics, — whether about everyday happenings or more far-reaching matters — then he himself is judged as though his intentions were quite other than is in fact the case. How easy it is for someone to pass a judgement about some statesman who is involved in what is going on today. If this comes to the ears of a person who belongs to the same nation as the statesman in question, then this person immediately feels himself affronted. This is because he takes something that is said about a reality and relates it, not to this reality but to something that is quite indefinable if it is not viewed in the light of spiritual-scientific reality; he relates it to his nation, as he says, or to some other nation.

Thus the oddest judgements buzz about in the world today. People belonging to a particular nation form judgements about other nations without realizing that such judgements carry no content whatever; they consist of no more than the words that express them and contain nothing that has been in any way experienced. Just consider what is entailed in forming a judgement about a whole nation — and are not judgements about whole nations scattered around in all directions these days! And not only that. People are fervently committed to their judgements without having the slightest inkling of even the most scanty evidence on which such a judgement should be based. Of course you cannot expect everybody to be in possession of such evidence. But you can expect of every single individual that he pronounce his judgements with a certain modicum of reserve, refraining from placing them in the world as absolute statements. Even if we do not go as far as this, we must be quite clear about the difference between a judgement that carries content, a sentence that carries content, and a sentence that is empty of all content. We could say: The great sin of our culture today lies in the fact that it lives in sentences that bear no content, without realizing how empty these sentences are. More than at any other time we can experience today: 'Then words come in to save the situation. They'll fight your battles well if you enlist'em, or furnish you a universal system.'

Indeed, we are experiencing even more; we are experiencing how history is being made and politics carried on with words that have no content. What is depressing is that there is so little inclination to realize this very

thing. Only rarely have I met a genuine sense for what is really going on in this field. But in the last few days I did come across some passages which do show a sense for this great deficiency in our time:

'With astonishment we hear from the prophets of our time that the old words, Liberty, Equality, Fraternity were no more than "tradesmen's ideals" due to be replaced by something new. Professor Kjellén said this ...'

I must point out — this is necessary nowadays — that the professor is not a German but a Swede; he belongs to a neutral country.

'in his paper on "The Ideas of 1914" in which he compared the old slogan of 1789 with the new one of 1914: Order, Duty, Justice! Looking more closely we find that these so-called new words are in fact quite old and pretty threadbare. Comparison between the two reveals the ancient conflict that characterizes human spiritual life, the conflict between an inner world of free personal activity and an outer world of rigid laws, coercive measures. Even as long ago as the time of Christ, justice as the fulfilment of the law was balanced by mercy, duty by love, and the legal order by voluntary imitation of Christ.

To give him his due, Professor Kjellén does not advocate the unconditional abolition of the words Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, even though they have become superfluous upon the demise of the "ancien regime". He suggests a synthesis between them and those new ones of 1914: Order, Duty, Justice. But there is nothing new in this synthesis either. It was enough of a reality in the England of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to allow for the imperfection of every human institution.

The fact that this synthesis has now become inefficive only goes to prove that all values and counter-values, together with whatever temporary synthesis may be current, become empty phrases as soon as the divine spark that gave them life is extinguished. Liberty, Equality, Fraternity signify one formula

that gains its power from a social conscience. Order, Duty and Justice, on the other hand, must presuppose the suggestive power of a higher authority if they are to become effective. Herein, and not in the predominance of one or another formula, is revealed the deficiency that is so decisive for the destiny of modern mankind: The force of a social conscience is lacking in too great a majority for the liberating values to dominate, and the force of authority is too much lacking for those values that bind from outside to dominate. Values which are not deeply rooted in evolution can rapidly turn to empty phrases and fall prey to misuse ...' and so on.

Thus, occasionally a chord is struck that reveals a genuine sense of what is going on. I need not be surprised at these words which stand out for me like an oasis in today's desert of empty phrases. They were written, after all, by my old friend Rosa Mayreder. They are to be found in the November 1916 issue of the *Internationale Rundschau* and they point to much about which we spoke together many years ago. So I need not have been surprised to find these words standing out for me; but in many ways I was delighted to hear how the thoughts of such a personality have developed over the years. Though she cannot bring herself to rise to a view of the world based on spiritual science and has ever taken a standpoint of unfruitful criticism, yet she has to say:

'All the problems found in the external structure of the world can be traced back to one single source-the power problem.'

If only we could take heed of this, we should be far less inclined to live our lives in empty phrases!

'At the centre of all the quarrels and disturbances that dominate the human condition stands the battle of groups and individuals for power. This battle for power between whole groups of nations or states is, beyond all empty phrases, the true cause of every war. War cannot be separated from power-seeking; those who desire to combat war must first devalue

the principle of power — just as, quite logically, the early Christians did. The guise in which the power principle now appears is worse than any it may have donned in the past; for now it threatens the human soul in all its most beautiful and noble traits. It could be called the mechanization of life through the technical and economic mastery of nature. It is the tragic destiny of man forever to become the slave of his own creations because he is incapable of calculating their consequences in advance. Thus it has happened that even where he has used his ingenuity and inventiveness to coerce the elemental forces into his service, he has once again become the slave of the unforeseeable effects they assume through their combination with the power principle. Modern technology, which makes human life so much easier in so many ways, and modern economics, which so infinitely increases man's material wealth, having now become the tools of modern imperialism, turn against the essential being of the individual. Massed together in a soulless multitude, human beings are ground up by the machinery of party interests that drives today's civilization. The individual becomes a spare part, a cog; he can hold his own only to the extent to which he has the strength. But the values of soul quality established by past cultures perish in the process ... At present such cultural values survive only in countries which lie outside the realm of imperialistic competitiveness, or in rural areas and small towns where there is still a degree of leisure and repose, where the demands made on the individual do not exceed his capacity to fulfil them. These are the indispensable preconditions for a harmonious art of living; but they are sucked under by the murderous maelstrom of excesses prevailing at the centres of modern civilization ...'

Voices such as this prove that there are some — not very many — who understand what is lacking today. Yet these people recoil from grasping the living impulse of spiritual science. The very thing most able to grasp reality is kept at arm's length. The main reason for this is that there is a fundamental impulse lacking in their striving, and that is the fundamental impulse for truth. There is an urge to seek for the truth in empty phrases. But however enthusiastically they fill their being with these phrases, this

urge will never lead them to the truth. To find the truth it is necessary to have a sense for the facts, regardless of whether these are to be found on the physical plane or in the spiritual world.

Let us look at life as it is today: Has the urge for truth kept pace with the sagacity and with the immensely admirable progress that are embodied in external culture? No. We can even say that in a certain sense people have lost the good will to look properly and see whether what is there in reality is rooted in any way in the truth. But it is essential to develop this feeling for truth in daily life, for otherwise it will be impossible to raise it up to an understanding of the spiritual worlds.

To show you what I mean, let me give you an example, not only of the lie of the empty phrase but also of how actual lies surge and billow on the waves of present-day civilization, influencing real life. There are many events we can now look back on which have shaken Europe to its foundations. It is necessary to go back many decades and to recognize over these decades the essential characteristics of these events if we want to form a judgement about what is today causing the whole world to quake; but we must have an eye for the realities.

I have told you before that in certain secret brotherhoods in the West — I have proof of this — there was talk in the 1890s about the present war. The pupils of these brotherhoods were given instruction by means of maps which showed how Europe was to be changed by this world war. The English brotherhoods in particular discussed a war that was to take place — indeed, that was to be guided into being and properly prepared. I am speaking of facts, but there are certain reasons why I have to refrain from drawing maps for you, though I could quite easily draw for you the maps which figured in the teachings of those western secret brotherhoods.

These secret brotherhoods, together with everything affiliated to them, were counting on tremendous revolutions which were to take place between the Danube and the Aegean Sea and between the Black Sea and the Adriatic in connection with the great European war they were discussing — every sentence I say here is quite deliberate. One of the sentences which figured in their discussions, and which I shall quote more or less literally, went: As soon as the dreams of Pan-Slavism have developed just a little further, a good deal will take place in the Balkans which is in accord with the developments in Europe. They meant in accord with the secret brotherhoods.

This is one great network that I want to bring to your awareness. The dreams of Pan-Slavism were discussed over and over again by these secret brotherhoods. They spoke of political dreams, of political revolutions, not of cultural dreams which would have been fully justified; have not we in our spiritual-scientific movement discussed more thoroughly than anyone else what lives in the soul of the East! Having seen what kind of role the dreams of Pan-Slavism played, let us now turn for a while to the realities of the physical plane. I will give one example. For many decades there existed, under the protection of the Russian government, a 'Slav Welfare Committee'. What could be nicer than a 'Slav Welfare Committee' under the protection of a mighty government? I will now read you a short letter that has to do with this Committee, dated 5 December 1887. It says the following:

'The President of the Petersburg Committee of the Slav Welfare Society has approached the Foreign Minister with a request for weapons and ammunition for the Nabokov expedition.'

The request was not for warm underwear for little children, it was for ammunition for a certain expedition connected with stirring the revolution in the different Balkan countries! You may perhaps see from this how something that is a lie, a conscious lie, can float about in public life. A 'welfare committee', — how innocuous, indeed worthy! — carries on the business of the various revolutionary committees connected with the Russian government who have the task of stirring up the Balkan states.

I could easily quote you ten, even twenty, such little notes. Let me add one more: In the fateful year of 1914 a certain Mr Pasic occupied a high position in the government of a certain Balkan country. No doubt you remember the name. While the Obrenovich dynasty were still the rulers of Serbia, this Mr Pasic was exiled to another Balkan country. You might ask what he was doing there. I do not want to criticize this gentleman but I would like to read you another short letter. It starts: 'Secret communication from the President of the Committee of the Slav Welfare Committee in Petersburg to the Consular Administrator in Rustshuk, dated 3 December 1885, Nr. 4875.' I quote the file number so that you don't think I am making this up or merely recounting an anecdote:

'On the instruction of the Director of the Asiatic Department I have pleasure in sending to Your Honour herewith 6000 roubles with the humble request that this sum be paid to the Serbian emigrant Nicola Pasic through the kind offices of the widow Natalya Karavelov who resides at Rustshuk. Please be so good as to confirm receipt and further disposal of this sum.'

You see how even those who worked for the innocuous 'Slav Welfare Society' played a certain part in the fateful events in Europe. Would it not be a good thing to develop an instinct for truth by not being so careless as to take things at their face value according to a name or a phrase and, instead, cultivating the will to examine them a little? Unless this is done, conclusions are reached entirely thoughtlessly, and thoughtlessness in forming judgements is what takes us further and further away from the truth. The fact that thoughtlessness in judgement takes us away from the truth can never be countered by the excuse that we did not know this or that. The judgements we carry in our soul are facts that work in the world; we should never forget that what we carry in our soul works in the world, though on the whole it is subject to what is at work governing the whole wide range of life.

To digress for a moment, the strangest judgements about the relationships between the various states can be heard these days. The words for this — an empty phrase in the place of the truth — are 'international relations'. Judgements are reached by people who make not the slightest effort to consult the evidence, even though this would sometimes be quite easy to find. I do not refer, of course, to those who are united with us here in the Anthroposophical Society. Nevertheless, we do stand in the world and it does influence us via at least one fatal indirect route, for we always allow ourselves to be influenced by what some people have called a major power: the Press! The effect of the Press really is most disastrous, for it falsifies and blurs virtually everything. How little would be written if those who write were really called upon to write properly! Who does not write today about the relationship of Romania to Russia, or Romania to any of the other states? It does not even occur to them that a fundamental prerequisite for saying anything about these relationships is to read the memoirs of the late King Carol of Romania. Those who write without having done this only write things which are not worth reading, even by the simplest people.

Times are grave; therefore only grave and earnest views of the world and of life can serve in these times. So it is important to sense something of a feeling that I have often described as essential: above all not to judge rashly but, instead, to look at things side by side and wait for them to speak. In the course of time they will say a good many things to us. To acquaint oneself with as many aspects as possible is the best preparation for penetrating thoroughly into the difficult and complicated conditions of life today.

Without wishing to express any judgement I should like to tell you something which will demonstrate the proper way to place the kind of thing I have to tell side by side with other things that happen. The important part played by the Romanian army in the Russo-Turkish war is well known. After the Russians had demanded permission to march through Romania, and after they had been refused, a moment arrived in this war when Grand Duke Nikolai, who was already playing an important part at that time, wrote to Romania as follows: 'Come to our assistance, cross over the Danube however you wish and under whatever conditions you wish. But come quickly, for the Turks are about to finish us off.' As a result, as we know, the intervention of the Romanian army led to a favourable outcome for Russia.

After this, King Carol of Romania wanted to take part in the peace negotiations. He was not admitted. So he took up quite a vehement position vis-à-vis the Russian government, in consequence of which he underwent rather a peculiar experience. There were Russian troops stationed in Bucharest and it was quite easy to be convinced that the intention was to remove the King; the situation being as I have just hinted, you can easily understand that such intentions might indeed exist. So King Carol demanded the withdrawal of the Russian troops, whereupon he received an exceedingly brusque, indeed quite atrocious reply from Gorchakov, the then Foreign Minister. He thought for a while — such people do think from time to time — and comforted himself with the notion that at least Tsar Alexander would not agree and that it was only Gorchakov who was taking such liberties. So he wrote to the Tsar and received a reply from which I quote verbatim the main sentences:

'The embarrassing situation brought about by your ministers has not in any way altered the cordial interest I feel for you; I regret having had to hint at the possible measures which the

attitude of your government would force me to take.'

I am telling you these things only as an example of how to place the events of recent decades side by side, so that out of these events one judgement or another may present itself. Only the events themselves can help us to form judgements with real content. And the events of recent decades are such that they cannot be judged summarily because far too many threads lead to each one. Furthermore, it is necessary with every judgement to bear in mind the proper motivation, the proper perspective. In this connection the most painful experiences can be had. I must admit that in the face of the great accumulation of unkindness I am now meeting in just this connection I cannot but reach the painful conclusion that there is very little inclination in the world to give judgements their proper perspective and also very little will to understand someone who tries to judge things in this way, thus finding the right perspective for his judgements.

Without stating my own opinion one way or the other, I must admit that outside Germany I have hardly met a single judgement about Germany that is really understanding and friendly. Judgements have been pronounced with immense confidence, yes, but not with genuine understanding. On the other hand, there are innumerable extraordinarily benevolent judgements about everything in the periphery. Nobody need believe that this surprises me. It certainly does not. I am not in the least surprised, but I do try to understand why it is so. The reason is that there is absolutely no will to gain a proper perspective. People do not even suspect that a judgement about what lives today in Central Europe has to be made from a perspective that differs utterly from that needed to judge what lives in the periphery. They have no idea what it means that with everything contained in Central Europe each single individual is vulnerable and threatened, and therefore that the scale of affairs is at a human level, whereas in the periphery the scale is that of state and political affairs which require to be judged from an entirely different perspective. Each is judged on the same basis, but this is meaningless in this case.

As I have already said, I am not stating an opinion but speaking about the form in which judgement is passed. Nowhere in the world is account taken of the fact that something that is not meant to relate to a particular nation is, nevertheless, inappropriately seen in relation to that nation. Nobody takes into account that the British Empire covers one quarter of

the earth's land surface, Russia one seventh, France and her colonies one thirteenth. Together this amounts to about half of the total land surface of the earth! I can well understand that the benevolence directed towards this side can be quite easily accounted for, simply mathematically. Obviously one is dependent on what dominates one half of the earth! I quite understand. But the terrible thought to be considered is that this is not admitted and, instead, all kinds of moral statements and empty phrases are used. If only people would say: We cannot help but go along with one half of the earth! At that moment everything would be almost alright. But people will do anything to avoid saying this. By the way, I might as well just mention that Germany, with all the colonies she has ever possessed, covers one thirty-third of the earth's land surface.

These things must definitely be taken into account, and I ask you: Is it not essential to include such things in one's judgement? What was meant by 'imperialism' in the essay quoted earlier was, of course, the spread of domination over the territories of the world. The British Empire is obviously the largest. This is indisputable. I am not speaking of opinions but of facts. Please do not think that my remarks are aimed at any particular person belonging to any particular nation.

Bearing in mind what has just been said, it is not surprising to learn that the British Empire had, and still has, the highest export figures. We have to know this and take it into account. However, a remarkable circumstance arose: Germany's exports started to catch up with the British. Not very many years ago a comparison showed that Germany's export figures were very low and those of Britain very high. Now let me write on the blackboard the figures for January to June 1914. For this period Germany's export figure was £1,045,000,000 and that of Britain £1,075,000,000. If another year had passed without the coming of the World War, it is possible that the German export figure might have been larger than the British. This was not to be allowed to happen!

These things can be seen without any need to let feelings come into play in one direction or another. What individual people, who strive for objectivity, think about the events of the present day is far more important than any subjective sympathies or antipathies and, above all, far more important than what throbs through the daily press in such a disastrous way. I shall go into these things more deeply from a spiritual point of view quite soon. But I would be failing in my duty if I were to throw spiritual light on these matters without pointing to the realities of the physical plane. I cannot make everything comfortable for you and avoid hurting

anyone's feelings by lifting the forming of judgements up into cloud-cuckoo-land. It is essential that I let the light of what can be said about the spiritual situation shine also on what one can and ought to know about the physical plane. So let me draw your attention to something which may interest you and which will not cause too much offence now, since I believe that all our friends here present are obviously entirely free of any prejudice. I have to carry out my duty conscientiously and this involves creating a proper basis.

There are some people today who strive to look at things clearly and see them for what they really are. Though it might seem that everyone is biased there are, in fact, varying degrees of prejudice and we should not lose sight of this. Without recommending or praising it in any way, I want to mention an article which, interestingly enough, has been published here in Switzerland: *On the History of the Outbreak of the War Based on the Official Records of His Majesty's British Government* by Dr Jakob Ruchti. This article diverges considerably from what is heard everywhere across half the world these days about the so-called guilt of the Central Powers. The style of the article is formally scientific, even rather pedantic, after the manner of historical seminars. And the records quoted are chiefly those of the British Government. Out of consideration for people's feelings I shall not repeat the conclusion reached, since it diverges greatly from the judgement usually heard in the periphery about Central Europe. At the end of the article we read:

'But history cannot be permanently falsified; the myth cannot stand up to the scrutiny of scientific research; the sinister web will be brought into the light and torn to pieces, however artfully it has been spun.'

This article, the fruit of a historical seminar at a Swiss university, was even awarded a prize by the University of Berne. So there exists today an article that has been awarded a prize by a Swiss university, an article which endeavours to reveal the facts in a light that differs from that found at the periphery very frequently nowadays. This is worth taking into consideration, for no one would dare to accuse the historical faculty of the University of Berne of having perhaps been bribed.

There is yet another fact I want to mention. For some time a discussion has been going on between Clemenceau, Mr. Archer and Georg Brandes. Georg Brandes is a Dane, a Danish writer. Most of you will know of him, since he is one of the most celebrated European writers. Do not think that I am mentioning him today because I have any particular liking for him; indeed he is a writer I particularly dislike, for whom I have very little sympathy.

Without any further introduction, let me now read to you the article Brandes wrote recently, following an argument with Grey, Mr. Archer and Clemenceau. I must repeat, though, that I am counting on my earlier statement about our present circle proving true: namely, that discrimination will be exercised and that no one will believe that it is my purpose to pick holes in any particular nation. I am not giving my opinion, I am merely reading to you an article by Georg Brandes. He writes:

'Since I have met with personal insinuations both in foreign newspapers and in those anonymous letters through which the flower of the Danish gutter airs its perfumes, I must say the following once and for all: I have the honour of being a member of three distinguished London clubs, and was president of one, vice-president of another; I am an honorary member of three learned societies and an honorary doctor of a Scottish university. Thus, strong links attach me to Great Britain. I owe England's literary and artistic world a debt of deep gratitude and I have ever been strongly attracted to British life and letters. The German Reich and Austria-Hungary, in contrast, have never awarded me the slightest honour of any kind, not even the tiniest Little Red Bird Fourth Class; I have never been a member of any German club or learned society and have never received even the smallest award from a German university.'

I, too, have never heard of any inclination on the part of a German society to award any honour to Georg Brandes, but they do heartily abuse him!

'Because of my remarks about Northern Schleswig I have been regularly and violently slandered in the German press for the last twenty years. It cannot, therefore, truly be claimed that I have been bribed to take up cudgels for Germany.'

Very true! This, dear friends, by way of a brief introduction. I might add that Brandes was a most intimate friend of Clemenceau. I myself have seen in Austria on the estate of friends of theirs, a bench on which — so I was told — Clemenceau and Brandes once sat in the most beautiful and affectionate concord and on which the names 'Clemenceau and Brandes' had been carved. Since then this bench in that beautiful Silesian hermitage has been known as the Clemenceau-Brandes Seat. Lecturing in Budapest, Georg Brandes once said:

'Since I cannot speak Hungarian I shall not be able to speak to you in Hungarian, and since I dislike the German language every bit as much as you do, I shall not speak to you in German either. I shall give this lecture in French.'

As you see, there is not the slightest reason why any German should have a particular affection for Georg Brandes. His article continues:

'It cannot, therefore, truly be claimed that I have been bribed to take up cudgels for Germany. If I have spoken without taking sides about what I see to be the truth, I have done so for reasons other than those so stupidly hinted at by Mr Clemenceau when he suggested that I was currying favour with the Kaiser.'

I do not know whether one or the other name has been eradicated from that seat since the appearance of these words! Brandes continues:

'Mr Archer bases his argument on the premise that the Central Powers alone (namely, certain persons) are to blame for the war and made preparations for it. This same premise turns up repeatedly among the Allies: the assumption that incomplete preparation for the war proves one side to be the lamb and the other wolf.

In my opinion the unpreparedness for war of a certain country on the Continent in the summer of 1914 proves nothing more than a certain carelessness, negligence, sloppiness and lack of foresight among the appropriate authorities. A certain nation might therefore very well have hoped, by means of war, to regain possession of some confiscated provinces. It is quite easy to imagine that public opinion has all along considered such a war to be a holy duty but that, even so, negligence meant that the military forces were unprepared.

And what applies to a land force applies just as much to a sea force.

I.

On 27 November 1911 a question was asked in the English Parliament as to whether the April 1904 Anglo-French agreement about Morocco could be interpreted, either by the French or the English Government, to include military support by land or sea, and under what circumstances. The answer amounted to a statement that diplomatic support did not commit to either military or maritime support. On the same day Sir Edward Grey said: "Let me try to put an end to some of the suspicions with regard to secrecy ... We have laid before the House the secret Articles of the Agreement with France of 1904. There are no other secret engagements ... For ourselves we have not made a single secret article of any kind since we came into office." On 3 August 1914 Sir Edward Grey read out in Parliament, among other things, the following passage from a document that he had sent to the French ambassador in London on 22 November 1912: "You have pointed out that if

either Government had grave reason to expect an unprovoked attack by a third Power, it might become essential to know whether it could in that event depend upon the armed assistance of the other. I agree that, if either Government had grave reason to expect an unprovoked attack by a third Power, or something that threatened the general peace, (an exceedingly vague expression) it should immediately discuss with the other whether both Governments should act together to prevent aggression and to preserve peace, and, if so, what measures they would be prepared to take in common." In the same speech, Grey says: "We are not parties to the Franco-Russian Alliance. We do not even know the terms of that Alliance." '

Brandes adds, in brackets: 'A really extraordinary statement.'

'On 10 March 1913 Lord Hugh Cecil said in the Debate on the Address: "There is a very general belief that this country is under an obligation, not a treaty obligation, but an obligation arising out of an assurance given by the Ministry in the course of diplomatic negotiations, to send a very large armed force out of this country to operate in Europe ..." Here Mr Asquith interrupted the speaker with the words: "I ought to say that this is not true."

On 24 March 1913 the Prime Minister was asked again whether under certain circumstances British troops could be mustered in order to land them on the continent. He replied: "As has been repeatedly stated, this country is not under any obligation not public and known to Parliament which compels it to take part in any war." Does this reply conform to the truth? When rumours surfaced again in the following year, Sir Edward Grey answered on 28 April 1914: "The position now remains the same as stated by the Prime Minister in answer to a question in this House on 24 March 1913." To yet another question on 11 June 1914 Sir Edward Grey replied: "There are no unpublished agreements which would restrict or hamper the freedom of the Government or of Parliament to decide whether or not Great Britain should participate in a war."

Without any exaggeration this can be called sophistry. After all, there existed the letter of 22 November 1912 to Monsieur Cambon which, in the dreadful bureaucratic style of diplomatic language, unequivocally committed England to participation in any military recklessness into which Russia might lure France.'

The style is indeed excruciating.

'Even more extraordinary was the conclusion of the speech by the Foreign Minister: "But if any agreement were to be concluded that made it necessary to withdraw or modify the Prime Minister's statement of last year, it ought, in my opinion, to be, and I suppose that it would be, laid before parliament."

The whole world knows that this did not happen.

II.

These passages from parliamentary speeches prove that Great Britain was not unprepared for a war with Germany. Mr Archer regards it as quite definite that Germany passionately longed for a war with Great Britain.

It has been proved that England's declaration of war was so unexpected by the German government that it caused consternation. It is possible to call the German government naive in this connection, but there is absolutely no doubt that they were painfully surprised. As C. H. Norman conclusively proves, Kaiser Wilhelm had good reason to hope for England's neutrality. In the years 1900-1901 he had prevented a European coalition that would have forced England to grant favourable peace terms to the South African republics. He had shown his friendship for England by refusing to receive in

Berlin a deputation of Boers who were being fêted throughout Europe. In the well-known interview in the Daily Telegraph he expressly publicized the fact that he had refused the invitation of Russia and France to join them in taking steps to force England to bring the Boer War to an end. Neither France nor Russia have ever dared to deny this.'

I could add a good deal out of that letter in the *Daily Telegraph* which would speak far more clearly than Georg Brandes is doing; but I don't want to add anything myself!

'So the Kaiser was not all that keen on a war with England at that time. And it will not be easy to convince any thoughtful person that six years after the publication of that interview he was all of a sudden eagerly planning to go to war with the whole globe. It is obvious, of course, that his Government made a false calculation. But they did not want war with England in 1914, and the uncontrollable hate of the German people against the English which burst out so repulsively was obviously the result of the surprise of discovering in Great Britain an unexpected and uncommonly powerful enemy.

To the last minute, Germany sought through her diplomats to win England's neutrality. They worked cautiously. The German Chancellor proposed to Sir Edward Goschen (the British Ambassador in Berlin) that he would stand for the inviolability of French territory if Germany should happen to conquer France and Russia. But Sir Edward Grey's attitude was negative because Germany would not extend this guarantee to include the French colonies.

Now Prince Lichnowsky, the German Ambassador in London, asked whether England would agree to remain neutral if Germany refrained from violating Belgium's neutrality. Sir Edward Grey refused. He wanted to retain a free hand. ("I did not think we could give a promise of neutrality on that condition alone.") Would he agree if Germany were to guarantee the integrity of both France and her colonies? No. ("The Ambassador pressed me as to whether I could formulate

conditions on which we would remain neutral. He even suggested that the integrity of France and her Colonies might be guaranteed. I said that I felt obliged to refuse definitely any promise to remain neutral on similar terms, and I could only say that we must keep our hands free.")

Sir Edward Grey afterwards maintained that Prince Lichnowsky had certainly over-stepped his authority in making these offers. Surely he could only say such a thing because he was, and still is, convinced that Germany had an invincible urge to do battle simultaneously with Russia, France, England and Belgium.'

Please forgive me for adding something here. From what I have just read to you we may see that a single sentence from Grey would have sufficed to prevent the violation of Belgium's neutrality. However, I do not blame Grey in any way, for he is the puppet of quite other forces about which I shall speak later. On the contrary, I regard him as a perfectly honest but exceptionally stupid individual; but I do not know how far it is permitted today to express such judgements! Anyway, one sentence from Grey would have sufficed to prevent the violation of Belgian neutrality, and it is possible to add: A single sentence and the war in the West would not have taken place. Some day the world will hear about these things.

I think that these things weigh quite heavily, for they are facts. Brandes continues:

'As I said earlier, and this is obvious to common sense, Germany was prepared for a German-Russian war, should this arise from the invasion of Serbia by Austria. But Germany did not want to molest France (or Belgium) if she remained neutral. France, however, was determined to go to the aid of Russia. The wisdom of this policy will be judged by future generations, but meanwhile its consequence is that ten million people are spending seven days every week miserably murdering one another. Without the knowledge of Parliament, the English Foreign Ministry had committed Great Britain to assisting France in the event of a European war. Given the new and strong sympathy for France, public opinion in

England might even have approved of this commitment had it been public knowledge. But if all the details had been known it would certainly not have approved of the constraint under which England was placed, for England was to be forced to go to war because of France's relationship with Russia, the only power with nothing to lose in the case of a war. Russia's population is so enormous that the loss of life occasioned by a war would hardly be worth considering, and if national passions were aroused and if the war were to lead to a victory, then this could only serve to strengthen the position of the conservative Government.

If the political position had been fully known, public opinion in Great Britain would have recognized that the consequences of a conflict could contain nothing good for the freedom or the well being of mankind. If the Allies were to win, this would only lead to an immense increase in the might of Russia, the victory of a governmental system opposed to that of Great Britain. For the Russian people, who as a people have won the heart of Europe, such a victory would bring no progress.

III.

I do not believe that my esteemed opponent, Mr Archer, can detest Prussian militarism more than I do. It is caused by the two long and threatened borders, that between Germany and Russia on the one side and that between Germany and France on the other.'

Note that this is said by a person who has never been awarded even the tiniest Little Red Bird, not even fourth class!

'It is excusable vis-à-vis France by the fact that the French have occupied Berlin twenty times or so, whereas the Germans have only taken Paris twice. It is obnoxious because of its caste system and its arrogance. But it can hardly be said

to be worse than the militarism of other countries.'

Says Georg Brandes, who does not possess even the tiniest Little Red Bird, not even fourth class!

'Europe, including England, was worried to note during the Dreyfus Affair what forms French militarism was capable of taking.'

Of course I agree whole-heartedly with Georg Brandes!

'As for Russian militarism, in the year 1900 our idyllic and amiable Russians, about whom my esteemed friend Wells is so enthusiastic, and who have captured the hearts of the rest of us too, cold-bloodedly slaughtered the total Chinese population of Blagoveshchensk and surroundings. The Cossacks tied the Chinese together by their pigtails and launched them on the river in boats which sank. When the women threw their children on the beach and begged that they at least might be spared they slaughtered them with their bayonets. "Even the Turks have never been guilty of anything worse than this mass murder in Blagoveshchensk," wrote Mr F E Smith, the former English press censor, in 1907, the very year of the Anglo-Russian agreement which guaranteed and at the same time undermined the independence of Persia.

The same English writer confirmed the description of Japanese militarism by the correspondent of The Times. On 21 November 1894 the Japanese army stormed Port Arthur and for four days a rabble of soldiers slaughtered the civilian population, men, women and children, with the utmost barbarity: "From dawn till far into the night the days passed with murder, plunder and mutilation, with every imaginable kind of nameless cruelty, until the place presented such a picture of horror that any survivor will shudder at the memory to the day he dies." '

These things which Georg Brandes says, even though he does not possess even the tiniest Little Red Bird fourth class, were of course well known to someone who wrote: 'War brings with it the horrors of war and it is not surprising if the most modern methods are used in war.' Yet I heard the other day that particularly this sentence in my pamphlet has been taken amiss. It can only be taken amiss by people who know nothing about history and have no idea of the cause of such a thing. Georg Brandes continues:

'So we see that militarism, whatever its nationality, is much the same everywhere. I wish Mr Archer would read a lecture which Dr Vöhringer gave about German Africa on 30 January 1915 in Hamburg. He would learn from this what the German inhabitants of the Cameroons, about fifty men and women, suffered when, surprised by the declaration of war, they were locked up by English officers and handed over to black guards who mistreated them. They suffered hunger and thirst. If they begged for water they were given slop buckets, and a British officer said, "It doesn't matter whether the German swine have anything to drink or not." On the journey from Lagos to England they were not even given water for washing.'

I did not bore anyone reading my pamphlet by telling things like this; yet it has been taken amiss that I do not join in the tune that is being sung everywhere. It is not what the pamphlet says that has been criticized but the fact that it does not say what is being said everywhere. It has been taken amiss because it does not scold in the way everyone else is scolding. Georg Brandes continues:

'This is what English militarism looks like. Is it any better than Prussian militarism when English nationalism, as with any other nation, is stoked up to the point of madness?'

IV.

Let Mr Archer and other eminent gentlemen in and outside Great Britain bring to an end the eternal discussion, into which I too have been dragged, about who is guilty of having started the war and about who ought to bear the consequences of its outcome! Let them turn instead to the only important and crucial question, namely how to find the way out of this hell of which we can in truth say, as in Macbeth:

*Oh horror, horror, horror! Tongue nor heart
Cannot conceive nor name thee ...*

The appetite of those who wage war is insatiable. Has it not been decided in Paris to carry on the trade war even after the cessation of hostilities? Is there never to be an end to this madness?

In any case the war will have to end with an agreement; and since the war is of an economic nature, the agreement will have to be an economic one. As a free trade power, England has shown the way to the whole world. Tariff agreements will be unavoidable; governments will be forced to make mutual concessions and it will be necessary to strive for greater freedom of trade so that finally world free trade can be achieved.

A citizen of the country which has suffered the most from the war right from the start, a Belgian manufacturer from Charleroi, Monsieur Henri Lambert, has spoken the redeeming word that can smooth the way for peace: The only intelligent and farseeing policy, in this case tariff policy, is a just policy which does not begrudge life to the other party. He has pointed out that a permanent improvement of the European situation can only be reached if the country seeking peace is obliged to abolish or at least reduce tariffs, of course only under an arrangement that is totally just to both sides. The abolition of tariffs seems to be the only sensible and effective means of preventing the economic tactic known by the English as "dumping", of which they so passionately accuse the Germans.

Tariff agreements will also be unavoidable in the unlikely event that the war is fought to the point of a crushing victory for one side or the other. If this were to happen, millions and more millions of human beings would be sacrificed on the battlefields or would perish at home of wounds, sickness and deprivation. Supposing the victors were to decide (in accordance with the economic conference in Paris) to discriminate against the conquered to such an extent by means of tariffs that they were brought down to a lower economic level, this would be a relapse for mankind as a whole to the system of national slavery.

The underdog would, as a matter of course, make every effort to rise up again; he would utilize any dissension among the conquerors and be free again within half a century. Alliances never last as long as fifty years.

So, a peaceful future for Europe depends on free trade. As Cobden says, free trade is the best peacemaker. Indeed, it seems to be even more: it is the only peacemaker. In olden times, horses whose task it was to go round and round on a treadmill had their eyes put out. Similarly, blind to the reality around them, the unfortunate nations of Europe are going round and round on the treadmill of war, voluntarily and yet under compulsion.'

This is the judgement of a neutral citizen, but one who does not base his judgement on empty phrases; he includes a number of facts in his judgement, showing how it is possible to measure these facts against one another in the right way. My endeavour has been not to express an opinion but to indicate something that is needed in our time if we are to seek the truth. Why should it not be possible to suspend judgement, at least in one's own soul, if one has neither the time nor the will to bother about the facts in a suitable way? Spiritual science can show us that judgements made today, and so frequently clothed in such words as: 'We are fighting for the freedom and the rights of the small nations', are indeed the most irresponsible empty phrases. Someone who knows even the least part of the truth must realize that such talk is comparable to that of the shark negotiating for a peace treaty with the little fishes who are going to be his prey. It will naturally not be understood immediately, perhaps not until

some meditation has taken place, that much of today's talk resembles the suggestion: Why don't the sharks enter into an inter-fish agreement (international is a word much used today) with the little fishes they want to eat?

People who today speak about the coming of peace say that the murder will not cease until there is a prospect of eternal peace. It is virtually impossible to imagine anything more crazy than the notion that murder must continue until, through murder, a situation has been created in which there will be no more war. It is hardly necessary to have knowledge of spiritual matters today in order to know that once this war in Europe has come to an end only a few years will pass before a far more furious, far more devastating war will shake the earth outside Europe. But who bothers today about things that are a part of reality? People prefer to listen to statesmen who declaim that this or that must be achieved in the interest of freedom and the rights of small nations. People even listen when lawyers, quite competent lawyers, who have become presidents appear in the toga of a Moslem prince to conduct cases in Romania ... only this is not noticed because in this instance we speak of a 'republic'. What more is there to be said if people are still willing to go to lectures given by such people about artistic and literary matters, about the relationships between the myths and sagas and literary materials of West and Central Europe, quite apart from other facts such as the one I mentioned to you the other day: that Maeterlinck was applauded loudly for calling Goethe, Schiller, Lessing and others 'mediocre intellects'. But I do not wish to influence your judgement in any way; I merely draw your attention to the fact that for the forming of judgements perspectives have to be sought, as well as quite other things, if the judgement is to become truth.

We must realize that the population crowded together in Central Europe has to be judged from an entirely different viewpoint because, here, human values are under threat. For the peripheral countries, on the other hand, the viewpoint can be that of state and political values, at least for some time to come, until certain other conditions are brought about by the prolongation of the war for many years. In Central Europe we have to do with the treasure of the spirit, with the development of the soul and with everything that has been created over the centuries. It would be utter nonsense to believe that we have to be similarly concerned about the periphery; it would be thoughtless to express any such thing. Of course there is much everywhere with which fault can be found. But it is one thing — comparing greater with lesser matters — to find fault with things that

take place inside a closed fortress and another to find fault with what occurs among the besieging army. I have as yet heard no judgement from the periphery that takes any kind of account of these things.

In order not to be onesided, I shall now, in conclusion, turn to something else. In order to be just, it is always thought to be a good thing to judge both sides by saying: Here it is like this and there it is like that, and so on. But the question is never asked: Is it really so? A Swiss newspaper recently published articles which, in order to be just to both sides, pointed out in quite an abstract way that lies were told in both camps. But supposing what is said there is not true? The article was about untruthfulness in the world war, but the article is, in itself, because of the way it is written, totally untruthful. Now I want to read to you — in fear and trembling, I might add — something out of a German magazine, selected at random, in order to show you the difference. What is written all around Germany is well enough known, and it is also well known that it is surely not written out of any benevolence towards the nations of Central Europe. Even in articles expressing judgements that are a little less vitriolic there are still plenty of very unkind statements against the nation who, after all, brought forth Goethe, Schiller, Lessing and others.

I came by chance across this article on human dignity by Alexander von Gleichen-Russwurm. The article is motivated by the fact that the Germans have been called barbarians, and are indeed still called barbarians in the periphery. Gleichen-Russwurm — he is Schiller's grandson — is not particularly offended that the word 'barbarian' is used. On the contrary, he shows rather nicely what the ancient Greeks and Romans meant by 'barbarian', which was certainly nothing dreadful. I shall not go into this aspect. He then goes on to discuss the various nations. The article is like many others we may find today written by people in Central Europe who are equivalent, say, to Maeterlinck. Pardon me! Gleichen-Russwurm distinguishes between nations and governments and in some cases he does so in words — I am only passing them on to you, they are not my words — that may seem terrible if a reader or listener feels offended because he is a member of that nation. I am confident there is no one among us here who will feel thus; we are all anthroposophists and can understand such things. It is not because of the words used to describe governments that I want to read you this article, but to show you how Gleichen-Russwurm — not a very famous man but one who is roughly on a par with Maeterlinck as far as intelligence goes — in no way recoils from saying to his own people within the fortress what a courageous, thoughtful and honest man has to say if he does not intend to throw sand in their

eyes. Obviously, though, what is said inside the fortress ought not to impinge on the periphery because basically it has nothing to do with that. Think tactfully and you will understand what I mean. Gleichen-Russwurm says:

'The Russian people are good natured and gentle, whatever the Cossacks, who are not related to them, might do. The criminal Tsarist Government has brought about the war, yet the greatest poet of the nation, Tolstoj, who will ever retain our respect, has preached abhorrence of war in most moving words.

The atrocities committed by the French mob, the stupidity of their ministers and the uncultured remarks of Paris journalists and writers, cannot undo the fact that France is the country of that saint of charitable love, Vincent de Paul, who still has many followers, nor that the majority of French people are hardworking and peaceful by nature.

England remains the birthplace of Shakespeare and has given the world gentle poets, selfless philanthropists and philosophers of the highest worth. Yet the country is ruled by liars and tricksters and the English people, who are proudest of their own culture, have brought into being the worst kind of modern barbarism through their manner of conducting the war.

Italy's characterless bandit Government is despicable. Everything connected with Italy recently has been disagreeable and repulsive even to her friends. Yet since Goethe we have received such rich treasures of culture, artistic sense and natural beauty from her that we shall keep her in our hearts, unforgotten and still fruitful.

The hate our enemies bear towards us has perhaps preserved what is most valuable in our nature. The bitterness shown us nowadays, our recognition of the unprecedented antipathy facing us on all sides, is like the warning whispered by the slave to the victor: "Memento mori!" ('Remember your Death')

Even if spoken by vile mouths it ensures that noble-mindedness does not become overbearing, that triumphal jubilation does not degenerate into arrogance or hubris — the presumptuousness the Greek poets warned their heroes to guard against.

Schiller, concerned for the dignity of man, considered that noble human beings pay not only by what they do but also by what they are.'

You see, it is possible to form very derogatory opinions about those who are participating in current events, without falling into the trap of scorning whole nations. Judgements of this kind may be found by the hundred and if, one day, statistics are drawn up from 1914 onwards showing the way other nations are judged by Central Europe and by the periphery, the result will be a revelation of a remarkable cultural and spiritual nature! But nothing is further from anybody's mind meanwhile. At present Mr Leadbeater is compiling statistics comparing the criminal records of Germany and England, and recently announced in large print in the *Theosophical Review* how many more criminals Germany has than England. Then, in the next issue someone else pointed out that a certain figure had been inserted under the wrong heading and that a rectification would show the situation to be quite different. I seem to remember that he put down twenty-nine thousand criminals for England, forgetting a hundred and forty-six thousand; for Germany he included them all. But whereas the table showing Germany as the country with the greatest number of criminals is printed in large letters in the *Theosophical Review*, the refutation appears in minute print right at the end of the next issue.

Statistics like this will one day be superseded by others and then something of what is said in that article 'On the History of the Outbreak of the War', which was awarded a prize by the University of Berne, will be found to be true:

'But history cannot be permanently falsified; the myth cannot stand up to the scrutiny of scientific research; the sinister web will be brought into the light and torn to pieces, however artfully it has been spun.'

It has been necessary to say these things in preparation for speaking next time on matters which a number of people are greatly looking forward to hearing about but which, I must repeat, may not be made as comfortable as some might imagine. I myself have no need to express one opinion or another. As a spiritual scientist I am used to looking at facts purely as they really are, without any falsification, and to speaking about them as such. I know very well what objections some people — though of course nobody from this circle — are likely to make with regard to certain atrocities and other things which are told and stirred up over and over again without any proper perspective. I know these objections, but I also know how shortsighted it is to make them and how small a notion someone who makes them can have about how matters really stand and how the blame is really distributed.

When we had our dispute — if I can call it that — with Mrs Besant, she managed to load all the blame on to us. According to someone who until that time had been her devotee but who then withdrew his esteem, she acted according to the principle: If a person attacks another person, and if the one who is being attacked cries for help, then the attacker can tell the one who is crying for help that he is wrong not to let himself be slaughtered. Many judgements made today are of a similar nature. The strangest situations can be met in this respect. Kind-hearted, well-meaning people who would never form such a judgement in everyday life, nevertheless do so with regard to political matters about which they know nothing. These people lack clarity in their judgements. But clarity is the fundamental prerequisite for the formation of any judgement, though it is not a justification for the delivery of this or that judgement in one or another direction.



Lecture 2

Inattentiveness and Attentiveness; The Role of the Secret Brotherhoods

9 December 1916, Dornach

Today I should like to add a few remarks to what I started to say in the last lecture. Since our friends wish it, I shall today and tomorrow endeavour to penetrate more deeply into this matter. But so that we may understand, and not misunderstand, one another when I start to illuminate the subject more from the spiritual side, as is the intention, I must first of all lay the foundation. For if we cannot take into account certain circumstances now prevailing on the physical plane and also the times during which these circumstances were being prepared, then it is not possible to enter into the more spiritual aspects. You know that it is not a question of taking sides or of sympathies or antipathies, but of displaying certain conditions and relationships which, so I have heard, some people wish to know in order to help them understand today's difficult times. So today, in so far as time allows, I shall give a few more introductory explanations.

To start with, it must become clear to us that everything that happens externally on the physical plane is dependent on the underlying spiritual forces and powers. But it is difficult to get to know precisely and concretely the manner in which these spiritual forces and powers work. For the incursions of the spiritual world into the physical plane are more obvious in some places than in others. I have often pointed out here that there are, in a certain way, lines of connection, via the most varied intermediate links, between the external world and the secret brotherhoods, and onwards from the secret brotherhoods to the spiritual world. To understand this rightly it is necessary to take into account that wherever human beings work with the help of spiritually effective forces, whether with good or evil intent, they have to reckon with long stretches of time; because of this, account must also be taken of the fact that much depends on the ability of the individual to grasp and use the conditions of the physical plane with a certain cold-blooded detachment. This is particularly required when existing spiritual streams are to be used in order to achieve something. During the course of my description you will doubtless see whether something is striven for or achieved with good or bad intent. One

characteristic of those who make use of spiritual forces is that very frequently — not always but very frequently — they have reasons for not wishing to appear on the stage of the physical plane. Instead they make use of intermediaries through whom certain plans can be realized. Often these things have to be done in such a way that others do not notice what is going on. I have already pointed out a number of times that people are, in a way, inattentive; they do not like looking closely at what is going on. Many of those who work with certain occult connections in order to bring something about in the world make use of this fact. Those of us who see the world, not in the usual way but with free and open eyes, will know that there are people who can be influenced by those who want to make use of such means. Someone who is intent on influencing people, someone who, as an occultist, is not entirely scrupulous, can indeed gain power over people in this way.

Let me start right at the beginning and take an example. You will find that starting at the beginning will lead us to an understanding of more profound aspects later. In the year 1889 Count Richard von Pfeil, who had lived in St Petersburg and knew it quite well, wrote the following lines about the reigning Tsar of Russia:

'The overall impression I gained of Tsar Alexander III confirmed what I had long suspected: that those around him were purposely keeping him in a state of deep mistrust towards Germany and that this mistrust was now so firmly rooted in him that a change could hardly be expected. He was rightly convinced of his own deep love of peace, but he also believed his counsellors and other influential people in Russia, many of whom did not desire peace nearly as strongly as did he.'

Here, in a most prominent position, you have an individual of whom it must be said: He can be influenced by those who approach him for that purpose, yet who do not want to show themselves by stepping into the foreground. What does someone do who knows about certain connections arising out of the impulses of the fifth post-Atlantean period and wants to make use of them for his own ends or those of some group? He aspires to approach such a person by awakening the impression that nothing is further from his mind than the desire to influence him, so that no one will

notice that he does indeed desire to gain influence. And so he gains influence over him. All he need do is form his sentences in a certain way, use certain expressions, and other means which I shall not describe, and he succeeds in turning the other's mind in the desired direction. The world at large, being to a certain extent unobservant and therefore kindly disposed in its judgement of certain people, will simply assume: Well, he is rightly convinced of his love of peace, but he also believes all his counsellors and other influential people!

You see how easy it is in the widest context to practise something similar to what I have described in another case, that of Blavatsky. After the mahatma who is known as K.H. had had a good influence over her for a while, he was replaced, through machinations, by another who was a spy in the hands of a particular society. He had run away from certain secret brotherhoods into whose highest degrees he had been initiated, and it was thus possible for him to remain in the background as a mahatma and achieve, through Blavatsky, things that he wanted to achieve.

By pointing out these elementary matters I simply want to draw your attention to what you must take into account if you want to form a judgement; for the world is frequently misled by the way in which history is written. The writing of history is really something very much more profound. Only at the outermost edge of physical existence, in the utmost maya, can it be said: If this or that professor is a competent historian who has mastered the historical method, he will know how to depict the right things historically. This need not be the case at all. Whether a historian knows how to depict the right things or not depends on whether his karma leads him to the possibility of discovering the right things or not. Everything depends on this. For the right things are often not expressed in what he finds when he looks here or there; they are often revealed only to one who knows how to find the right places to look. Let me say this in another way: For one who is led by his karma to see the right things at the right moment, they are revealed at the point where something significant is expressed by a single phenomenon. Often a single phenomenon expresses something that throws light on decades, illuminating like a flash of lightning what is really happening. To prepare for what will be specially important when we turn to the more spiritual aspects, I should now like to tell you a little story.

There was, in Vienna, a physician who, even in the eighties of the last century, was practising analytical psychology, psychoanalysis, though not to the exaggerated extent that has since become fashionable through the

theories of Freud. He still lives there, as a matter of fact, but no longer occupies himself so much with these things. He enjoyed some outstanding successes with his psychoanalysis because he managed to draw a good deal out of people by his method of catechism. In 1886 a man came to this physician who gave the impression that he might have a great deal inside him. So he started to treat him for his nervous condition. And indeed, for a doctor who knew his job, there was a good deal to be found in this man's soul life; it was handed to him on a plate, you might say. This was a particularly interesting case. The doctor found out that his patient was involved in the most varied political factions, that he could poke his nose in everywhere and had his finger in every pie. He also discovered that he wrote articles for certain journals and that these articles had a great influence on the ruler of his country.

The patient, Voidarevich was his name, was a late descendant of a family of voivodes from Herzegovina. He said a great many things. Amongst much else he knew all about the interconnections in the net spun from Russia in the seventies in Herzegovina and Bosnia before the beginning of the Russo-Turkish war. Under normal conditions people do not usually give away such secrets; but under the hands of a psychoanalyst things come out which would otherwise remain hidden. After a number of sessions it became clear that he had also been involved when, before the declaration of war, King Milan and Nikita had resisted Turkey at the end of the seventies, and the uprisings in Bosnia and Herzegovina had been arranged. The motive for declaring war on Turkey had been given to Nikita and Milan by sources in Russia. And yet, outwardly, it was said, the people of the Balkans had been roused by the bad treatment given them by Turkey. This is not to deny that such treatment did occur. I am only relating the connections and, in this respect, we must realize that causes often lie, or are made, far longer ago than is suspected.

Something else was revealed by Voidarevich, something that prompted the doctor to seek an interview with an appropriate authority in Vienna, for even though it was only a matter of disconnected sentences, nevertheless the doctor, an intelligent man, was able to deduce a great deal. He learned from Voidarevich that the Russian ambassador was in Vienna and was on his way to St Petersburg, and not to Constantinople as the papers were saying. Further, he learned that the Russian Foreign Minister was staying at home and would not be going to a Bohemian spa as the papers were saying. These two things made a strange impression on the doctor: that the Russian ambassador in Constantinople was on his way to St Petersburg via Vienna, and that the Russian Foreign Minister was not going to a

Bohemian spa but was waiting in St Petersburg to receive the ambassador, and also that the newspapers were saying something quite different. It suddenly dawned on him — it was one of those obscure intuitions that come by instinct: All this is connected with the fact that Alexander von Battenberg is to be deposed in Bulgaria. It all seemed very suspicious to the doctor, and he informed the appropriate authority. But the appropriate authority merely knew that the Russian ambassador was travelling to St Petersburg on private business, as they say; and the authority was quite satisfied with this explanation, as often happens, because such authorities, too, can be so plagued by that urge for inattentiveness about which I have spoken, that they are not in the least concerned with getting to the bottom of things. And a week later Battenberg was forced to abdicate.

You see, this is quite an insignificant event from a historian's point of view, but it is nevertheless an event that throws light in the deepest sense. And if it had not happened 'by chance' — as is so easily said — that the doctor wormed these things out of Voidarevich by psychoanalysis, it would never have come to light. The threads of karma run in remarkable ways. We know from the psychoanalysis that Voidarevich — who gave away a number of other things of a similar kind — was destined, had everything gone according to plan for the descendants of the ancient voivodes in Bosnia and Herzegovina, to assume the rank of voivode himself. Because of the light that dawned on the doctor we know how the threads ran from Russia in the East to Herzegovina and Bosnia and we can eavesdrop on the origins of a story that later on played an important part in history. For Voidarevich was in the service of Russia and was a party to all this from the beginning.

So we are dealing here, not exactly with magic but with the knowledge of how to utilize the situation and conditions of the physical plane in order to achieve certain quite definite aims. Voidarevich failed to serve his purpose only because he grew nervous; a great deal had been instilled into him and it was intended that he should achieve much. You have here a striking example of how to work in the world while at the same time obliterating the tracks you intend to follow. From this you will be able to grasp that forming judgements about world events is not as easy as is usually imagined. Those who desire to work systematically behind the scenes of world history know very well how to pull such strings and they are cold-blooded enough to make use of them in a way that suits their purpose. Much can be exploited in this connection. Only a thirst for knowledge and a will to learn can lead us to see the things of the world clearly.

In order to understand what many of our friends here are striving to grasp, let us turn our attention to what exactly there is that can be utilized. We will look at the manner in which the streams of the fifth post-Atlantean epoch work through certain externally discernible endeavours and facts of the present time in a wider sense. Let us start with the Russian people in the East of Europe. I said only last Monday that all the people of Europe have taken them to their hearts. In the Russian people, together with various other Slav elements, there lives — I have spoken about this a number of times — a folk element of the future. For in the folk spirit of all that is gathered together as the Slav peoples there lives what, one day in the future, will furnish the material for the spiritual stream of the sixth post-Atlantean epoch.

In this Slav element we have first the Russian people and, in addition, all those other Slavs who, though differentiated from the Russians, nevertheless feel themselves in some degree linked as Slavs with the Russian Slavs. Out of these links arises, or arose, what is nowadays known as Pan-Slavism, a sense among all Slavs of belonging together in spirit and in soul, in political and in cultural life. In so far as such a thing lives within the folk soul it is a thoroughly honest and, also in the higher sense of human evolution, a right thing — though the word 'pan' is thoroughly misused these days. For one who understands the interconnections it is possible to use the phrase 'Pan-Slavism' for that spiritual communion which, I would like to say, quivers through all Slav souls in the way I have just described. To speak of 'Pan-Germanism', whether within or outside Germany, is nonsense, more than just mischief, for it is not possible to force everything into the same mould. If something does not exist, it is not possible to speak about it. It might perhaps be posed as a theory and even haunt the minds of some individuals; but it is quite different from that genuine communion which quivers in the many Slav souls, varying from one Slav people to another.

Whoever, since the nineteenth century, has concerned himself seriously with certain spiritual knowledge, knows that in the East of Europe there is a separate folk element. Spiritual scientists have always known that a folk element for the future lives in the Slavs. If certain occultists belonging to the Theosophical Society have maintained something else, for instance that this folk element for the future sixth sub-race lies with the Americans, this only goes to prove either that these people were no occultists or that they wished to bring about something other than that provided for by the facts. So we must reckon with the fact that there is in the East an element which bears a certain future within it, that emerges as though out of the blood,

an element that today is still basically naive and does not know itself, yet prophetically and instinctively contains within itself something which will one day evolve from it. It is often present in dreams.

As every spiritual scientist further knows — not externally, but as a cultural fact — the Polish element comes forward in a quite particular way as the most advanced and culturally secure, because it is both political and religious; this element differs from all the other Slav elements in that it possesses a uniform, firmly-rooted spiritual and cultural life that is exceptionally vigorous and energetic. This just as a short sketch. Perhaps we will go into more detail later.

Let us return to what I have just described. In contrast to what I characterized just now there is the spiritual and cultural life of the British people, which is equally well-known to the spiritual scientist in its deeper significance. I mean the kind of cultural life as it appears before the world in British institutions and the life of the British people. This element is, above all, extremely political in character; its tendency is supremely political. One consequence emerging from it is the political thinking that is so much admired by the rest of the world; in a certain way the most advanced and free kind of political thinking. Wherever in the world efforts have been made to set up political institutions in which freedom can live — freedom in the sense we have come to understand it since the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century — there, ideas have been borrowed from British thinking. The French Revolution at the end of the eighteenth century was more a matter of feeling, of passionate impulsiveness, but the thoughts it contained had been brought over from British thinking. The manner in which political concepts are formed, the manner in which political bodies are structured, the manner in which the will of the people is led within political organizations that are as free as possible so that it can work from all sides — all this is expressed in British political thinking in accordance with its original tendencies. That is why so many new states in the nineteenth century imitated British institutions. In many places efforts were made to take over the British way of parliamentary life and parliamentary institutions, for in this connection British thinking is the teacher of modern times.

In England during the nineteenth century, let us say up to its final decades, this political thinking came to expression in some very important politicians who modelled their thoughts in particular on this political thinking. One thing especially became obvious: The salvation of the world could be brought about by this thinking if only people would devote

themselves entirely to it and allow nothing else to take effect in the arrangements of the various institutions. Therefore, politicians who may seem one-sided to some extent but who model their thoughts entirely on this political thinking and endeavour to work in accordance with it, appear as outstanding and entirely moral. Think of Cobden, Bright and others, not to speak of greater men who are always being mentioned; for in this field it is very possible to go astray as soon as a really prominent position is reached. That is why I mention those who have not gone astray in any direction but who are genuinely important in the sense I now mean. I could name many others. This phenomenon was really present there as an impulse right up to the nineties of the nineteenth century, and as such it is, in a certain way, the counter-image of what I described earlier as being borne by the Slav people. For this way of forming thoughts of a political orientation belongs in its character very much to the fifth post-Atlantean period. That is where it belongs and where it has to be developed. And those people I have mentioned have taken it up in the right way. On the one hand we have something that is made visible through good sense, intelligence and political morality, and on the other something that exists as a future folk potential deep down, not only in the soul but in the blood.

Let it be clear to us that what I am speaking about is not only my own knowledge; it was viewed in the way I have described throughout the nineteenth century by those who are concerned with such things. In those western brotherhoods I told you about there lived an exact knowledge of these things and of their connection with the stream of evolution in the fifth post-Atlantean epoch and its transition to the sixth post-Atlantean epoch. And in some individuals there was the will — we have yet to see whether for good or bad — to make use of the forces concerned. For these are indeed forces: on the one hand the talent to think in that way, and on the other a folk element for the future.

If someone wants to use these things, he can. Of course there exist not only those streams I have described but also others which flow side by side with them, and it is necessary gradually to point these out as well. There exist ways and means in the world of carrying out what I might call 'mass hypnosis'. To bring about a suggestion on a grand scale you have to place something in the world which makes an impression. Just as it is possible to insinuate an idea into the mind of an individual in the way I have shown, so too, by using suitable means, suggestions can be made to whole groups of people, especially when one knows what actually binds these groups together. It is possible to steer a force that lives in an individual person in a particular direction. This person may then be totally convinced of his deep

love of peace; and yet he does what he does because somehow or other a suggestion has been planted in him. He is quite at odds with what he does. In the same way, with the right knowledge, similar things can be done to whole groups; it is merely a matter of selecting the appropriate means. You take a force that lives but has no particular direction, such as the force living in certain Slav races, and by suggestion on a grand scale you nudge it into a definite direction.

There is a suggestion on a grand scale which has worked, is still working and will continue to work in a marvellous manner: the so-called 'Testament of Peter the Great'. You know the history of Peter the Great; you know how he was at pains to introduce western life into Russia. There is no need for me to describe it since you can read it up in any encyclopaedia. I have no intention of recounting external history nor of developing sympathy in any one direction; I shall merely point in the simplest way to certain facts. Much of what is said of Peter the Great is true, but it is not true that he composed that testament. The testament is a forgery; it did not come from him but emerged at a certain point, in the way such things do emerge, out of all sorts of underground goings on. It was thrown in amongst human evolution; suddenly it was there. It has nothing to do with Peter the Great but a great deal to do with certain underground currents. It is very convincing, for it vindicates the future of Russia — I say Russia, not the Slav people — by stating that Russia must extend her boundaries over the Balkan states and Constantinople, across the Dardanelles and so forth. All this is contained in the testament of Peter the Great. It is easy to be so moved by this testament that one says: This is no bungling effort, it has been given to the world by a grand gesture of genius! I still sometimes recall the impression made by the testament of Peter the Great, during a course I had to give, when I studied it with individual students in order to demonstrate the implications of the separate paragraphs and their influence on the cultural development of Europe.

Those who desire to work in this way are always concerned, not to stimulate just one stream but to make sure that one stream is always crossed by another, so that they influence each other in some way. Not much is achieved by simply running straight ahead with a single stream. It is necessary sometimes to throw a sidelight on this stream so that certain things become confused, so that certain tracks are covered up, and other things are lost in an impenetrable thicket. This is very important. Thus it comes about that certain secret streams which have set themselves some task or other also set about achieving the exact opposite. These opposing tasks have the effect of obliterating all tracks. I could point to a place in

Europe where so-called Freemasonry, so-called secret societies, had a great influence at a certain time when significant things were going on; certain people were acting under the suggestive influence of certain Masonic societies with an occult background. It was then necessary to obliterate the tracks at this point. So a certain Jesuit influence was brought to play so that the Masonic and Jesuit influences met; for there are higher instances, 'empires', which can quite well make use of both Masons and Jesuits in order to achieve what they want to achieve through the collaboration of the two. Do not believe that there can be no individuals who are both Jesuit and Freemason. They have progressed beyond the point of working in one direction only. They know that it is necessary to tackle situations from various sides in order to push matters in a particular direction. I say this in order to point out certain connections in an elementary way.

Peter the Great — let us return to him once more — introduced western civilization into Russia. Many genuine Slav souls bear a deep hate for all the western elements that Peter the Great brought to Russia; they have a deep antipathy against it all. This has grown particularly strong during this war, but it has always been present. On the other hand there is the testament of Peter the Great, which is not really his but which somehow made its appearance, and which is suitable for making use, by means of suggestion, not of individuals, but of whole masses of Slav connections, those masses in whom lives that antipathy towards the west that is symbolized by the name Peter the Great. So here we have two things at the same time in a way amounting, I must say, to historical genius: sympathy with the testament of Peter the Great and antipathy towards everything western. They work beautifully all muddled up together, so mingled, in fact, that their working can become extremely effective. And with this I point to another side of this stream in the East. I shall show as we continue how, after years of preparation, use can be made of such a stream from a definite moment onwards. Then there is one stream into which, as it were, two tributaries have been made to flow. As I said at the beginning, account has been taken of long passages of time. Once a stream has been brought to the point of being effective, it can then be put to use.

Now let us prepare in yet another way. I want to show you another stream that flows along in the West beside the one that has brought into being what is hitherto the most mature political way of thinking in the fifth post-Atlantean period. This other stream has been more hidden and has only revealed its occult basis from time to time, smuggled into all kinds of

public activities. With that I have to point once again to certain secret brotherhoods in the West. It is characteristic of these, more than anything else, that they have an exact knowledge of the kind of situations I have been describing and can instruct their pupils how things are going for the fifth, for the sixth post-Atlantean period, and what kind of forces are at work: for instance for the one the element of intelligence, and for the other the folk element. And they can show their pupils how such things can be used for one purpose or another.

These occult streams which live, as I have said, through the secret brotherhoods have, as one of their basic doctrines, the teaching that the English-speaking peoples are for the fifth post-Atlantean epoch what the Romans were for the fourth. This is a fundamental doctrine among these brotherhoods and they say further that, whatever happens, account must be taken first of the Latin element. This expresses itself in the various Latin cultures and peoples — I am not saying this myself but am merely repeating what has always been taught in the brotherhoods — and is destined to be submerged further and further in the materialism of science, the materialism of life and the materialism of religion. There is no need to take any trouble over these, for eventually they will disintegrate in the decadence into which they will fall. So, they say, their chief attention must be turned to ensuring that what they call the Latin race is in the process of total disintegration, that it is an element that is perishing; the task is to arrange and do everything in such a way that the Latin element will perish.

This view goes so far as to say: Those forces which push the Latin element down the slippery slope must be absorbed into all political impulses and also all spiritual and religious impulses. Of course nothing of this must show outwardly; but support must be given to anything that helps to free the world of the Latin element. They say that, just as at the end of the fourth post-Atlantean period everything was to be permeated with the Latin culture, so at the end of the fifth period the nature of everything must be filled with the culture that is to arise out of the English-speaking peoples. I am only speaking of the teachings of the secret brotherhoods and of what can, and indeed does, ensue from them. In addition, it has always been taught that, just as the Germanic-British element, as they call it, opposed the Latin; so will the Slav element come to oppose the English element, for that is the way of the world. Only now there is a ninety-degree change of direction. Whereas the Latin element found its impulse in the North, now the impulse strives from East to West.

We must realize that such things flow into much that is printed, much that is read by the general public, and into whatever else seeps into human social life. There are ways and means of bringing this about unnoticed, as I have described. For just imagine if this were to become known in certain quarters — it is, of course, unthinkable! It is just that things are expressed differently; it is a matter of exercising influence by means of suggestion. You can do one thing and say another, you can say something different from what you are doing, and you can often do something that seems to be the opposite of what is supposed to happen and of what you are really doing.

You may look upon what I have been sketching for you as some kind of spiritual atmosphere; indeed care is taken that it should be a kind of spiritual atmosphere. You might read something quite innocuous, but between the lines — this concept 'between the lines' can be something perfectly concrete — you find yourself reading something quite different as well; you learn something quite different and find you are looking at something quite different. So now people are immersed in this atmosphere and their thoughts form themselves accordingly. The thoughts of even the most intelligent people sometimes take on quite bizarre forms. Thus, in order to judge the way other people think, it is not enough to develop that naive enthusiasm of inattentive people, of which I have often spoken during these lectures; attention has to be paid to the kind of atmosphere in which people are living. This is perfectly real and is not that nebulous, abstract something which many people call the influence of the environment. Eucken, for instance, speaks of the influence of the environment without noticing that he is saying on the one hand: The environment creates the person; and on the other hand: The environment is created by people; which is equivalent to saying: I want to lift myself up by my own pigtail! The way to look at what is termed the environment in which people are immersed is to realize that this environment emerges in a definite way from certain spiritual streams. It is not the nebulous something that many people consider it to be.

Let us look at a case in point. You will have to forgive me, but I did say last Monday that I would not be able to make matters easy for you. We cannot avoid going into certain details; and you will understand the connection tomorrow. I want to read to you some passages from a letter written in the middle of April 1914 by Mitrofanoff, a history professor in St Petersburg, to a German who had been his teacher and with whom he had

remained friends. Imagine this Mitrofanoff immersed in the various streams. In April 1914 he writes a letter that contains the following passages:

'... aversion towards the Germans is felt in every soul and expressed by every mouth, and it seems to me there has rarely been such unanimity of public opinion.'

The following is a particularly interesting passage. Please pay particular attention to this passage, but not because of the name it mentions; it is possible to feel sympathy or antipathy with regard to this personality. I simply want to draw you attention to the formal content living in this passage:

'It was perhaps Bismarck's greatest political mistake that he did not want to be more Russian than those Russian diplomats who, from weakness and lack of understanding, meanly surrendered the interests of their country during the Congress.'

What a marvellous expectation! This man reproaches Bismarck for not having been more Russian than the Russian statesmen who attended the Berlin Congress! That is why it is necessary to hate the compatriots of Bismarck! Whatever you may think of it, this sentence is certainly most original. And because the good professor of St Petersburg indulges in thoughts of this kind, he can also write the following:

'As a reaction' — against the Triple Alliance that had come about in Central Europe — 'the Double Alliance was formed, which meant that Russia was associated with a vengeful France instead of the Triple Alliance.' ... 'For Russia the Balkan question is no guerre de luxe, no adventurous dream of the slavophiles. Its solution is without doubt an economic and political necessity. The Russian budget is based on export; if her balance of payments becomes negative the Russian treasury will be bankrupt, because it will be incapable of

paying the interest on its enormous foreign debts. And two thirds of these exports pass through the southern ports and the two Turkish straits. If these outlets are blocked Russian trade will falter, and the economic consequences of such a blockade would be incalculable. The last Italo-Turkish war showed this clearly. Only possession of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles can bring to an end this insufferable situation, since the existence of a world power such as Russia cannot be allowed to depend on chance and the arbitrary acts of others. On the other hand Russia cannot possibly behave with total indifference towards the fate of the southern Slavs of the Balkan peninsula. First of all, the little Balkan states provide rear cover for the two straits and, secondly, over the course of the centuries far too much Russian blood and Russian gold have been expended on the Balkan heroes for the whole thing to be dropped now: Such an act would constitute moral and political suicide for any Russian government.'

Connect this, please, with the various remarks I have made about the Slav Welfare Committee. Too much Russian gold has been expended! Mitrofanoff continues:

'One must, of course, not exaggerate the significance of Pan-Slavism and its ideals, but it does exist and it is doubtless quite vigorous; the demonstrations by the slavophiles in 1913 on the streets of so many Russian towns, in which even elements of the opposition participated, provide a clear demonstration of this.'

This letter of April 1914 then gives the following summary:

'Once more: The urge to go south is a historical, political and economic necessity and whatever foreign power opposes this urge is eo ipso an enemy power. For some time the Triple Alliance has been single-mindedly set upon this course towards war. In Austria the urge to go south is also seen as a

historical necessity, and the Austrians are just as right from their point of view as are the Russians from theirs. During the first half of the nineteenth century there were three directions in which the mighty Habsburg monarchy could expand: towards Italy, towards Germany and towards the Balkan peninsula. Since 1866 only the latter remains; Bismarck once again, this time perhaps unintentionally, caused Austria and Russia to face one another for a decisive battle, and by entering into the Triple Entente he placed the might of the German Empire at the disposal of Austria. Austria of course took advantage of this: everywhere and at every opportunity, if it was a matter of the Balkans, Russia found Austria standing in her way. The annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which made a deep impression in Russia, constituted not more than a page in the thick volume of Russian-Austrian enmity. Indignation was so great and danger was approaching so obviously that even the peace-loving Russian Government, despite its shattered finances, was prepared to go to war.'

He means in 1908.

'But the "Nibelung" by the Spree threateningly shook his armoured fist and Russia, not sure of her allies, was forced to yield. In the year 1913 the realization of the Slavo-Russian ideal at last seemed almost within reach. The Turks were hit on the head, the victorious southern Slavs pressed forward to Salonika and Constantinople; one small push and the matter was settled.'

This letter is really interesting for it points to a number of remarkable matters. For instance the writer gets all excited about the following:

'The workshops of Essen sent their cannon to the Turkish artillery; they were not up to the standard of the Creuzot guns, but nevertheless were very well made. And most important of all, German instructors drilled the Ottoman field

army ... It has now become clear to the Russians' — April 1914 — 'that if everything remains as it is at present, the road to Constantinople lies through Berlin. Vienna is merely a secondary question.'

April 1914! A number of other things are said which demonstrate clearly that in this head there is a dream of what is to happen soon. Whether the head in question imagined that the time was so close is another question; but this head, together with its body and limbs, of course, now set out to visit its teacher in Berlin. They spoke about many things together and I intend to tell you about a number of these. The professor of history said:

'If you do not leave Constantinople to us, war will be inevitable.'

He repeated over and over again: It goes without saying that the Germans will remain God's choice of teacher for the Russian people, and that we only have to keep the peace — that the Germans only have to keep the peace — in order to conquer by means of spiritual, inner superiority. But do not believe that you can conquer us. On my estate at Saratov I own a house in which my ancestors have lived for centuries; but I would set it on fire with my own hands before allowing German soldiers to be quartered there. We could get on rather well together if we were to share Austria between us, so that German-Austria became part of the German Empire while the other part of Austria was taken over by Russia!

This is in June 1914! We could show in a number of ways how thought forms come into being in a particular environment. Quite a bit has taken place recently that could astonish us. Where social forms are more autocratic, things that happen tend to emanate from single sources, whereas in other situations they arise more out of popular streams. Never generalize, for in one place it is like this and in another like that. We could ask, for instance: What is the basis for this peculiar, puzzling behaviour by a country like Romania? I am not speaking of the incident that gave the final push but of the stream out of which it arose. But I do not want to give what is nowadays usually called a 'historical' explanation, for the type of history that has been coming into being since the nineteenth century and

has now entered the twentieth is not worth a snap of the fingers. A true science of history has to proceed symptomatically; it has to show the different situations which are suddenly illuminated as if by lightning. I should like to point out one such lightning illumination.

Those who are knowledgeable in the field know that much that has gone on in Romania recently has been puzzling. This is connected with the fact that in the whole of the East a certain circumstance has been reckoned with that has dominated very many people like a suggestive idea. I do not want to characterize this by means of impressions; instead I shall merely tell you certain remarks made — I do not want to be vague — by the Minister for Interior Affairs, Take Ionescu, in 1913 to a certain Mr Redlich. He said, almost word for word, that in his opinion the monarchy of Austria-Hungary would not exist beyond the death of Franz Josef, and he would surely die soon. It would then be a matter of dividing this monarchy into its constituent parts. This was a firmly-rooted opinion and, in accordance with it, people's thoughts tended to go in one particular direction. It was another of those widespread, suggestive ideas.

An article written by a Russian asks what Russia can still expect from France and sets forth reasons why Russia can no longer expect much from France with regard to her own plans, and why Russia must become the victim of France if things do not change. This article was written by Prince Kotshubey and published in the 26 June 1914 issue of the Paris journal *Correspondent*. I have not chosen an article at random but selected one by a well-known writer who is thoroughly versed in whatever lives in his environment. The author asks whether it would have been better for Russia not to rely any longer on her alliance with France but instead to join forces with Germany once again. Prince Kotshubey discusses this possibility. But, he says, it would not be feasible to carry it out because of the Franco-Russian alliance which forces Russia to be the permanent enemy of Germany, her powerful western neighbour. So, in this head, the situation is reflected in a way that makes Russia an opponent of Germany as a result of pressure from the alliance with France, which in turn provides her with two alternatives: either to cancel the alliance with France in favour of closer relations with Germany, or drop her plans for expansion eastwards into Asia. He then goes on to say:

'But whatever surprises may be in store for us in the future, one thing is certain, and that is that the Triple Entente would only constitute a true political alliance if France were to enforce a three-year military service and if England were to introduce general conscription.'

June 1914! This is how that prince sees the Triple Entente that had gradually come about; for he thought that the alliance with France was no longer sufficient. The French would have to be quite strong, yet this was not enough; England must also introduce general conscription!

You see, the thought is so comprehensive that there was no time to realize it before the outbreak of war; but general conscription was introduced in England anyway. To understand the real situation in the world it is not enough to single out one thing or another arbitrarily; it is necessary to develop the will to look at those things that really matter. One person can say something far more important than a hundred others who chatter away like the blind talking of colours, repeating what they hear, and whose words have no effectiveness.

I have attempted, on the one hand, to show you how definite environments come into being and, on the other hand, to give you a few examples which show how people are immersed in these environments, and how it is necessary to get to know the environment if one wants to understand the thoughts that are expressed in one place or another. It is necessary, at least once, to thoroughly absorb the demand that is made of life as it is developing today: to develop, not the enthusiasm of inattentiveness but the enthusiasm of attentiveness.

We shall speak more about such things tomorrow, and thence endeavour to penetrate more deeply into our subject. We need these details in order to do this. It would be more comfortable to skim over the surface, but those who do not know at least a few actual cases cannot put the right questions to the spiritual world.

Lecture 3

Current Events and the Spiritual World

10 December 1916, Dornach

In order to examine, from our point of view, the subject we are dealing with at present, we must never lose sight of the manner in which spiritual-scientific observation — with all its significance for mankind's development in the fifth post-Atlantean period and for the preparation of the sixth — makes its appearance. For without paying attention to how materialistic man today is negligent with regard to a spiritual-scientific observation of the world, we cannot proceed to the source of present-day events. As a starting point for further discussions I want to show you the manner in which, in some individuals, a kind of compulsion comes about to look up to those worlds with which our spiritual science is concerned. It is important to realize that this compulsive winning-over of these people to a certain view of the world is only sporadic so far. Yet, even so, there is much in it that is extremely characteristic.

A short time ago I mentioned to you that a certain Hermann Bahr had published a drama, *The Voice*, in which he attempts — though rather after the manner of the Catholics — to link the world that surrounds us and is accessible to our physical senses with spiritual events and processes. Not long before writing this drama, Hermann Bahr wrote a novel *Ascension* and this novel is really in some respects a historical document of today. I do not want to overstate its artistic and literary merit, but it is certainly a historical document of our time. As is the way with karma, it so happens that I have known Hermann Bahr, an Austrian, for a very long time, since he was a young student. This novel, *Ascension*, describes a romantic hero, as literary criticism would say. He is called Franz and he seems to me to be a kind of likeness — not a self-portrait, but a kind of likeness — of Hermann Bahr himself. A lot of interesting things take place in this novel, which was written during the war. It is obviously Hermann Bahr's way of taking issue with present-day events.

Imagine that the hero of this novel represents a kind of likeness of a person living today, now fifty-two or fifty-three years old. He has joined in all the events of his day, being involved very intensely from a young age in all sorts of contemporary streams. As a student he was sent down from

two different universities because of his involvement in these various streams, and he was always intent on joining his soul forces to all sorts of spiritual and artistic streams. This is not a self-portrait; the novel contains no biographical details of Hermann Bahr's life. But Bahr has definitely coloured his hero, Franz. A person is described who endeavours to come to grips with every spiritual direction at present to be found in the external world, in order to learn about the meaning of the universe. Right at the beginning we are told about all the places Franz has frequented in order to gain insight into universal matters.

First he studies botany under Wiesner, a famous professor of botany at the University of Vienna. Then he takes up chemistry under Ostwald, who took over from Haeckel as president of the Monist Society. He studies in Schmoller's seminar, in Richet's clinic, and with Freud in Vienna. Obviously someone who wanted to experience present-day spiritual streams would have to meet psychoanalysis. He went to the theosophists in London and he met painters, engravers, tennis players and so on. He is certainly not one-sided, for he has been in Richet's laboratory as well as with the theosophists in London. Everywhere he tries to find his way about. His fate, his karma, continues to drive him hither and thither in the world, and we are told how here or there he notices that there is something in the background behind human evolution and discovers that he ought to pay attention to what goes on behind the scenes. I told you yesterday about one such background and I now want to show you how someone else was also won over to recognize such things. So I shall now read a passage from the book. Franz has made the acquaintance of a female person. She is particularly pious — Klara has her own kind of piety — but just now all I want to do is point out that this is of importance to Franz:

'It was more important at the moment to decide whether he should reply to her and what he should say. Should he decline politely and then wait calmly till chance should bring her into his vicinity? Or should he follow her advice and turn to one of the pious men, and then take this as an occasion to write to her once more?'

The pious men in this connection are Catholic priests, and he does attempt to discover whether their opinions and knowledge can help him find his way in the affairs of the universe. The book continues:

'But first and foremost he ought to make up his own mind as to what it was that he himself really wanted. Was he merely in love, and was therefore his inclination to turn pious nothing more than a hidden wish to please her? He had certainly not lied on purpose, but it could be that his feeling for her, which cast a brightness over everything, made all her attributes and ways desirable to him. Instinctively the lover longs to resemble his beloved, so that what she loves and values is lovable and valuable to him too. No, this did not apply in his case! Was he not on the way to believing before he ever met her? It was, indeed, unlikely that he would ever have made her acquaintance had that strange, to him inexplicable inner urge not drawn him gently into the church where he found her before the saint, herself almost a saint. Otherwise he would hardly have noticed her; did he perhaps not love her at all but merely the appearance through her of his own longings? So was what he now felt not love, not what love had meant to him hitherto, but the bliss of piety? But was he pious? He only knew that he wanted to be, but somehow still did not dare to, perhaps from fear of deceiving himself once again, since hitherto every desire had deceived him and, if he were to be disappointed yet again, there was no further wish he could aspire to! He longed to be pious, but whether he was capable of it was indeed questionable. Could he be as pious as those beggars in whom he so envied the staring bliss of their stolid worship? He doubted it. For that, he had tasted too much of the tree of knowledge. Could he be as pious as Klara? He was no longer in a state of spiritual innocence. But was there not perhaps a kind of second innocence — innocence regained? Was there not the piety of the one who knows his limitations, of the humble intellect, the faith of one who knows, the hope of desperation? Had there not lived, in every age, wise men, hidden, secluded from the world, associating with one another by secret signs, silently working wonders with their almost magical power, living in a higher region above nations, above creeds, above limitations, in the region of a purer humanity that was nearer to God? Were there not still in the world today, widespread yet hidden, knights of the Holy Grail? Were there not disciples of a white lodge, invisible perhaps, not to be entered, existing only in feelings, yet working everywhere,

reigning over all, guiding destiny? Was there not ever on earth an anonymous company of saints, unknown to one another, not knowing of one another, and yet working on and with each other through the rays of their prayers? In his theosophical phase he had already been much exercised by such thoughts, but evidently he had met only false theosophists; maybe the true ones could not be known.'

He had met a canon who had shown himself to be a man with few prejudices in any direction.

'Suddenly he wondered whether the canon might not perhaps be one of those true masters, one of those hidden spiritual rulers of the world, a secret guardian of the Grail? Only now did he realize that the canon had always attracted him, seeming to promise great revelations, as though he might be a repository of the words of life. The regard in which this priest was held; the timidity, the awe with which people spoke about him, the obedience shown even by those who disliked him, the deep solitude that surrounded him, the mysterious power he was reputed to have with which he could help his friends and damage his foes — though he smilingly denied that he deserved either the gratitude of his friends or the rancour of his enemies — all this went far beyond the importance, the power, the dignity of his office, of his external position. Some explained all this as stemming from "his good connections", others by his rumoured descent from an exalted personage; and yet the magical power of his glance, his presence, indeed even his mere name, remained unexplained. There were dozens of canons in the city, but he was The Canon. If anyone spoke of the canon, he was meant. Someone asking for His Excellency was not immediately understood. They still could not accustom themselves to call him that. To them he remained the canon. In processions he paced modestly behind the cardinal, yet he it was who commanded all the attention. If he did not appear at a certain hour for his customary walk, the whole town whispered: The canon has gone away! And

later when word went round: The canon is back; this seemed to be of the utmost importance for the whole of the city. Franz remembered a conversation years ago in Rome,'

forgive me for reading this, but Hermann Bahr wrote it

'a conversation with an Englishman who, after travelling the whole world, had settled in the holy city because, he maintained, he had found nothing more mysterious than the monsignori. One who could understand them would possess the key to the destiny of mankind. He was an intelligent man of mature years, of good family, wealthy, independent, a bachelor and a proper English gentleman; sensible, pragmatic, unsentimental, totally unmusical, inartistic, a robust and jolly man of the flesh, angler, oarsman, sailor, given to hearty eating and drinking, a high liver whose enjoyment of life was disturbed by a single passion, a thirsty curiosity to see everything, to know everything, to have been all over the place. There was really no other reason for this than to have the satisfaction of saying, whatever town in question: Ah, yes! Cook's put me in that and that hotel and I saw such and such and met this or that person of high position or renown. To make his travels more comfortable and ensure an entree wherever he went, someone had recommended that he become a Freemason. He praised the usefulness of this association until he thought he had discovered that there must be a similar but better managed and more powerful organization. Then he was determined to become a member of that, just as he would have turned to a different, better Cook's if such a thing had existed. He could not be dissuaded from believing that the world was ruled by a tiny group of secret leaders. History was supposed to be made by these hidden men who were unknown, even to their closest servants, who in turn were unknown to theirs. Following the trail of this secret world government, this true Freemasonry, of which the other was no more than an exceedingly foolish copy possessing inadequate means, he claimed to have discovered its seat in Rome among those very monsignori, though of course most of these were unaware of their role as a crowd

amongst whom the four or five true rulers of the world could conceal themselves. Franz still had to smile at the comical despair of his Englishman whose misfortune it was never to find those he sought; instead, ever and again coming up against none but supernumeraries. Yet he never allowed himself to be put off entirely. Indeed, his respect for such a well-guarded, impenetrable society only grew. He wagered that in the end he would be admitted to its ranks, even if he had to remain in Rome to the end of his days, become a monk or even have himself circumcised. For since he had everywhere sniffed out the invisible threads of a power which enmeshed the whole world, he was not disinclined to esteem the Jews to a considerable extent. Occasionally he seriously posed the supposition that in the last, inmost circle of this hidden world-wide web, rabbis and monsignori might be found joined in utmost concord. He would not have minded this in the least if only they would let him join in their magic workings.'

You see, he is searching! We are shown a person who is a seeker. And although this is not an autobiography you may be quite certain that Hermann Bahr met this Englishman! All this is told from life.

'Even in those days Franz had asked himself from time to time whether there might not be a grain of truth in the Englishman's foolish idea. Life, both that of the individual and that of nations, appears at first glance and from close to, to be nothing but a confusion of coincidences; yet seen from a little distance, from a higher vantage point, it is ever well planned and firmly guided. If we do not want to assume that God Himself takes a direct hand in bending man's folly, the mad arbitrariness of his actions, to serve His purposes, then there is nothing for it but to imagine a kind of middle realm which mediates His will. Perhaps there is a circle of men who rule in seclusion, through whom God works upon the world; stages of divine power and wisdom, sending forth rays into the murky darkness of mankind, so that in the end all is once more purposefully ordered. These lenses of God's light, gathering the creative spirit and scattering it forth into the world, these

secret organizers, these hidden kings, they it must be who transform all madness into sense, all passion into stillness, who render chance into necessity, give chaos form and bring light into darkness. Who in his life has not encountered people who seem indeed to possess a remarkable majesty and distance, who reputedly have the power to curse or bless with a glance, and who, however still they may seem, none the less appear to exercise their power far and wide? Often their lives are simple. They may be shepherds, country doctors, village parsons; often they are old women or precocious children who die young. There is something about them all that makes them uncanny to ordinary folk, something that gives them great power over man and beast, or indeed, it is always maintained, over all nature, over springs and minerals, weather, sunshine and rain, hail and drought. When our paths cross with theirs we sense with absolute certainty, at that very moment perhaps, or maybe years later, that the meeting has been decisive for our own life. They themselves, it seems, feel their power to be more of a burden, even a curse, but always a definite obligation. They live in obscurity and are glad to be left in peace. It is not hard to imagine them all linked together throughout the world, communicating by signs, or perhaps passing on the signs of even more mighty secret princes. Maybe they are quite unconscious of all this, or only partly conscious, fulfilling inner commands, obeying by instinct rather than acting from their own initiative; for they seem indeed to be not in control of their own power but rather overwhelmed by it. All these capacities appear when consciousness is dulled or even extinguished. In his youth, Franz had known people like this; they are not rare in the mountains. The Englishman's visionary fancies reminded him of them. Very much later it had occurred to him that perhaps even someone not born with these capacities might come into their possession; possibly by education and training they could be acquired. But he had soon been disappointed by the theosophical exercises. He had only been reminded of all this by the sight of the ecstatic worshippers in the dark church. Through practice these people had reached a stage in which sorrow, distress and envy were stilled; composed, comforted and strengthened they returned from prayer.'

As you see, Franz did not want to undertake these theosophical exercises; he did not want to find a transition to knowledge of the spiritual worlds by this means. But something about which we had to speak yesterday is beginning to dawn. People are being won over into recognizing the course of certain threads and they are beginning to notice that certain people make use of these threads. If only people like Hermann Bahr would approach this matter even more seriously than they do. Even the canon encountered by Franz did so more seriously. Franz was once invited to the home of this canon together with some rather unusual company which is described. We discover that the canon associates with all sorts, not only pious monks but also cynics and frivolous people of the world. He invites them all to his table. Franz noticed a number of things. The canon led him into his study while the others were conversing together. As we know, when dinner is over, something else always follows. So the canon led him into his study:

'The niece had retired, but the guest of honour, Uncle Erhard and His Excellency, seated in comfortable chairs and devoutly given over to the process of digestion, had still not reached a conclusion. The tales waxed increasingly risqué, the mockery more audacious, the allusions more obvious; nothing was spared and it seemed as though the whole world consisted of nothing but anecdotes. Disgusted, Franz turned to the library. It was not large, but very select indeed. Only the bare essentials as far as theology was concerned:'

of course a canon needs theology least of all for himself

'the Bollandists, many Franciscan writers, Meister Eckhart, the spiritual exercises, Catherine of Genoa, the mysticism of Görres, and Möhler's symbolism. Then philosophy; there was more of that: the whole of Kant including the papers of the Kant Society, Deussen's Upanishads and his history of philosophy, Vaihinger's Philosophy of the As If, and a great many works on the theory of knowledge. Then there were the Greek and Latin classics, Shakespeare, Calderon, Cervantes, Dante, Machiavelli and Balzac in the original; of German writers there were only Novalis and Goethe, the latter in

various editions, that of his scientific writings in the Weimar edition. Franz took out a volume of these and found in it many annotations in the canon's hand. The latter at that moment left the young monk and the Jesuit to join Franz. He said, "Nobody knows Goethe's scientific writings. Alas! The old heathen he is supposed to have been appears in quite a new light in them, and they help you to understand the ending of Faust as well. I could never bring myself to believe that he was suddenly just pretending to go all Catholic" '

We can forgive the canon, can we not, for wanting everything to be 'Catholic'; what is important for us is that he has turned to the natural scientific writings of Goethe.

' "merely for the sake of the pictorial effect. My respect for this great writer is too great, indeed so is my respect for any writer, to believe that any one of them would dress up in a costume just when he is about to pronounce his last words. But in the scientific writings every page shows how Catholic Goethe was," '

Let us forgive the canon.

' "without knowing it perhaps, and certainly without the courage of his convictions. When you read them you seem to be listening to someone unfamiliar with Catholic truths who has discovered them all on his own. Of course he does violence to some of them and there are some wonderful eccentricities, but by and large nothing crucial, necessary or essential is missing, even that hint of superstition, magic, or whatever you might like to call it, that a born Protestant finds so suspicious about our holy doctrine! Often I could hardly believe my own eyes! But once you are on the track of

Goethe, the unavowed Catholic, you soon find him everywhere. Observe his trust in the Holy Spirit, though he prefers to call Him Genius," '

Goethe has good reason for this, of course!

' "observe his profound feeling for the sacraments, of which he considers there are too few, observe his feeling for the mysterious, observe his gift for reverence. Note especially how he is quite unprotestant in the way he is never satisfied with faith alone; everywhere he urges that God should be recognized through the living deed, through pious works. And see his rare, most lofty and most difficult understanding, that man cannot be taken up by God if he does not first call God into himself; his grasp of this terrible human freedom of choice, the freedom to accept or reject the proffered grace, the freedom which makes of this grace a reward for the one who decides to accept it. Despite the exaggerations and distortions, all this is so utterly Catholic that, as you see, I have in many places been able to write the passages from the tridentine mass in the margins next to what Goethe says in almost the very same words. When Zacharias tells Werner that one sentence in Elective Affinities made him into a Catholic, I most certainly believe him. Of course I would not deny that there is also a heathen, a Protestant, and even almost a Jewish Goethe. And I certainly would not claim him as an exemplary Catholic, though he was more that than the insipidly jolly, common or garden monist that the north-German school teachers present to their pupils under his name." '

You notice, even in these circles a different Goethe is sought, one who can follow the path into the spiritual world, a different Goethe for sure than that 'insipidly jolly, common or garden monist' described and presented to the world today by the Goethe biographers. As you see, the path trodden

by Franz is not so very different from those you find interwoven in what we call our spiritual science and, as you also see, a certain modicum of necessity can be present.

May I remind you — I have often mentioned it — that the death of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria is one of those concealed events of the present day, despite all that occurred on the external physical plane. I have stressed especially that if the physical and spiritual worlds are taken together, then for them as a totality there was something present before the assassination of Franz Ferdinand that became different after that event. It does not matter in such cases what things look like in external maya! What occurs inwardly is the important thing. As I told you: What rose up as the soul of Franz Ferdinand into the spiritual worlds became a focal point for very strong, powerful forces, and much of what is now happening is connected with the very fact that a unique transition took place between life and so-called death, so that this soul became something quite different from what other souls become.

I said that someone who has lived through recent decades in a state of spiritual consciousness must know that one of the main causes of today's painful events is the fear in which the whole world was drenched, the fear that individuals had of each other, even though they did not know it, and above all the fear that the different nations had of one another. If people had seeing eyes with which to track down the cause of this fear, they would not talk as much nonsense as they do about the causes of the war. It was possible for this fear to be so significant because it is woven as a state of feeling into what I described to you yesterday by means of examples. Please regard this as a kind of sketch. But, drenching everything is this aura of fear. That soul was connected in a certain particular way with this aura of fear. Therefore that violent death was in no way merely an external affair. I told you this because I was able to observe it, because for me it was a particularly significant event that is connected with many aspects of what is going on at present.

I do not suppose that such things, which obviously ought to be kept within our circle, have been talked about all over the place outside our circle. The fact is, however, that I have been speaking about these things in various branches since the beginning of the war. There are witnesses who could verify this.

Hermann Bahr's book appeared much later, only quite recently. Yet in it there appears a passage that I shall quote in a moment, and I would ask you to pay attention to the following fact: Within the circle of our anthroposophical spiritual science, indications are given about an event that is spiritually very important; then a novel written at a later date is published, in which is found a character who always appears to be rather foolish. He is actually a prince in disguise, but he appears as a foolish person who performs lowly tasks. From a poster — he is living in a rural area — he learns of the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, whereupon he makes a remark which almost causes him to be lynched and leads to his being locked up; for any police force would naturally be convinced that somebody making such a remark immediately after an assassination must be a party to the plot. Though there are many miles in between, the one event having happened in Sarajevo and the other taking place in Salzburg, nevertheless to the police, in its wisdom, that man must be a party to the plot.

It now emerges that this person is a prince in disguise and that he owns a deeply significant mystical diary. The reason for the remark he made also emerges. He was actually a prince, but had found the whole business of being a prince irksome and so had disguised himself as old Blasl who performed lowly tasks, behaved stupidly, even let himself be beaten by his master, and hardly ever spoke a word; he became talkative on certain occasions but usually he said nothing. Then when he was being investigated he was found to possess a mystical manuscript which he had written himself. The book continues:

'The enchanted, now disenchanting prince, still in his old clothes, and still the same old fellow, too, though somehow different now that Franz knew they had been a disguise, said smiling, "Forgive me the deception which for me was none. I ceased to be the Infante Don Tadeo long ago. If circumstances now compel me to represent him again for a while, it will be a far more difficult role for me to play. For me, I really was old Blasl and, if I lied, it was myself I lied to, not you. That I should cause you inconvenience I could not have known. I am sorry indeed for that. Of course it was the most stupid misunderstanding. Though I had never met him, I knew the

heir to the throne very well; he meant a great deal to me and we were in communication with one another, though not in the manner usual here." '

'The manner usual here' denotes the manner usual on the physical plane: We were in communication with one another, though not after the manner of the physical plane.

' "He had long gone beyond the boundaries of earthly work and stood with one foot in that other realm of purely spiritual activity. Now it was time for him to step over finally. I knew that in order to fulfil himself he could no longer stay. His deed will be done from there. I was only surprised that destiny had hesitated so long with him. On that Sunday when I stepped out of church, where my prayers had once again been rewarded with reassurance, and saw the uneasy crowd, I knew immediately that his liberation had come. What has to happen through him he can only bring about from the other side. Here he could only promise; his life was only a prediction. Only now can it really happen. I have never been able to imagine him as a constitutional monarch with parliamentarianism and all that humbug. He was too great for that. By this he has seized the initiative for himself. This dead man will now truly start to live. This is what I felt when I heard the news. That is what I meant to say. You will understand that there was little chance of making myself understood to those peasants. I preferred to give myself up in silence and am only surprised that they did not do for me. I was prepared for that — then by now it would all be over. There must still be something for me to do. So be it!" He had said all this in the same tone of voice, as it were without punctuation, only staring at Franz from time to time with numb eyes. Then he requested him not to mention his notebooks and to forget them himself.

"The truth is written in them, but only for myself; to understand them you would have to understand my sign language. What is written in them is right; only the words are

invalid." Franz could not help describing to him the impression the notebooks had made on him.'

For Franz was the only person in that town who could understand Spanish, and since the notebooks were written in Spanish he was asked to help out. There is a little gentle irony here too, since in Austria anything not immediately understandable is said to be 'Spanish'. Since Blasl, or rather the Infante, was suspected of being a party to the plot, it was necessary to read the notebooks, and since Franz had once been in Spain, it was he who had to read them. For Hermann Bahr had also once been in Spain.

So you see, since we must assume that Hermann Bahr had not been tipped off about this, that we have here an example of a remarkable winning-over of an individual to a recognition of these things, of an inner need growing in him today to occupy himself with these things. I think it is justifiable to be somewhat astonished that such things appear in novels these days; it is something to do with the undercurrent of our time. Admittedly, to begin with, only people like Hermann Bahr are affected, people whose lives have been similar to that of Hermann Bahr, who went through all kinds of experiences during the course of time. Now that he is older, having for a long time been a supporter of impressionism, he is endeavouring to comprehend expressionism and other similar things. He is a person who has truly been capable in his soul of uniting himself outwardly and inwardly with the most varied streams. He really immersed himself in Ostwald's thoughts, in those of Richet, in those of the theosophists in London, struggling to enter fully into them. Only finally, when his perseverance failed him, did he happen upon Canon Zingerl, whom he now considers to be a Master. He did indeed immerse himself to the full in internal and external streams.

When I first knew him he had just written his play *Die neuen Menschen*, of which he is now very ashamed; its mood was strictly social-democratic, and there was at that time no more glowing social-democrat than Hermann Bahr. Then he wrote a short one-act play which is rather insignificant. He then converted to the German nationalist movement and wrote *Die grosse Sünde* from their point of view. Again, there existed no more radical German nationalist than Hermann Bahr. Meanwhile, he had reached his nineteenth year and was called up to serve in the army; now he was filled to the brim with militaristic views and soldierly pride.

He understood, you see, how to unite his soul with external streams, yet he never shirked coming to grips entirely seriously with those that are more inward as well. After his period as a soldier he went to Berlin for a short while and there edited a modern weekly journal, *Die freie Bühne*. Chameleon-like, he could turn himself into anything — except a Berliner! Then he went to Paris. He had hardly arrived, could not even conjugate a reflexive verb with *être* but used *avoir* with everything, when he started to write enthusiastic letters about the sunlike being Boulanger who would surely show Europe what true, genuine culture is. Then he went to Spain, where he became a burning opponent of the Sultan of Morocco against whom he wrote articles in Spanish. Finally he returned, not exactly a copy of Daudet but looking very like him.

He told us about all this in the famous Griensteidl Café which has offered hospitality to all sorts of famous people since 1848 when Lenau, Anastasius Grün and others went in and out there. Even the waiters in this cafe were famous; everybody knew Franz, and later Heinrich, of Griensteidl's! Now it has been demolished, but because Hermann Bahr talked so much there about the way in which his soul had entered into the spirit of France and about that sunlike being Boulanger, someone else had grown rebellious, and when Griensteidl's was pulled down Karl Kraus wrote a pamphlet *Literature Demolished*. I still remember vividly how Hermann Bahr told us about the grand impressions he had gained and how he, the lad from Linz, had been the proud owner of the handsomest artist's face in the whole of Paris. He spoke enthusiastically about Maurice Barrès and stood up in the most intense way for the French youth movement; through the outpouring of a single heart filled with ardour we gained an experience of the total will-force of a whole literary movement. Then, in Vienna together with others, he founded a weekly journal himself, to which he contributed some really important articles. He became increasingly profound yet, with him, superficiality always seemed to go hand in hand with profundity. Thus he never stopped changing: from social democrat to German nationalist, from a militaristic disposition to a glowing admiration for Boulanger, then discipleship of Maurice Barrès and others; and after a later transformation he began to appreciate impressionist art. From time to time he returned to Berlin, but always departed again as quickly as possible; it was the one place he could not tolerate. Vienna, on the other hand, he loved dreadfully, and he expressed this love in many ways.

In more recent years his beloved friends in Danzig have invited him a number of times to lecture on expressionism, something they are said to have understood exceedingly well; and the lectures are included in his

book on expressionism. He also enthuses about Goethe's scientific writings and shows that he has drawn a little nearer to what we are coming to know as Anthroposophy; but in his case it is only a beginning. I might add, by the way, that his recent book about expressionism is full of praise for his Danzig friends — of course, so that they should stand out favourably in comparison with the Berliners.

Lately it has been said that Hermann Bahr has converted to Catholicism. I don't suppose he will be all that Catholic though — perhaps about as much as he was boulangistic in days gone by. But he is a human being! You have now seen in his most recent novel that through his very worldliness, through his longing to learn about everything in his own way, he has now been touched by the necessity to discover something about man's ascent into the spiritual world and about the links between human beings that are different from those ordinary physical links; in other words, links of the kind we described yesterday.

You can understand why I find it to some extent significant that such a novel should contain not only general echoes but should lead to a point as concrete as the death of Archduke Franz Ferdinand. This shows that these things are far more real than is generally supposed. Just such things as this must show us that what takes place on the physical plane is often no more than a symbol of what is really happening 'behind the scenes of earthly life'. For if you read about what has occurred in connection with these events, in connection with this assassination, without appealing to the spiritual aspect, it will be impossible for you to understand that someone can be led to place such significance on the matter. But it is not yet possible today to speak about these things without some reservation; as yet, not everything connected with these things can be expressed. Attention may be drawn to some aspects only; to begin with, perhaps, the more external ones.

Let us recall what was said yesterday about the world of the Slavs, about the soul of the Slavs. The testament of Peter the Great appeared on the scene in 1813, or perhaps a little earlier, and was disseminated for good reason as though it stemmed from Peter the Great himself. This document is used to seize hold of a natural stream, such as the stream of the Slav soul, in order to guide and lead it by means of suggestion. Whither is it to be led? It is to be led into the orbit of Russianism in such a way that the ancient Slav stream should become, in a way, the bearer of the idea of a Russian state! Because this is so, a clear distinction must be made between

the spiritual Slav stream, the stream that exists as the bearer of the ancient Slav tradition, and that which strives to become an external vessel to encompass the whole of this Slav stream: Russianism.

We must not forget that a large number of Slav peoples, or sections of these peoples, live within the boundaries of the monarchy of Austria-Hungary. The Austro-Hungarian monarchy encompasses — let me use my fingers to help me count — Germans, Czechs, Slavonians, Slovacs, Serbo-Croats, Croats, Poles, Romanians, Ruthenians, Magyars, Italians and Serbs; as you see, many more than Switzerland has. What really lives there can only be recognized by someone who has lived for quite a long time among these peoples and has come to understand the various streams that were at work within what is known as Austria-Hungary. As far as the Slav peoples are concerned there was, during the last decades of the nineteenth century, a paramount endeavour to find a way in which the various Slav peoples could live together in peace and freedom. The whole history of Austria-Hungary in recent decades, with all those bitter battles, can only be understood if it is seen as an attempt to realize the principle of the individualization of the separate peoples. This is of course exceedingly difficult, since peoples do not live comfortably side by side but are often enmeshed in complicated ways. Among the Germans in Austria there are very many who consider that their own well-being would be served by the individualizing of the various Slav peoples in Austria, that is, by finding a form in which they could develop independently and freely. Obviously such things need time to come about; but such a movement certainly does exist.

Then, apart from the Slavs in Austria-Hungary, there are the Balkan Slavs who lived for a long time under Turkish dominion, which they have thrown off in recent decades in order to found individual states: Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro and so on. Yesterday I mentioned the Polish Slavs as those who have developed furthest in their spiritual life. I am mentioning only the more important sub-divisions, for I too can only work these things out gradually. In all these Slav peoples and tribes there lives what I called yesterday a consistent, primal folk element, which is something that is preparing for the future.

Seen quite externally, why was Franz Ferdinand rather important? He was important because in his being, in all his inclinations — you must take the external manifestation as a symbol of what lived within — he was the external expression of certain streams. In him there lived something which, if only it had been able to free itself, bore the deepest understanding for

the individual development of the Slav peoples. You might indeed call him an intense friend of all that belongs to the Slavs. He understood — or perhaps I should say: something living in him of which he was not fully aware understood — what forms would be necessary for the social life of the Slavs if they were to develop as individual peoples.

We have to realize that karma had decreed that this karmic path should be extremely unusual. Let us not forget that there was once an heir to the throne, Archduke Rudolf, on whom great hopes were pinned, especially as regards the direction in which many liberal and free-thinking people of the day were tending. Those who knew the circumstances and the person, understood that something was working through his soul which would have brought about the application to the Austrian situation of what I yesterday called English political thinking, English ideas concerning the way in which states should be administered. This is what was expected of him and it was also what he himself was inclined to do. But you know how karma worked and how what should have happened was made impossible. So then something else became possible instead. Now a man tending in quite another direction grew in importance. It is indeed not without significance if our attention is drawn to this: 'Here he could only promise; his life was only a prediction. Only now can it really happen. I have never been able to imagine him as a constitutional monarch, with parliamentarianism and all that humbug.'

Yet this is just how we should have imagined the other one to be! You see that karma is at work and we must see how this karma works in order to achieve further heights of understanding. The circumstances which could and should have been brought about — not because of the wishes of some person or other but because of the purpose of world evolution — by this soul who looked upon the Slav folk element with understanding (for the moment I am giving a purely abstract description), would truly have had a liberating effect on the Slav folk element. But it would, at the same time, have destroyed what Russianism wants to do with the Slav element. For Russianism wants to confine the Slav element within its own framework and use it as its tool. It wants to contain it within the confines of the testament of Peter the Great. The speed with which such things come to realization depends, of course, on all kinds of side-currents and peripheral circumstances. But it is important to have an eye for what is gathering momentum in any particular direction. Obviously, therefore, only those who understood the Slav element more deeply could understand what web was

really being woven, and also that those who wanted to destroy the Slav element through Russianism had to work against more healthy endeavours.

Matters become particularly delicate and tricky if they start interfering with streams and counting on methods that are connected in some way with the occult streams using the secret brotherhoods which exist all over the world. Some are more profound, as are those about which I shall speak tomorrow. Others only touch on these things but, even then, as they do touch on them, they must be seen as vessels through which occult streams flow. The society whose dissolution was demanded after the death of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the Serbian society 'Narodna Odbrana', was the actual successor of an earlier secret brotherhood, having changed its methods only slightly. I am stating no more than facts.

Here, then, is a contact between political strivings and a secret society which, though centred in Serbia, had threads leading in every direction to wherever Slavs were to be found, and also links with all kinds of other societies, but in particular an inner connection with western societies. In such a society things can be taught which are connected with occult workings throughout the world.

Why do we have to make so many detours in order to reach even a partial understanding of what we actually have to understand? Do not be surprised that so many detours are necessary, for a superficial judgement is all too easily reached if insight is directed to immediate events in which we are involved with sympathy or antipathy; all too easily misunderstandings and false ideas come about. What often happens to all of us? We are perfectly entitled to have sympathies and antipathies in our soul; but often there are reasons why we do not admit this to ourselves. Perhaps we do not actually convince ourselves on purpose, but autosuggestion often gives us good reason to believe that our judgements are objective. If only we would calmly admit to sympathies or antipathies, we would also accept the truth. But because we want to judge 'objectively' we do not admit the truth but, instead, delude ourselves in regard to the truth.

Why do people have this tendency? It is simply because, when they endeavour to understand reality, they easily meet with extraordinary contradictions. And when they meet these contradictions they attempt to

come to terms with them by accepting one half of what is contradictory and rejecting the other half. Often this means a total lack of any desire to understand the truth.

I will give you an example of how we can become entangled in a serious contradiction if we fail to understand the living connection between the contradiction and the full truth of the reality. In our anthroposophical spiritual science we understand Christianity to be something that is filled with the meaning of the Mystery of Golgotha, with the fact that Christ was condemned, died, was buried, but then also rose again in the true sense and lives on as the Risen One. This is what we call the Mystery of Golgotha and we cannot concede the right to anyone to call himself a Christian unless he recognizes this too. What, though, had to happen so that Christ was able to undergo, for human evolution, what I have just described? Judas had to betray Him and He had to be nailed to the cross. If those who nailed Him to the cross had not done so, then the Mystery of Golgotha would not have taken place for the salvation of mankind.

Here you have a terrible, actual contradiction, a contradiction of gigantic proportions! Can you imagine someone who might say: You Christians owe it to Judas that your Mystery of Golgotha took place at all. You owe it to the executioner's men, who nailed Christ to the cross, that your Mystery of Golgotha ran its course! Is anyone justified in defending Judas and the executioner's men, even though it is true that the meaning of earthly history is owed to them? Is it easy to answer a question like this? Is one not immediately faced with contradictions which simply stand there and which represent a terrible destiny?

Think about what I have placed before you! Tomorrow we shall continue. What I have just said is spoken only so that you can think about the fact that it is not so easy to say: When two things contradict one another I shall accept the one and reject the other. Reality is more profound than whatever human beings may often be willing to encompass with their thinking. It is not without reason that Nietzsche, crazed almost out of his mind, formulated the words: 'The world is deep, deeper than day can comprehend.'

Now that I have endeavoured to indicate the nature of a real contradiction, we shall tomorrow attempt to penetrate more deeply into the subject matter we have so far touched on in preparation.



Lecture 4

Murder as a Political Weapon; The Outbreak of the War

11 December 1916, Dornach

Before continuing with the discussion we started a week ago, I wish to say once again that, if misunderstandings are to be avoided, on no account are judgements which are based on facts to be taken as something aimed at a nation as a whole or a nation as such. It is a total misunderstanding when again and again generalizations are made by applying to whole nations something that has been said about actual, real factors, such as personalities. Something is said about a personality who stands, or seems to stand, as a representative for a particular nation; then others identify with this personality by saying: I, too, belong to this nation. Most people have no idea what is going on when they do this. They are talking in pitch darkness. What is to happen with people's judgements if they make them on the basis of empty phrases without being able to pinpoint anything, because such judgements do not touch on any kind of actual reality?

I intend, so far as is possible, to direct the eye of your soul to three things. First I want to give you some understanding — of course it can only be some understanding — of the great spiritual streams that underlie current events. Then I want to show how these streams are working in different places and how they either work through people with the help of associations, brotherhoods or whatever, or more or less consciously through individuals. Finally, I shall indicate how to discern those characteristic elements which are crucial for an understanding of how the events of the physical plane can be explained out of a wider context.

Let us first adopt a somewhat higher standpoint so that we can encompass in our view that wider context. We find that many things have changed in proportion, now that we no longer see them as a chance patchwork of odd facts. For the history of mankind — even in its most painful events — is guided and led by spiritual impulses. But these spiritual impulses also work against each other and people stand within streams which often contradict one another. It is too easy to think that the wisdom-filled world order will sort everything out. If this were so, there would not exist in the entire wide sweep of the physical world something that in fact

does exist: human freedom. On the other hand, however, there do exist impulses of necessity, great karmic impulses which work in everything, and in our present considerations we shall particularly take into account the working of these karmic impulses. At the same time, though, we have to deal with the details and pay attention to the way in which affairs develop when there is a particularly great contrast at work which is significant for the continuing evolution of mankind. One such contrast is that which exists between the West and the East in European culture, and I have described to you what has developed in the West and also what lives in the East as a folk element for the future. These are real forces that are at work. It is true that most people know nothing of these real forces, but certain individuals have always been able to learn something about them.

Two things are possible. Either people know nothing of these real forces; in such cases it can easily happen that, through lack of awareness, without being able to do much about it in the ordinary sense, they become unconscious tools by letting themselves be used by others who, in their turn, are more or less swept away in the current and whose working is a kind of combination between the regular streams and their own egoism, their own ambition. These people are able to influence, by suggestion, those who are unobservant.

Or the opposite can happen; something that has been so important and significant in European life during recent decades: that there are individuals who, by some means or other, learn through the secret brotherhoods about the spiritual forces that exist and consciously misuse this knowledge for some other ends. Perhaps their goal is not even an end that deserves a morally damning judgement. Yet it is like playing with fire when people, who do not know how to treat spiritual impulses, work to turn these impulses in a particular direction. Such a situation arose in the second half of the nineteenth century, when various more or less secret brotherhoods, who were strongly influenced by the European periphery, formed themselves in Central Europe. They worked to a high degree with occult means. One of these was the 'Omladina', which achieved a great deal through the impulses living in it.

The Omladina was an association that worked amongst its members through the means of certain rites such as are used in the different degrees of these secret brotherhoods. In Central Europe the Omladina formed several extremely secret brotherhoods which were spread particularly over the various Slav areas, but also the Balkan states, and which actually worked with occult means in their ceremonial rites. They

achieved a great deal until by chance, as is said — but only as is said — the whole matter came out into the open through a court case in Bohemia. These societies, all of whom maintained links with one another, burrowed and stirred a great deal under ground, and behind masks they continued in existence. One such mask was the much-mentioned 'Narodna Odbrana' in Serbia, which was named so frequently at the beginning of today's painful events. This stream, which had already flowed through something that worked with occult means and which encompassed people who knew about such things and others who knew nothing, gave the impetus for much that has taken place in south-eastern Europe during recent decades. In the western, particularly in the English brotherhoods, there was much talk, during the last decades of the nineteenth century, of the coming world war, and it was always pointed out how important would be the events that were to take place in the Balkan countries.

Let me say something more to introduce this subject. For if we investigate only the spiritual aspect of things we lack the basis on which to frame the right questions, and we then do not know how the spiritual happenings are mirrored below, on the physical plane. This is the important question I now wish to develop further for you, after having yesterday called upon you to ponder deeply about the great contradiction of the Mystery of Golgotha. What I have to describe as an introduction will serve as a basis for a number of topics, and I want to stress yet again that I beg you not to believe that what I have to say is in any way aimed at a particular nation as such. Nobody can have more sympathy than I feel for the unfortunate Serbian people. Not only have they endured so much that is painful in recent times but, above all, they have for decades been the plaything of the most varied elements which have made use of what lives in this nation, for purposes of which it can surely be said: They are behind a misuse which is intended to turn those real impulses of mankind's evolution, which live in the fifth post-Atlantean period, in a particular direction.

I shall not go further back than the second half of the nineteenth century. Little is discussed nowadays which can really throw light on these matters. I shall give only a sketch, and in a sketch some things are described only in outline. I know how little inclination there is to go into the real facts, but some of them at least must be made known. So I shall go back only as far as Michael Obrenovich, who played an important part as the ruler of Serbia in the second half of the nineteenth century. He was an attractive personality of whom it can truly be said that he did not try to steer in an evil way those forces which are, of course, seen above all by one who

belongs to a particular people. It is possible, out of national or individual egoism, to steer the impulses of a people in such a way that these impulses become grossly overstrained; in other words the individual folk impulse is pushed beyond the point at which it can remain in harmony with the impulses of mankind as a whole. It is extremely difficult to hit upon the right measure in this matter. In the case of Michael Obrenovich it was so that, on the whole, his ideas ran concurrently with the good European impulses. But he needed these good European impulses only so far as he could go as a good Serbian patriot. In order to understand a certain one-sidedness in Michael, you have to put yourself in Serbia's position. You could say that if a man like Michael Obrenovich lives out his patriotism in such a way, this way would certainly be comprehensible for others whose birth, inheritance and education have given them a similar patriotism for a different country. I need only quote a few words about the ideal of Michael Obrenovich written by one who knew him well. Milan Pirotzanatz says:

'His political aim was not the creation of Greater Serbia but the formation of a confederation of southern Slavs under the hegemony of Serbia.'

So Michael was thinking of a Balkan confederation. This confederation was also discussed by those western European occultists who were informed and working in the very best way during the good period of western European occultism. And even though this ideal was opposed to those of many, it must be said that it was an ideal which was connected with certain real impulses of the fifth post-Atlantean period. Against this ideal of Michael Obrenovich there now rose up a greater part of Serbia's intelligentsia under the leadership of Jovan Ristic. From this Serbian intelligentsia there flowed an element that was different from that of Michael. Whereas his aim was to create a Balkan confederation out of the Slav forces of the Balkan countries without any assistance from Austria and Russia, that of the group led by Jovan Ristic and others was, at all costs, to place Serbia at the service of what came out of Russia, infiltrating the Serbian soul by means of suggestion and with the help of the testament of Peter the Great, in order to create a framework for Russianism.

The group influenced by the Omladina originated the slogan which claimed that a movement must be started which would work against Michael's efforts, and also that, at all costs, Russia must play the same role

in connection with Serbia that France had played for Piedmont when the new Italy was created. Just as France had given her assistance when Piedmont was transformed into modern Italy, so Russia should serve Serbia, so that out of Serbia on the other side of the Adriatic could emerge something new, but only under the guidance of what was to be included in the mysterious impulses of the testament of Peter the Great.

There are altogether about six million Serbs. Only three-and-a-half million of these live in Serbia and Montenegro; two-and-a-half million migrated to Austria earlier on. All these are surrounded and mixed with four million Catholic and half a million Mohammedan southern Slavs. Obviously clashes were inevitable. Just imagine the spiritual chaos surging and mingling there, and what it must have been like in this chaos to guide a particular movement such as that of the Omladina. Various things can be done if the possibilities are utilized properly. And those who use such means in the way the Omladina did, always pit one stream against another so that something else emerges.

Thus it came about that Michael Obrenovich met with terrible opposition, and that this opposition found an effective way of working against him by organizing a hostile movement with the corresponding hostile press outside Serbia, in Hungary. Since the Omladina existed not only within Serbia but also maintained connections in all the states of Central Europe, it is easy to understand how it was possible to silence it within Serbia if necessary and instead organize all sorts of things from the outside. In this way, in case anything should leak out, the possibility remained to be able to say: That other country organized it. This possibility always had to be maintained.

In addition to all this, Michael Obrenovich was deeply loved by his people; they loved him with elemental force. Such a force is also an occult power. To counter this love of the people it was necessary either to set up an equally strong love in another direction — but this was not all that easy to do — or to bring about something revolutionary. So it came about that to all the endeavours mounted by the Omladina was added the dynastic dispute between the Obrenovich and the Karageorgevich families. The Karageorgevich faction were based in Geneva, were in debt in a number of places all over Europe, and coveted the Serbian throne for themselves. They had the opportunity of making the acquaintance of all sorts of societies in Europe — there were many — and also of finding out what their impulses were. By working hand in hand, especially when you have at your disposal the means I have described, you can achieve a great deal. You organize things in such a way that different things can be brought

about from various different places which have to be situated in different countries. Thus Alexander Karageorgevich set up an administrator for his affairs in Szegedin in Hungary. This administrator was — shall we say — a banker. There was nothing much for him to administer, but one day he exercised his influence on a group of convicts — these things are done with the help of convicts or other such elements — and on 10 June 1868 these convicts murdered Michael. On 10 June 1868 Michael Obrenovich was murdered.

His only male heir, a nephew, was a very wretched fellow and hardly more than a boy, so now all the power fell into the hands of Jovan Ristic, who was very much a certain type of politician, a great politician from one point of view. Since he represented all these things in everything he did, it is possible to retrace the external paths he trod in order to achieve his internal aims. First and foremost he established, as a supreme principle, that Serbia was now to follow only those impulses which came from Russia, but that this need not necessarily always be done openly. If the Russian impulses could be better served by making concessions and establishing friendly neighbourly relations with the Habsburg monarchy, then there was no harm in undertaking some project together with Austria against Russia once in a while. In reality, though, everything was to be done in the service of Russia and this meant, on occasions, going along with the others. This was the supreme principle for Ristic.

At first his main concern was to establish himself and gain supporters. This was difficult, since the Serbs did not love Milan Obrenovich, and of course no one must be allowed even to guess at the secret threads which connected Ristic himself with the murder of Michael Obrenovich. One can put a great distance between oneself and events and yet be very close to them. Then the tracks have to be obliterated. He did this by bringing it about in some way that rumours were spread throughout Serbia claiming that the murder of Michael Obrenovich had been plotted in Hungary and the Magyars were the guilty party. This was believed without question in the circles which were important to him.

Into the stream about which we have just been speaking flowed yet another, founded by ten people in the year 1880. The intention was that it should work in harmony with other European streams, so it was numbered, drafted the manifesto of this 'Brotherhood of Ten'. It included the words:

'A confederation of all the Serbs presupposes the destruction of Turkey and the destruction of Austria-Hungary, the removal of statehood from Montenegro and the freedom of the peoples of Serbia.'

This, then, was the quite definite manifesto of these 'Ten', worked out in 1880. The subsequent plan was to weave this manifesto more and more closely together with the radical stream of Ristic, for he was now the right person at the right place: Since Milan was a minor, Ristic held the power. The two fitted very well together. Certain streams always worked to win the right man at the right place in order to achieve as much as they could.

The university professor Jovan Skerlic, who was also connected with this radical stream wrote, for instance: 'The freedom of the Serb people and the existence of Austria-Hungary are mutually exclusive.' I wish to speak only of facts and do not deny that a manifesto such as this is perfectly possible for a Serb from his own point of view. When Milan Obrenovitch attained his majority, circumstances brought it about that he wanted to free himself from this radical stream. He wanted to carry on with Serb patriotism, but in agreement with Austria-Hungary. So as time went on these two streams proceeded to weave in and out of each other: On the one hand the rather weak, though definitely existing impulses which emanated from Milan Obrenovich, and on the other everything that was connected with the pretendership of the Karageorgevich family. It is worth noting that while nobody from the Obrenovich dynasty was invited to the coronation of Alexander III of Russia, Peter Karageorgevich, the pretender who later occupied the throne of Serbia, was present.

The bonds between Russia and the Balkans were to be tied even more tightly through the marriage of Peter Karageorgevich with the eldest daughter of Nikita of Montenegro who, however, did not particularly relish this plan since he himself wanted to assume the Serbian throne after the departure of the Obrenovich. However, the Russians offered a million as dowry. Of course old Nikita pocketed this; he was rather partial to such little tricks.

I shall not trouble you further with external history at this point, except to mention that, after Serbia had lost the unfortunate war with Bulgaria which took place at this time, her realm was only preserved by the decisive

intervention of Austria-Hungary. The Omladina party could not have cared less about this. Their sole aim was to support the stream which was working to imprison the Slav element in Russianism. This party worked very well indeed. Some remarkable statistics were compiled by Serbs, not foreigners. Statistics can, of course, be made to say what you want them to say, but in this case even if half the claims are disregarded they are still significant enough. It was maintained that this Omladina party had been able to spread far and wide because they had carried out 364 political assassinations between 1883 and 1887 in order to rid themselves of those who would have acted as troublemakers if they had been on the physical plane while the party was expanding. As I said, this claim is made by Serbs, not foreigners: 364 political murders between 1883 and 1887. Even if only half is true, it is surely enough.

In the nineties this party underwent a further considerable expansion. After a long period of systematic work it took a mighty step forward when, on a certain day during the nineties, every Serbian town suddenly blossomed with flags. This caused great concern in Austria. What had happened? It was the day on which the alliance between Russia and France had been sealed! During the same week, behind the backs of the Obrenovich dynasty, one hundred thousand rifles had been ordered from France for the radical party.

It was during this period that a personality appeared on the scene through whom a great many influences worked, but for whose position it was extremely difficult to gain agreement from leading quarters. She had been singled out by Russia for certain purposes. However, the party which was the continuation of the Omladina was embarrassed to use, as an important tool, a personality of this type and in this kind of position. This was really going too far for the Serbs. I am speaking of Draga Masin whom Alexander Obrenovich was allowed to elevate to the position of his mistress in 1886. This person appeared on the scene at this time, and a friend of the Obrenovich dynasty, Vladan Georgevich, wrote a very significant and beautiful book from which a great deal can be learned: *The End of the Obrenovich Dynasty*. I recommend particularly the chapter which describes the remarkable weaving of the threads of world history, even though Georgevich half unconsciously only hints at this. He tells of an extraordinary visit he had to make to Draga Masin who was, of course, an important personage. He shows how the enchantment with which she had to inveigle those whom it was necessary for her to inveigle emanated from a particular blend of perfumes, which was suitably adjusted to the individuality of the person who was to be influenced by suggestion. If you

read with understanding this chapter in Vladan Georgevich's thick book you will gain from his veiled description many hints — in the occult sense, too — regarding the field of lesser magic. You will be astonished to discover how much can be achieved, when those who want to achieve something remain in the background and leave what has first to be done to the seductive charms of a woman skilled in the art of perfume blending. Even in the seventeenth century this played a considerable part in the politics of many a royal court. The history of some periods cannot really be written except by someone who is an expert on the effects of perfumes in history at different times and periods.

Then an event took place which throws some light on a number of strange karmic connections. The party I have described to you continued to work. A point was reached when, once more, by means of a plot such as that mentioned earlier, an attempt was made to assassinate Milan, who had long since abdicated but still played a role, and through whom, moreover, a number of roles were indeed still played. One of those condemned to death in consequence was Nikola Pasic; you know the name. He owed his deliverance solely to the fact that Emperor Franz Josef intervened on his behalf. You remember, Pasic is the name of the man who was Prime Minister of Serbia when the war broke out.

All these events took place because it was necessary for something to happen. The desired goals could not be achieved while the Obrenovich dynasty remained. So Karageorgevich would have to be established on the throne under Russian protection. But Draga Masin, who had meanwhile married Alexander, also stood under Russian protection. She had in the meantime become a thorn in the flesh of the radical party, because they had come to regard her as a disgrace. All this had been reckoned with, because those who had put her in this position in the first place were not concerned with establishing this charming person, gifted in the art of perfume-blending, upon the throne of Serbia, but rather with making the Obrenovich dynasty look impossible through its representative Alexander. So she had to be made to look ridiculous and impossible. Draga Masin had to be made Queen so that she could be murdered. Those whose purposes were to be served were those for whom, outwardly, Draga Masin was extremely awkward. The whole comedy had to be played in order to get rid of her, and it was Draga who had to play it. I shall not mention details except to say that they even included the pretended imminent birth of a future heir to the throne, though such a one was, in fact, never on the way. There should be mention, though, of the fact that the most

extraordinary personalities were taken on, whose task it was to set up connections between Geneva, where the Karageorgevich family dwelt, and the Balkans, and also various other connections.

Peter Karageorgevich had been instructed to remain quietly in Geneva, without stirring. In contrast, there existed in various places a whole series of intermediaries whose task it was to run the affair in accordance with Russia's wishes, and also to give it a face. I should like to point out here that there is often no need to attach any special significance to those who work in connection with these things. For example, there was an important intermediary from Montenegro who played a large part in the various activities undertaken jointly by Russia and Karageorgevich. He himself was not in the least interested in serving the radical Serbian party, or anyone else if it comes to that. He showed this later, in particular by offering for sale in Vienna in 1907 the numerous letters he had exchanged with Peter Karageorgevich in this fateful matter. So poor old Karageorgevich himself had to cough up 150,000 francs in order to buy them back.

I only want to touch on these things. When one day the history of these events is written — and it will be written — much light will be thrown on many matters by the chapter which mentions what took place then in the Hopfner Restaurant in Vienna, in Linz on 22 January 1903, and in the Biegler Hotel in Mödling in April; then it will be made known how the document came into being in which Karageorgevich committed himself not to punish the murderers of Alexander Obrenovich and Draga Masin, if he should come to the throne. Particularly important will be the revelation of what it was that Peter Karageorgevich signed on 22 January 1903, and of what was discussed by certain officers serving this cause when they met in the Kolaratz Restaurant in Belgrade.

After all these preliminaries the murder was committed in Belgrade in July 1903; it became known to the world in a different way. An important part was played in this murder by a certain Lieutenant Voja Tankosic. It is not without significance that the leader of one of the groups who were distributed in various places, in order to carry out the murders of numerous supporters of Alexander Obrenovich and Draga Masin, was Lieutenant Voja Tankosic. For perhaps you know that, according to an enquiry carried out in Austria, a certain Major Tankosic is named as one of those who organized the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo. It is the same Voja Tankosic, now promoted to the rank of major, who then had the task of murdering the two Lunjevitz brothers, the brothers of Draga Masin and then, as a major, played the role now known to the world in

connection with the assassination of Franz Ferdinand. It is important to see in this way, by means of real examples, how events are interconnected, and to indicate how they continue to work in subsequent events.

Once the dynasty of Obrenovich was out of the way, it was a matter of finding a means of putting Karageorgevich on the throne of Serbia. Pasic, for instance, though he had his finger in every pie, was not yet ready to agree to the ascent of Karageorgevich to the throne; at that time he wanted to put an Englishman on the Serbian throne. Even in eastern Europe there were differences of opinion. It is historically documented, for instance, that when the death of the last Obrenovich became known, the Grand Duchess Militza was heard to say: Let us drink to the health of King Nikita of Serbia. So there was an inclination in this circle to put Nikita of Montenegro on the Serbian throne. But when the time came to make the final decision Tcharikoff, the Russian attaché in Belgrade, said, literally: I have come in order to inform you that my government will only give its consent if Prince Karageorgevich is elected unanimously as King of Serbia at tomorrow's election.

I have now pointed out a number of facts in order to show you how things work when they are channelled into particular streams. It is necessary to have a concrete idea of what is going on in the world. Now let me proceed by what might be called the symptomatic method. We have to look into all sorts of things in order to gain a complete picture which can lead us a step up to the fundamental truths. Once again in connection with all this I must stress: You may have a standpoint, and any standpoint is understandable; but you must then be aware that this or that standpoint is the one you have chosen; you cannot then form judgements as though your standpoint were higher.

Recently I have often had to ask myself what might be the origin of certain judgements which crop up again and again. When I began these lectures I told you how painful it was for me to meet in a certain direction only unfriendly or at best uncomprehending judgements, and I said that the very people who make these unfriendly judgements with a particular bias are the ones who ascribe to themselves the capacity to judge things objectively. There is no need to look far to find the unfriendly judgements I mean. I must stress that I can understand every standpoint; but I cannot understand it when certain judgements which are anything but objective are claimed to be founded on an objective basis.

For instance, if it is stated that the diplomatic documents already known are of crucial value for deciding who is to blame for the outbreak of the war, then there can be no objection. But there must be every objection to the conclusions so often drawn from them. It is necessary to study these documents far more thoroughly than is usually done if a valid judgement is to be reached. I might tell you that I have closely studied all the Blue, Red and White Papers many more than a dozen times and yet I could still justify any number of judgements based on what they tell me. If only it had been possible to make proper use of the actual facts! All in all, I must say that the judgements I hear remind me of long discussions which end with the words: Never mind, the Jew will be burnt! Whether people are more or less intelligent, the voice that always sounds the loudest says: Never mind, the German will be burnt! And since an objective foundation can never be found for such grave allegations as these, the only thing to do is to accept that we are faced with a most important question: Why is it that such a large proportion of people forms judgements which can be summarized, if not literally then from their general content, in the words: Never mind, the German will be burnt?

Many elements flow together in this judgement, especially because it is pointless to bring out one or another aspect which allows the basis on which this judgement is founded to speak for itself. And still the question I am asking is in the deepest sense of the word a question of the heart and a question of the soul. I am aware of all the notions that arose when from a certain necessity I wrote my pamphlet *Gedanken während der Zeit des Krieges* (Thoughts during Wartime), which was intended, as it says in the subtitle, *for Germans and those who do not believe they have to hate them*. I know that it expresses thoughts — do not think me immodest when I say this — which some day, however far distant, will be recognized by history as those thoughts which ought to be taken into consideration. But I also know that for inner spiritual reasons certain things will not be possible until, at least in certain quarters, there grows a sense for the rightness of these thoughts. Those who do not wish to be convinced by the inner gravity of such thoughts will find themselves facing lessons from many sides.

One important lesson will be shared with the world when the manifestos of such people as Lloyd George come to be realized. Possibly many other lessons will be needed as well. Certain people in the periphery will also be faced with such lessons. Much could be carried out differently if only people would not allow themselves to be so very stupefied by the judgements I have described. What I am telling you is really true. Many a

solution will come about because the judgement reached in certain quarters will be steered towards the direction just mentioned. What purpose is served if an Englishman gives his support to a particular personality through whom certain influences are working, and if this Englishman is then personally offended when that personality is characterized in an objective way? English culture itself has brought it about that political thinking can be formed in a particular way, and it is because of this that much that serves certain purposes can be concealed behind this thinking. The extraordinary situation is: that for certain impulses which stem from western Europe the political thinking of English culture must be regarded as the least suitable instrument.

It really is so that, on the one hand, there exists the task which the English people are called upon to perform during the fifth post-Atlantean period, and yet this purpose is constantly being thwarted from quite another direction. And though there are indeed beautiful voices in the orchestra, as I described the day before yesterday, there are also a good many others to be heard as well. Let me draw your attention to some remarks made by Lord Rosebery in 1893, not because they are particularly important but because they are a symptomatic expression of something that does actually exist. Lord Rosebery said:

'It is said that our Empire is large enough and that we possess sufficient territories ... We must, however, examine not only what we need today but also what we shall need in the future ... We must not forget that it is a part of our duty and our heritage to ensure that the world bears the stamp of our people and not that of any other ...'

It is important to know that such voices, too, join in the orchestra of the world. Lord Rosebery himself was not particularly important in this direction, but the way he spoke in this tone was a good example of what I wanted to point out. It is important that a pretension of this kind should ring forth, not from a people but from an individual who is backed by various concealed groups, a pretension that the whole world must be stamped with the mark of the English spirit. It is nothing other than an echo of what had always been taught in some secret brotherhoods in words such as the following: The Latin element is now decadent; it may be

left to itself and it will trouble us no more. The fifth post-Atlantean period belongs to the English-speaking peoples alone; it is for them to make the world into something which stems from them.

The firm doctrine which had come into being in the secret brotherhoods must be heard resounding in the words of Lord Rosebery; for we must learn to look in the right places. What happens outwardly might be quite a comedy. But we have to see through the comedy and not regard it as something that can bring blessing to the world.

If somebody defends the standpoint of Lord Rosebery, there is no need to enter into any discussion with him, for discussion is quite unnecessary in such matters. Neither is it possible to say that no one has the right to such a standpoint. Everyone has the right to take up Lord Rosebery's standpoint. But he ought then to say: My aim is to make the world English; and not: I am fighting for the freedom and rights of the small nations. This is what matters. It is not difficult to understand Lord Rosebery from his own standpoint. But someone who does not share this standpoint must, instead, take up another. In consequence, there is no agreement between these two standpoints, and the matter has to be balanced out by the means the world has at its disposal for such matters. Under certain circumstances such standpoints of necessity even lead to the outbreak of war. This is perfectly obvious, since it would otherwise be possible to demand that the opposition subject itself voluntarily to one's own standpoint. But if their standpoint prevents them from doing this, conflicts arise. So I am describing here only standpoints, for we are dealing not with objective judgements but simply with choosing between two possibilities.

I can, for instance, very well comprehend the standpoint of the French Minister Hanotaux expressed in his book on Fachoda and the partition of Africa. He says:

'It is ten years since the work was completed; France has defended her position among the four world powers. She is at home in all quarters of the world. French is spoken, and will ever be spoken, in Africa, Asia, America and Oceania ... The seeds of mastery have been sown in every part of the globe. They will flourish under the protection of heaven.'

This standpoint, too, is perfectly comprehensible, yet obviously there could be collisions with other possible standpoints.

Now let us take another objective point into consideration. Bismarck never intended to follow a policy of colonialism. Germany had to be won over to adopt a colonial policy. She did not carry it on of her own accord but was induced to do so in a very peculiar manner from quite another side. I may go into this later. Anyway, it was certainly not in accordance with the character of the German people to bring about collisions in this respect. Fichte, in his famous speeches to the German nation, said expressly: Germany will never argue with a nation who speaks about the freedom of the seas while actually meaning that it intends to defend the seas against all comers. Above all it was known in France that the tendency was not to oppose the aim expressed by Hanotaux but to let France pursue in peace her path as a colonizing nation. In Minister Hanotaux's book there is also the following passage:

'It will be a matter for history to decide what was the leading idea of Germany and her Government during the complicated dispute which accompanied the partition of Africa and the final phase of French colonial policy. It may be assumed that, to begin with, Bismarck and his politicians watched with satisfaction as France entered into distant and difficult enterprises which for years ahead would fully occupy the attention of country and Government alike. However, it is not certain that this calculation proved to be right in the long run, since Germany for her part eventually followed the same path, though rather too late, and attempted to win back the time lost. If this country, at her own discretion,'

Note that he says 'at her own discretion'.

'left the colonial initiative to others, she should not now be surprised that they took the best territories for themselves.'

Of course this standpoint is perfectly comprehensible, but it also contains the admission that Germany, at her own discretion, left the best territories to the colonial policy of France.

Please do not base any judgements on the details I am giving you, for not until I have gathered them all together will a total picture emerge.

Now let us ask how it is possible to construe — as is often done so utterly irresponsibly — any connection between the events of 24 and 25 July 1914 and those of the days that followed. You have no idea how excessively irresponsible it is to seek a simple continuity in these events, thus believing that without more ado the great World War came about, or had to come about, as a result of Austria's ultimatum to Serbia. There was a lot more to it than that; a great many things had to be in preparation for decades. It is necessary to develop an eye for all kinds of things that happened, and to pay attention to them. I should like to advise those gentlemen who simply make judgements about all the many books, as in the example I gave you, to do their reading, not in the way it is often done today but in such a way that they notice what things were at work. To do this, as you probably know, particular attention must be paid to a number of things. For the present I do not mind laying myself open to the accusation that I am making all sorts of statements that cannot easily be proved. But I can prove all these things quite well.

Read the reports of the conversations that took place in July 1914 and take note of how these conversations proceeded. In real life people's expressions also contribute to the actual words. In the case of politicians it is their expressions and gestures more than their words which sometimes really tell us what is meant; indeed often their words only serve to disguise what is actually being communicated. Moreover, reports are often more accurate as regards these incommunicables than they are in respect of the words.

So let me ask: Why did a personality such as Sasonov so obviously play two roles during all the negotiations? During the negotiations with the representatives of the Central Powers he plays the part of an extraordinarily agitated person who has to hold onto himself with all his might in order to remain calm, so that he gives the impression of one who has been rehearsed. Why does he play the part of apparently not listening and only saying what he has prepared beforehand, which never provides an answer to the questions he is actually asked?

Why does he play this part in the negotiations with the representatives sent by Austria, and why does he appear totally different when negotiating with the representatives of the Entente? Why does he listen to them? Why do we find, in the reports of what he said, sentences which were obviously first spoken by the representative of the Entente? Only compare the two! Why does he listen to the representatives of the Entente, and why does he know in advance what he is going to say when he is speaking with the representatives of Austria? With the latter he even went somewhat too far. During the visit of 24 July he said after the Austrian ambassador had only spoken a few preliminary words: There is no need for you to tell me all that; I know what you are going to say! He was embarrassed by what the ambassador wanted to say because his answer was already prepared. And why in this rehearsed speech did he emphasize so strongly that Austria must on no account demand the dissolution of the Narodna Odbrana — which, of course, continues the earlier endeavours of the Omladina? Just bear these questions in mind! Often it is necessary to ask negative questions.

Another example: The blame for the war is laid at the door of the German government. Against that, the question can be asked: What would have happened if what the German government had desired had come to pass, namely the localization of the war between Austria and Serbia? For even a child could tell by following the negotiations that it was the aim of the German government to localize the war between Austria and Serbia, and not to allow it to spread beyond the conflict between Austria and Serbia. So we can ask: What would have happened if events had gone as the German government wished? We should all answer this question conscientiously.

There is another question which also requires a conscientious answer. In order to localize the war, one thing was necessary: Russia should have kept quiet; she should have refrained from interfering. If Russia had not interfered, the war could have been localized. Of course, other constraints play into this from other directions, but these constraints have nothing to do with the will of human beings or with the question of apportioning blame. Why, in the discussions between Sir Edward Grey and all the others, does the viewpoint of localization never put in an appearance, at least not seriously? Why, instead, even as early as 23 July, does the viewpoint arise: Russia must be satisfied? We never hear the viewpoint that Austria might be left alone with Serbia; always we hear that Russia cannot possibly be expected to leave Serbia alone. The viewpoint of localization was not

brought up, even when Austria gave her binding promise not to attack the territorial integrity of Serbia. Is it possible to say that this was not believed? Even then they could have waited! It has happened before — only think of earlier events — that countries have been left to get on with their quarrel, and afterwards a conference has been called. Why does it immediately become the task of those with whom Sir Edward Grey speaks to keep on defining the problem as a Russian one? This is another question that must be answered by those who want to examine this affair conscientiously.

This now brings us to the important point of the relationship between Central Europe, England, America, and so on — in other words to everything that is connected with the words of Lord Rosebery, everything that proceeds from them and also what lies concealed behind them. We also come to the fear nations had of one another, that I described yesterday.

It would be going too far to explain this fully today; but I shall certainly have to go into it before bringing this discussion to the culmination it ought to reach. Let me merely remark that certain things happened from which the only sensible conclusion to be drawn later turned out to be the correct one, namely that behind those who were, in a way, the puppets there stood in England a powerful and influential group of people who pushed matters doggedly towards a war with Germany and through whom the way was paved for the world war that had always been prophesied. For of course the way can be paved for what it is intended should happen. So there arose in the minds of a number of people in Central Europe, particularly in Germany, the firm conviction which was connected with a strong fear, that a war in which Germany and England would confront each other would definitely be brought about at a suitable moment by a certain group in England. This had nothing to do with a longing to start a war with England at all costs. From the German standpoint such a longing would have been utter nonsense. Yet it was the case that even those who only saw things superficially recognized, as a result of various events, that a war was threatening to break out.

So let me draw your attention to another point that is important for the formation of judgements: Until 1908, or even 1909, there existed in England extensive circles quite close to King Edward VII, who considered it an impossibility that Russia should ever be allowed to approach Constantinople or enjoy free passage through the Dardanelles in the way

she desired. But then an event took place which changed much during the course of only a few months. Two people spoke to one another one of whom understood a very great deal about interpreting the signs. This was the attempt to gain Austria's agreement to free Russian passage through the Dardanelles in compensation for the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This was Russia's aim, and Izvolski, who is an intelligent man but thought himself even more intelligent than he really is, really believed at that time that he had in his hands Austria's agreement to this Russian demand, despite English endeavours to the contrary. But this was not the case, so another course had to be taken.

This was one of the important events. There were many others. Everything that has happened in recent years is full of deceptions, and many of these are to be found in the periphery. There is no escaping this fact. And when you have struggled honestly and fairly with the various papers, which of course only describe the final phases of the tragedy, when you have studied them, as I have, twelve, fifteen or even twenty times, it is impossible to avoid realizing how powerful was the group who, like an outpost for mighty impulses, stood behind the puppets in the foreground. These latter are, of course, perfectly honest people, yet they are puppets, and now they will vanish into obscurity so that Europe can start to convince herself of what is still to come.

Still, a situation had now been reached in Central Europe that prompted the question: Will it be possible for enough honest people to come to the surface through selection in order to overcome that powerful group, or not? Also, there were people who were worried because they foresaw that there would be a coalition between Russia, France and England if a war were to break out. I really wonder whether there is any need for surprise that these people were worried. There is much about which one may be surprised, but this particular thing really is not surprising. Those wise gentlemen who study all the official papers could, it seems to me, at least discover something that was even discovered by the author of that celebrated article which was awarded a prize by the University of Berne, namely, that for England's part the war was made absolutely unavoidable when Belgium's neutrality was violated. Absolutely everything points to the fact that there was no reason that could have been candidly presented to the English people. For the reasons that did exist could not on any account be mentioned! If any English minister had presented Parliament with the real reasons, he would have been swept away by public opinion. That is why Sir Edward Grey, for instance, had to give such peculiar speeches.

It is easy and reasonable to maintain that the English people did not want a war. Indeed it hardly needs saying, for it is obvious and everybody knows it. No one who really points to the true facts can maintain that the English people wanted such a war. On the contrary, anyone voicing the real reasons would have been swept away by public opinion. Something quite different was needed — a reason which the English people could accept, and that was the violation of Belgian neutrality. But this first had to be brought about. It is really true that Sir Edward Grey could have prevented it with a single sentence. History will one day show that the neutrality of Belgium would never have been violated if Sir Edward Grey had made the declaration that it would have been quite easy for him to make, if he had been in a position to follow his own inclination. But since he was unable to follow his own inclination but had to obey an impulse which came from another side, he had to make the declaration which made it necessary for the neutrality of Belgium to be violated. Georg Brandes pointed to this. By this act England was presented with a plausible reason. That had been the whole point of the exercise: to present England with a plausible reason! To the people who mattered, nothing would have been more uncomfortable than the non-violation of Belgian territory! Of course this does not apply to the people, nor to the majority in Parliament, but — well! — parliaments are parliaments!

All this had been in preparation for a long time, and some of it had leaked out after all. There were some people who had the most extraordinary experiences; for instance in April 1914 a German had a conversation in England in which he was given some strange information. I shall bring this up again in another connection. Since all this was going on it is understandable that some people were saying: We shall have to be prepared to find that what is worst for Germany will come from England.

Naturally these people then also began to discuss these things publicly in Germany, especially after the beginning of the new century. I shall now quote one of these voices. You will have to forgive me for quoting this particular voice, but nowadays one has to ask for forgiveness for so many things because so much that is peculiar is buzzing about in the world that one quite often has to speak in paradoxes in order to express the truth. I want to read you a passage from a book that was written in 1911 and has since become well-known. It discusses what threats Germany might have to face from England:

'Nevertheless, English policies could also go in another direction so that, instead of a war, an agreement might be sought with Germany. Such a solution would certainly be preferable to us.'

These words appear in a well-known book by Bernhardi, *Germany and the Next War*. You know that, together with Treitschke, Bernhardi has achieved a certain renown abroad. He is less well-known in Germany, but there it is. Let me read you another passage from his book:

'To increase her power by territorial gains in Europe itself is probably totally out of the question for Germany under the present circumstances. The eastern territories lost to Russia could only be regained as a consequence of an extensive war which we would have to win; and even then they would continue to be a cause of further wars.'

In other words the author considers that to seek territorial gains from Russia is the least desirable of all possible courses of action!

'Even to regain what was once southern Prussia, which was amalgamated with Prussia when Poland was partitioned for the second time, would be a highly doubtful exercise on account of the Polish population.'

This is quoted from a book written in 1911 which states that among all the things Germany ought to do should be included the firm determination not to start any territorial wars in Europe. This passage is from the book by Bernhardi, and for people on the periphery who speak about him it would be more sensible if they would look without prejudice at what the book actually says and, above all, seek to discover the context in which things are said. Though much is clumsily expressed in this book, a closer study of it would at least reveal that it would be more sensible to take things as they are, rather than in the way in which they are taken today.



Lecture 5

The Question of Necessity in World Events

16 December 1916, Dornach

If we were not a society whose task it is to observe all things from the point of view of deeper knowledge, indeed of profound spiritual knowledge, I would obviously now bring to a close the discussions we have been having and which were requested from so many different quarters. If it were a matter of anything other than deeper knowledge, then these discussions would of course have to be suspended until such time as the results of the important events now taking place were available.

It is, I believe, without question that every soul who is earnestly and honestly concerned with the welfare of mankind is awaiting with bated breath the outcome of the next few days. The facts will show whether certain sources from what we have called the periphery, the circumference, are capable of coming to their senses sufficiently. If they are not, then the whole of mankind — in the future, too — will be expected to believe that one fights for peace by turning down and excluding the possibility of a relatively early achievement of peace. If matters go in the direction that various voices in the press seem to assume — though no serious observer would still consider such an assumption — then no one would be obliged even to pretend any longer to believe that there is one jot of sincerity in all those declamations which proclaim peace or even the rights of nations. In the near future the world will have the opportunity to decide with full consciousness whether to see the declamations of the will to peace as wrong and untruthful and yet still continue to find them significant, or whether to turn to the truth.

We, however, do stand on the foundation of deeper knowledge, and so there is no need for us to interrupt our observations. We are seeking for the truth, and truth must be found at all costs. For the truth can never be seriously harmful or work harmfully.

Today I intend to put before your soul certain matters which give us the opportunity to make our judgement justifiable in a number of directions. In no way do I want to influence anyone's standpoint, nor their judgement; for we are concerned with looking the facts of the physical plane, as well

as the facts and impulses of the spiritual world, calmly in the eye. Some time ago I said that the question of necessity in world events would have to be scrutinized, even in the face of the most painful happenings. But Anthroposophy will never make us into fatalists, in the sense that we speak of necessities as a fate to which we have to resign ourselves. It is justifiable to ask: Did these painful events have to take place? But even if we feel obliged to answer in the affirmative, there is still no question of bowing down to these necessities in a fatalistic way. I should like to start by illustrating what I mean by a comparison.

Let us suppose that two people are arguing about how good the harvest will be next year in a certain area. The one says: The harvest will depend on the constraints laid down by nature. He lists all the constraints — the weather, and all the other conditions that are more or less independent of the will of man. The other, however, might object: You are right, all that exists; but what we ought to do is look at the practical question of how much of a contribution we ourselves can make. Then it is much less a matter of the weather and other things over which I have no influence; my main concern, then, is that I want to play my part in next year's harvest, so on my section of the land I will sow the best quality seed I can find. Whatever the other factors may be, it is my duty to sow the best possible seed, and I will make every effort to do so. The first man may be a fatalist; the second may not deny the reasons for the fatalism of the first, but he will do his best to sow the best quality seed. In the same way, for every person who desires to be prudent it is a matter, above all, of finding out how he can sow the best possible seed.

Of course, for the spiritual development of mankind the expression 'to sow the proper seed' means something vastly more complicated than is the case in the comparison I have just cited. It does not mean the application of a few abstract principles. It means taking the demands of mankind's evolution and recognizing correctly what is needed at the present moment for this evolution of mankind. For whatever next year's weather may be like and whatever other hindrances or unfavourable circumstances may apply, if the second person does not sow good seed the harvest will certainly be bad! So it is most important to recognize that at present the salvation of mankind's development demands certain conditions which, at the moment, by far the greatest portion of mankind is resisting. These are conditions which must be incorporated in human development so that a thriving and healthy development can take place in the future. And it must also be realized that man finds himself at present in a phase of development in which, within certain limits, it is up to him to cope with his mistakes.

In earlier times this was not the case. Before the fifth post-Atlantean period, before at least a large part of earthly mankind had come to the full realization of their freedom, divine spiritual powers intervened in earthly development, and it can be clearly perceived that this intervention by divine spiritual powers was sensed by human beings. Today, what matters is to show mankind how it is possible to reach certain insights and, above all, how to form a healthy judgement which coincides with the conditions demanded for man's development. The fact that there is a resistance to this judgement is one of the deeper causes of the present painful events.

Another question we shall have to consider over the next few days is why human beings did not turn to more spiritual inclinations a century ago. For had they done so today's painful situation would surely not have arisen. Let us postpone this a little longer and come to it perhaps tomorrow or the next day. Above all, let us hold to the knowledge that the painful events have come about chiefly as a result of this rejection of man's links with the spiritual world. Present events might therefore be described as a karma of materialism. But this phrase 'karma of materialism' must not be taken as an empty phrase; it must be understood in the right way.

Insights that are so deeply necessary have surfaced only sporadically during the years spanned by our lives — the final decades of the nineteenth and the first decades of the twentieth century. Certainly some insights — and much depends on insights — have been cast amongst mankind. Moreover, the attempt was made to cast them in such a way that a considerable number of people might have been included. But, at the moment, for reasons which will be mentioned later, people are still tremendously resistant to any kind of higher, spiritually grounded insight.

I now want to mention a book which appeared years ago. You might of course say: Many books are published, so why is this one so significant? At most, a book can only give people some theoretical instruction, and the salvation of the world is certainly not going to depend on whether they read it or not. Let me tell you that more is at stake than might be expected if certain ideas and insights are disseminated. Look in your soul once more at what I have told you during the last two or three lectures and you will be able to admit that this is so.

The book I mean was published in America and the author is Brooks Adams. When it appeared all those years ago it seemed to me to be one of the most important manifestations of new human insight. Even though the way it was presented to the world was spoilt by the fact that it included a

foreword by ex-President Roosevelt, one of the greatest phrasemongers of today, nevertheless the ideas in this book by Brooks Adams could have brought enlightenment in the widest sense of the word. Another factor to be considered in connection with European cultural life was that the German translation of this book was brought out by a publisher of whom it was known that he serves quite particular spiritual streams, streams which are definitely hostile and detrimental, for instance to our Anthroposophical Movement. This is not what matters, however. What always matters is to have a sense for the fact that it is significant if certain ideas are presented to the world under an appropriate flag of this kind. It is quite different if a book is published by, let us say, the Cotta'sche Verlag, a distinguished publishing house which simply publishes books or, as in the case of the book in question, by a publisher who brings out books which serve the purposes of a particular society. There is a great difference between dealing simply with literature and dealing with certain definite impulses!

What is in this book by Brooks Adams? Let me first unfold only the main ideas which are brought forward, I must say, quite generally and abstractly in the most amateurish way and only in so far as their significance could be recognized in America. Yet it is important to know that a bird such as this flies up from this particular spot. Brooks Adams says in effect: There are in the world various nations who have been developing slowly for long ages. In the development of these peoples it is possible to detect both rise and fall: they are born, they pass through infancy, youth, maturity and old age, and then they perish.

This is, to start with, no profound truth but merely a framework. However, what Brooks Adams then develops in connection with the evolution of these peoples in the way of developmental laws certainly has some significance. It can be observed, he says, that in the period of their youth these peoples necessarily develop two tendencies which belong together. To enter properly into ideas such as these of Brooks Adams we must, of course, distinguish strictly between a people as such and the individual human beings; neither must we confuse the concept of a state with the concept of a people. So, Brooks Adams ascribes certain characteristics to a particular developmental period of a people and he also considers that these characteristics belong together. According to him some peoples, in the period of their youth, have the capacity for imagination, that is the capacity to form mental images which are, in the main, drawn from within. They owe their origin to the productive imagination and not to considerations such as those of what we today call science; they are drawn from the creative inner powers of the human being. This characteristic of

creative imagination is, according to Brooks Adams, necessarily connected with another: these peoples are warlike. The two characteristics of creative imagination and a warlike disposition are inseparably linked in these peoples. Brooks Adams considers this to be a natural law in the spiritual life of these peoples. Peoples who are both imaginative and warlike are, as it were, a particular type.

In contrast to those peoples who belong to the imaginative and warlike type there are, says Brooks Adams, peoples who belong to another type. Here, creative imagination is no longer predominant, for it has developed into something we can call sober scientific judgement. Peoples who possess this characteristic of sober scientific judgement are not warlike by nature; they are industrial and commercial. These two characteristics — we are speaking of peoples, not individuals — belong together: the scientific and the commercial (for industry is simply a basis for commerce). Thus, there are peoples who are scientific and commercial, and peoples who are imaginative and warlike.

For the moment I do not want to criticize these ideas but merely mention that an opinion is asserting itself, though in a rather dilettante fashion, which years ago fluttered up, as it were, from American soil: Take care not to believe that the whole of mankind can be measured by the same yardstick! Do not imagine that the same ideals can be set for every nation! Note that consideration can only be given to what is founded in evolution, which means that you cannot expect a people like the Slavs, whose character is imaginative, to be unwarlike! Those of you who read Brooks Adams' book attentively, please note this latter example particularly. Judgement must be based, not on external appearances but on inner values, inner affinities.

The book is superficial if only for the reason that such knowledge, if it is expressed at all, should be expressed on the basis of spiritual insights alone. So long as there is a lack of spiritual insights, judgements about the evolution of mankind — which is of course affected by the working of spiritual powers — cannot but be one-sided. Above all, a great truth is omitted: On the physical plane we stand within the realm of maya regarding events as well as the will of human beings. As soon as maya is treated, not as maya but as reality, we must fall into error. And as soon as we fail to pay proper attention to developments within maya and to what resembles development within maya, we are already treating maya as reality.

If it were not nonsensical it would be very nice, for instance, to live in a season of permanent springtime, to be surrounded forever by blossoming, sprouting, burgeoning life. Why did the creators of the universe not arrange things so that we have sprouting, burgeoning life forever? Why do the beautiful tulips, lilies and roses have to fade and decay? The answer is quite simple: they have to fade and decay so that they can bloom again! In so far as we stand on the physical plane it must be clear to us that the one cannot be without the other — indeed, that the one is there for the sake of the other; and there is profound truth in Goethe's saying that nature created death in order to have much life. Since the physical world is maya there is no balance so long as we are in the physical world; a balancing can only come about if we can raise ourselves from the physical to the spiritual world. However, this balance is different from the balance we would expect so long as we hold the physical world to be a reality. So it is necessary to come to know the laws of maya, and to learn that within maya a balance can never be found, either by man or by any other being, if maya is not interwoven with something which lies outside maya but inside spiritual reality.

So, above all, it is always important to come to know maya as maya, to come to understand what it means when sprouting and burgeoning have to be accompanied by decay. In the case of nature it is easy to admit, since we see before our very eyes the facts we have to recognize. It will be easy to make anyone understand that in the summer and autumn of 1917 the fruits will ripen which were sown in the previous year's sowing season. If bad seeds were sown, then of course bad fruits will be harvested. So we will tend to pay attention to the quality of the seed and not allow ourselves to be so easily deceived by maya, as we are in other areas of human life where matters are rather more obscure.

Someone who points in a similar way, in connection with the life of nations, to the effect a bad sowing has on the quality of the ripening fruit, will immediately be met with prejudices. These may, for instance, be expressed as follows: I might suggest to someone that he should not be surprised at his bad harvest since his seed was poor when it was sown; he might then retort that it was his seed and that I am hurting his feelings by saying bad things about it. But I have no intention of hurting his feelings, for the poor quality of his seed might not be his fault at all. It is not a question of hurting a person's feelings but rather of stating an objective fact. It is not for me a matter of judging the connection between him and his seed-corn; that is his affair and I leave it to him entirely. But to know the objective facts it is necessary to inspect the seed-corn very closely and

face up to what is really at the bottom of events. If, in doing so, we can maintain a proper objectivity, this might even be beneficial to the sower. Indeed, the benefit to him might be considerable if we succeed in making clear to him the connection between the harvest and the sowing. What I want to make clear to you is the importance of putting forward the thoughts in the right direction, and of seeking them in the right way.

After this prelude, I now want to go back some way in history. The reasons for this will soon be clear to you. I have already drawn your attention during lectures here to a king of England who played an important part for England in the realm of maya, in relation to religious development: Henry VIII. As you know, he was rather good at getting rid of his wives, of whom he had quite a number. He also had — well — let us say, the pluck to break with the Pope who did not want to dissolve one of his marriages. This refusal by the Pope gave Henry VIII the courage to bring about a new religion for the whole of England, inasmuch as it depended on him. We have spoken about this on another occasion.

During the reign of Henry VIII lived the great and eminent Thomas More. He was a man of sublime spirituality, indeed of a spirituality equal, for instance, to that of another great man, Pico della Mirandola, as well as other eminent personalities of that era. Thomas More was an enlightened spirit, even though, despite his enlightened insight, he became Henry VIII's Lord Chancellor and did not despise Henry himself. I shall prove to you in a moment that he did not despise Henry VIII. He was a spirit whose illuminated instinct enabled him to accept maya as maya. Yet, like Pico della Mirandola, he was also a pious man. He was not pious after the manner of Henry VIII, nor after the manner of the Pope; he was a sincere, earnestly pious man and from his point of view rejected all the impulses and attempts at reformation which were already beginning to flicker during his time.

In a certain respect Thomas More was a faithful son of the Catholic church; and although Henry VIII, whose Lord Chancellor he already was, would have loaded him with every honour if he had complied with his wishes, he remained disinclined to turn to a new religion simply because Henry desired to take a new wife. For this he was not only deprived of his position, he was condemned to death, and the record of the court proceedings which culminated in his condemnation is extraordinarily interesting and very characteristic of that time. The wording of the sentence which condemned Thomas More to death is quite remarkable.

Most of you know, since it has long been published in secular books, that in Freemasonry the ascent through the various degrees is connected with certain formulations which also include the manner of death awaiting those who fail to keep the secrets of a particular degree. It is stated that under certain circumstances the candidate will have to die a terrible death; for instance, in the case of one of the degrees, his body shall be cut open and his ashes strewn to the four winds of the earth. These things, as I just said, are now the subject of numerous secular writings. Now the sentence passed on Thomas More coincides exactly with the formulation in respect of a particular degree of Freemasonry: he was to be brought from life to death by a most inhuman method. Yet this alone was not enough. His body was to be divided into as many segments as there are compass points and the pieces were to be scattered in all these directions. Part of this sentence was indeed carried out in this very manner.

Consider that this event took place at the beginning of the fifth post-Atlantean period. Thomas More was born in the second half of the fifteenth century and died in the first half of the sixteenth century. We may well ask whether all he did was to refuse the king the oath of supremacy — that is, refuse to recognize that the English church was independent of the Pope and commanded instead by the King of England. Is this really all he did?

Let us now turn to the most important thing he did, namely something which, even today, can have the utmost significance for anyone who looks at it squarely. Thomas More wrote the book *Utopia. On the Best Form of the State and the New Island of Utopia*. The main part of this book deals with the institutions of the island of Utopia, which means 'not place', or 'no place'. If we take the book in the sense intended by Thomas More, we discover that Utopia means much more to him than some imaginary land in the external physical world. We should not be so foolish, however, as to assume that More wrote the book simply as an imaginary story. Thomas More cannot be counted among the Utopians. He did not want to present people with some imaginary tale; he wanted to say far more than this, in so far as this was possible in his day.

The main part of the book deals with Utopia, but it also has a very detailed introduction. This explains to us why More wrote the book. There is an important passage I want to bring to your attention, so that you can see that he did not despise Henry VIII. It begins as follows:

'There was recently a rather serious difference of opinion between that great expert in the art of government, His Invincible Majesty, King Henry the Eighth of England, and His Serene Highness, Prince Charles of Castile. His Majesty sent me to Flanders to discuss and settle the matter.'

While in Flanders as an ambassador for Henry VIII, whom he calls an enlightened and great king, he meets a man he regards as exceptionally intelligent — spiritually, exceptionally important. So he asks him: Since you know so much and can assess matters so correctly, why do you not place your insights at the disposal of some prince? For More considers that most people in the service of princes are not very inspired, and that much that is good and favourable could ensue for the world if such inspired people were to place themselves at the service of the princes. The other now replies: It would be to no avail, for were I to express my views within some ministry or other, I should render the others no cleverer; instead they would very soon throw me out. In order to stress that this man, with whom he himself cannot agree, did actually exist, Thomas More adds: I met this man in the most varied company and he told us how he had once attempted to put forward his views in another company.

This is not merely an introduction to *Utopia*; Thomas More means something further. We have the curious situation in which Thomas More wishes to express criticism of the England of that time, the England of the turn of the fifteenth to the sixteenth century; the Lord Chancellor wants to criticize England. It goes without saying that someone who thinks as Thomas More does would not embark on a criticism of something abstract. In speaking of England he knows that the English people are not identical with what is meant by the configuration of the English state. He knows this very well and he also knows that the state is not something abstract but that it is made by individuals, and that the English people are not included in any criticism that might be expressed about the actions of these individuals on whom all the more important aspects of the English state depend. So Thomas More seizes on the best possible starting point for a concrete discussion, for it is certainly not concrete, but mere nonsense, to say: England is like this, Germany like that, Italy like the other — and so on; to say this is to say nothing at all.

Now, within the framework of a larger company, More brings this intelligent, enlightened man into contact with someone who is an excellent lawyer, someone whom the world considers to be 'an excellent lawyer', and so these two — the intelligent man and the excellent lawyer in the eyes of the world — enter into a discussion of English jurisprudence. English jurisprudence was then of course not as it is today, but no matter: the fifth post-Atlantean period was just beginning. The intelligent and enlightened man thought that it was extraordinarily stupid to proceed against thieves in the way considered proper in the England of that time. This man, who has seen Utopia and later describes it, thought that the whole way in which robbery and other matters were considered was not at all clever. He thought that the deeper reasons for such behaviour should be investigated. Thus he came to reject all the views of that time concerning people's attitude to thieves. The excellent lawyer, of course, could not understand him at all. Let us now occupy ourselves a little with the arguments of the intelligent man — not those of the excellent lawyer. He says:

'I once happened to be dining with the Cardinal when a certain English lawyer was there. I forget how the subject came up, but he was speaking with great enthusiasm about the stern measures that were then being taken against thieves. "We're hanging them all over the place," he said, "I've seen as many as twenty on a single gallows. And that's what I find so odd. Considering how few of them get away with it, why are we still plagued with so many robbers?" "What's odd about it?" I asked — for I never hesitated to speak freely in front of the Cardinal.'

Now let us hear the intelligent man speak!

' "This method of dealing with thieves is both unjust and socially undesirable: As a punishment it's too severe, and as a deterrent it's quite ineffective. Petty larceny isn't bad enough to deserve the death penalty, and no penalty on earth will stop people from stealing, if it's their only way of getting food. In this respect you English, like most other nations, remind me of incompetent schoolmasters, who prefer caning their pupils to teaching them. Instead of inflicting these horrible

punishments, it would be far more to the point to provide everyone with some means of livelihood, so that nobody's under the frightful necessity of becoming a thief and then a corpse." "There's adequate provision for that already," replied the lawyer. "There are plenty of trades open to them. There's always work on the land. They could easily earn an honest living if they wanted to, but they deliberately choose to be criminals." "You can't get out of it like that", I said.'

This is the intelligent man once again.

' "Let's ignore, for the sake of argument, the case of the disabled soldier, who has lost a limb in the service of King and Country, either at home or abroad — perhaps in that battle with the Cornish rebels, or perhaps during the fighting in France, not so long ago. When he comes home, he finds he's physically incapable of practising his former trade, and too old to learn a new one. But as I say, let's forget about him, since war is only an intermittent phenomenon. Let's stick to the type of thing that happens every day.

Well, first of all there are lots of noblemen who live like drones on the labour of other people, in other words, of their tenants, and keep bleeding them white by constantly raising their rents. For that's their only idea of practical economy — otherwise they'd soon be ruined by their extravagance. But not content with remaining idle themselves, they take round with them vast numbers of equally idle retainers, who have never been taught any method of earning a living.

The moment their master dies, or they themselves fall ill, they're promptly given the sack — for these noblemen are far more sympathetic towards idleness than illness, and their heirs often can't afford to keep up such large establishments.

Now a sacked retainer is apt to get violently hungry, if he doesn't resort to violence. For what's the alternative? He can, of course, wander around until his clothes and his body are both worn out, and he's nothing but a mass of rags and sores.

But in that state no gentleman will condescend to employ him, and no farmer can risk doing so — for who could be less likely to serve a poor man faithfully, sweating away with mattock and hoe for a beggarly wage and barely adequate diet, than a man who has been brought up in the lap of luxury, and is used to swaggering about in military uniform, looking down his nose at everyone else in the neighbourhood?"

"But that's exactly the kind of person we need to encourage," retorted the lawyer. "In wartime he forms the backbone of the army, simply because he has more spirit and self-respect than an ordinary tradesman or farm-hand."

"You might as well say," I answered,

Now the intelligent man speaks again.

' "that for the purposes of war you have to encourage theft. Well, you'll certainly never run short of thieves, so long as you have people like that about. And, of course, you're perfectly right thieves do make quite efficient soldiers, and soldiers make quite enterprising thieves. The two professions have a good deal in common. However, the trouble is not confined to England, although you've got it pretty badly. It's practically a world-wide epidemic.

France, for instance, is suffering from an even more virulent form of it. There the whole country is overrun even in peacetime — if you can call it that — by mercenaries who have been brought in for much the same reasons as you gave for supporting idle retainers. You see, the experts decided, in the interests of public safety, that they must have a powerful standing army, consisting mostly of veterans — for they put so little faith in raw recruits that they deliberately start wars to give their soldiers practice, and make them cut throats just to keep their hands in, as Sallust rather nicely puts it.

So France has learnt by bitter experience how dangerous it is to keep these savage pets, but there are plenty of similar object-lessons in the history of Rome, Carthage, Syria, and many other countries. Again and again standing armies have seized some opportunity of overthrowing the government that employed them, devastating its territory, and destroying its towns. And yet it's quite unnecessary. That's obvious enough from the fact that for all their intensive military training the French can't often claim to have beaten your wartime conscripts — I won't put it more strongly than that, for fear of seeming to flatter present company." '

Thus says the Lord Chancellor, Thomas More. We need hardly do more than copy down what he said then about the poor people of France. You could use these words to formulate the most beautiful sentences to present to the English ministers so that they can fulminate against 'Prussian militarism'. But these things were said at the beginning of the fifth post-Atlantean period, and possibly the juxtaposition of today's chatter with what lay at the beginning of it all might cause hurt feelings in some quarters.

You see, Thomas More lets us listen to the words of a person who endeavours to get to the bottom of things, and, moreover, in a way which could be disagreeable to some, even if matters are only touched upon quite superficially. He continues:

' "In any case I don't see how it can possibly be in the public interest to prepare for a war, which you needn't have unless you want to, by maintaining innumerable disturbers of the peace — when peace is so infinitely more important.

But that's not the only thing that compels people to steal. There are other factors at work which must, I think, be peculiar to your country." '

Thus speaks the man who has come back from Utopia.

' "And what are they?" asked the Cardinal.'

A new participant in the conversation.

' "Sheep," I told him. "These placid creatures, which used to require so little food, have now apparently developed a raging appetite, and turned into man-eaters. Fields, houses, towns, everything goes down their throats. To put it more plainly, in those parts of the kingdom where the finest, and so the most expensive wool is produced, the nobles and gentlemen, not to mention several saintly abbots, have grown dissatisfied with the income that their predecessors got out of their estates. They're no longer content to lead lazy, comfortable lives, which do no good to society — they must actively do it harm, by enclosing all the land they can for pasture, and leaving none for cultivation. They're even tearing down houses and demolishing whole towns — except, of course, for the churches, which they preserve for use as sheepfolds. As though they didn't waste enough of your soil already on their coverts and game-preserves, these kind souls have started destroying all traces of human habitation, and turning every scrap of farmland into a wilderness. So what happens? Each greedy individual preys on his native land like a malignant growth, absorbing field after field, and enclosing thousands of acres with a single fence. Result — hundreds of farmers are evicted. They're either cheated or bullied into giving up their property, or systematically ill-treated until they're finally forced to sell. Whichever way it's done, out the poor creatures have to go, men and women, husbands and wives, widows and orphans, mothers and tiny children, together with all their employees — whose great numbers are not a sign of wealth, but simply of the fact that you can't run a farm without plenty of manpower. Out they have to go from their homes that they know so well, and they can't find anywhere else to live. Their whole stock of furniture wouldn't fetch much of a price, even if they could afford to wait for a suitable offer. But they can't, so

they get very little indeed for it. By the time they've been wandering around for a bit, this little is all used up, and then what can they do but steal — and be very properly hanged?

Of course, they can always become tramps and beggars, but even then they're liable to be arrested as vagrants, and put in prison for being idle — when nobody will give them a job, however much they want one. For farm-work is what they're used to, and where there's no arable land, there's no farm-work to be done. After all, it only takes one shepherd or cowherd to graze animals over an area that would need any amount of labour to make it fit for corn production. For the same reason, corn is much dearer in many districts.

The price of wool has also risen so steeply that your poorer weavers simply can't afford to buy it, which means a lot more people thrown out of work. This is partly due to an epidemic of the rot, which destroyed vast numbers of sheep just after the conversion of arable to pasture land began. It almost looked like a judgement on the landowners for their greed — except that they ought to have caught it instead of the sheep. Not that prices would fall, however many sheep there were, for the sheep market has become, if not strictly a monopoly — for that implies only one seller — then at least an oligopoly. I mean it's almost entirely under the control of a few rich men, who don't need to sell unless they feel like it, and never do feel like it until they can get the price they want."'

I need read no further, but simply point out to you that in this book Thomas More, the Lord Chancellor, a man who shares the views of Pico della Mirandola, expresses bitter criticism through the mouth of a person who may indeed be fictitious and who has been in Utopia; but the criticism is levelled at something that really happened at that time. For indeed over wide areas the people who had tilled the soil with their hands were driven from their land, which was turned into grazing ground for the sheep of the landowners who sought to make profits in this way from the sale of wool.

Thomas More found it necessary to draw attention to the fact that people exist who drive the rural population from the soil they have tilled in order to turn it over to sheep. Those who are able to link effects with causes in

an objective way can pursue, on the physical plane, how the structure of the English state today is intimately bound up with what happened all that time ago and was criticized in this way by Thomas More. And if one pursues the matter with the means of the spirit, which also exist, then one discovers that the English people cannot be held responsible for a great deal for which the England of politics must be held responsible. Moreover, those who are responsible for the England of politics are the heirs — in certain cases, even the actual descendants — of those who are criticized here by Thomas More. There is an unbroken evolution which can be traced back to that point. If we take such things into account we shall discover and know that in speeches such as that of Rosebery, which I quoted to you the other day, can be heard the voices of those who long ago made profits from the sale of wool in the manner described. Everywhere the objective connections must be sought. Above all one must be entitled not to be misunderstood in every possible way.

What does it mean when one is reproached and told to be more tactful because, otherwise, the English will think this or that? This is not at all what matters. What is important is that there are certain things in our life today which can be traced back to certain origins, and these origins must be sought in the proper places. There is no cause for anyone, merely because he is English, to rush to defend the impulses of the descendants of those who long ago drove the peasants from house and home, land and soil, in order to keep flocks of sheep instead of retaining arable land. It is necessary to become familiar with the laws of cause and effect, and not babble about one nation or another being to blame for this or that.

Now that I have endeavoured to demonstrate to you a characteristic link between something in the present and something in the past, let me turn to yet another point, in order once again to make a connection. I shall present you with a number of external facts which shall serve the purpose of giving you a foundation on which to build judgements.

A survey of present-day Europe, with the exception of the eastern part which is inhabited by the Slavs, reveals that for the most part it has emerged from what was the kingdom of Charlemagne in the eighth and ninth centuries. I am not concerned at the moment with Charlemagne himself, nor with the fact that there is much argument about him today. This argument about Charlemagne really has as little point as the argument of three sons about their father. If three sons quarrel amongst each other, the reason is frequently that they are all quite right to call a

certain person their father. Indeed, three people would often not quarrel amongst each other were it not for the fact that they do all share the same father; and the object of their quarrel as likely as not is their inheritance!

Out of the realm of Charlemagne have come, in the main, three component parts: a western part which, after various vicissitudes, became the France of today; an eastern part which, in the main, has become today's Germany and Austria, with the exception of the Slav and Magyar regions; and a middle part which has become essentially the Italy of today. Strictly speaking, all three are equally justified in tracing themselves back to Charlemagne. Sometimes people even have strange feelings which determine whether they want to be traced back to Charlemagne or not. For instance, when you consider how many Saxons were slaughtered by Charlemagne, it is not surprising if some people attach no particular importance to being traced back to him. So, these three regions emerged from the kingdom of Charlemagne. In order to understand much of what is going on today we need to take into account that throughout the Middle Ages there existed, between the middle and the western region, certain links which were of an ideal nature, links which today no longer exist at all in such areas, apart from some empty phrases which cannot be taken seriously. For the Holy Roman Empire was to a large extent founded on ideals. If you do not wish to believe other sources which speak of these ideals, then read Dante's *De Monarchia*, or investigate what else Dante thought about these things. Consider, for instance, that it was Dante who reproached Rudolf of Habsburg for taking too little care of Italy, 'the most beautiful garden in the Empire!' Dante was, at least during that part of his life that matters most, an ardent adherent of that ideal community which had come into being and was called Germany-Italy.

Then in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries we see that the Venetian Republic began to rebel against what came down from the North. First of all Venice devoured the patriarchate of Aquileia, but the main concern of the Venetians was to gain a foothold on the Adriatic and settle along the coast there. Venice was very successful and we can see how what came from the North was indeed pushed back, particularly by the influence of the Venetian Republic. Then comes the era known as the Renaissance, which flourished in Italy and elsewhere, particularly under the influence of the blossoming of the free cities. But this was followed by the Counter-Reformation and the politics emanating from the Pope and Spain, and we see that not until the eighteenth century can Italy begin to think of recovering from centuries of pain and suffering. Since you can read it up in any history book, there is no need for me to describe how the moment at

last arrived when Italy found her unity, to the approval of the whole world. Those of us who are familiar with these things know that in German regions just as much enthusiasm was expressed for the unification of Italy as elsewhere.

We might ask how the modern unification of Italy came about. We should look upon the case of Italy as a particularly important example of how unified states come into being. But we must also come to understand the connections between the events in Serbia and Italy which I told you about last week. These are connections which are immensely important for an understanding of the situation today. But first one must consider for a moment how the state of Italy came into being, a state which can surely be recognized ungrudgingly.

We need go back only as far as the Battle of Solferino in which France fought alongside Italy, and where the first step was taken towards the subsequent creation of the modern state of Italy. We are in the fifties of the nineteenth century. How did it come about — for there was a great deal at stake at that time — that the first step on the path towards modern Italy could be taken at Solferino by Italy and France? Read your history books and you will find they fully bear out what I am saying: It came about solely because Prussia and Austria — Austria could only lose — could not reach any agreement!

What happened subsequently is owed to the fact that Italy had in Camillo Cavour a truly great statesman, in whose soul the idea flourished that, from this starting point, something could arise in Italy which would lead to a rebirth of the ancient Roman greatness. But matters took a different turn. Something similar, though perhaps with a very different nuance, occurred; something similar to what we saw in connection with Michael Obrenovich, Prince of Serbia, when he sacrificed his earlier idealistic views to the demands of state necessity. In a similar way the great soul of Camillo Cavour bowed before karmic necessity and made the transition from the ideal to external realism.

I can only give you an outline of these things. Italy proceeded from stage to stage. In the summer of 1871 Victor Emmanuel was able to enter Rome. How had this become possible? It was made possible by Germany's victories over France! From the statesman Francesco Crispi stem the words: Italy went to Rome thanks to the German victories, after France

had taken the first initiative at Solferino. But the fact that Rome became the capital of the kingdom of Italy is due to the German victories over France.

Now a remarkable relationship develops between Italy and France. It is interesting to note how to the extent that Italy was able to consolidate her unity, she became at once an opponent and an ally of France. Another factor is that Italy's statesmen set great store by the fact that her state structure was pieced together from the outside and also that she owed to Germany the final great push towards unity. These statesmen also saw that to join forces with France in the way which would have been possible at that time could not be fruitful for her. This stream, however, was in opposition to another, which gained in force from the year 1876 onwards: that of the francophile democratic left-wing party. So now this new state vacillated between an attraction to France which was, I might say, more on the feeling level, and a more practical attraction to Central Europe. The remarkable thing was that in everything that came about at that time it always turned out that the deciding factor was the practical tendency of Central Europe.

A new turn of events came about when France took over Tunisia. It had always been taken for granted that Tunisia would fall to Italy. But now France proceeded to spread herself there. So the practical tendency in Italy began to gain the upper hand, the tendency which leaned towards Central Europe. It is interesting, for instance, that at the Berlin Congress the Italian delegate asked Bismarck, who was quite calmly suggesting that France should spread over into Africa, whether he was really intent on setting Italy and France at each other's throats. Certainly for the Italian statesmen of that time this meant that Italy must turn towards Germany. And since Bismarck had spoken the famous words: 'The path to Germany lies via Vienna', Italy had to turn towards Austria too. So the ancient feud, which Austria had taken on as what I would call her tragic destiny, had to be shelved. For everything the Venetian Republic had done meant, basically, that those elements which tended towards Germany had been pushed out of Italy. So Austria had to take on the role of bearing the stream which came down from the North.

As a result of France's actions in North Africa, the francophile stream in Italy had to retreat, and so the connection with Central Europe came to be taken for granted at that time. I am giving you only a sketchy outline of these things since it is, after all, not my task to teach you politics. But it is necessary to know certain things about which, unfortunately, far too little is

known these days. Italy joined Central Europe in 1882 in what came to be known as the Triple Alliance. Certain people will always misjudge this Triple Alliance because they cannot accustom themselves to using the valid terms. There really are people who blame the painful events of the present war on the Triple Alliance instead of the so-called Triple Entente, which included the Entente Cordiale. You see, people do not always use the proper terms. Normally you can ask about something which is intended to lead to a particular goal whether it is really getting there and how long it remains valid. Now, it was always said by those who were a party to the Triple Alliance that its purpose was to preserve peace. And it did indeed serve this purpose for many decades; that is, for decades it served the purpose for which its participants said it was intended.

Then came the Triple Entente of which it was also said that its purpose was to preserve peace. Yet within less than a decade peace had disappeared! Anything else in the world would be judged on what it achieves. Yet precisely in this matter people do not condescend to form an objective judgement. Only five years later that secret matter was contrived which gives us the possibility of studying more closely the alchemy of those bullets which were used for the assassination at Sarajevo! The assassination of June 1914 could not possibly fail! For if those bullets had missed their target, others would have succeeded! Every precaution had been taken to ensure that if one attempt failed, the next would succeed. It was better thought out, indeed planned on a larger scale, than any other assassination in the whole of history.

In order to study what our friends have asked us to bring up here, we shall have to discover the alchemy of those bullets. I shall return to this later. For after only five years something had been mingled with the interrelationships of the Triple Entente, something which brought it about that there was a link between every event that took place in Italy and every event that took place in the Balkan countries. The aim was to let nothing happen in the Balkans without a corresponding event in Italy. The passions of the people were to be swayed in such a way that no action could be taken one-sidedly, either in the one country or the other; the people's feelings and thoughts were always to run parallel. For decades there was this intimate connection between the various impulses in the Apennine and the Balkan peninsulas. Sometimes a case of this kind stands out in an extraordinarily symbolic way. It is 'a beauty' in the way it conforms exactly to the theory, just as a doctor might find a serious case 'a

beauty' if it gives him an opportunity of performing a particularly good operation — which does not mean in any way that it is something beautiful in itself.

On a visit to Italy we once called in Rome on a most charming, delightful and friendly gentleman who has since died. He conducted us into his sitting room where we found in a very prominent position the portraits, personally autographed, of Draga Masin and Alexander Obrenovich. This friendly gentleman was not only a famous professor; he was the organizer of the so-called Latin League, which was concerned with the separation of South Tyrol and Trieste from Austria in favour of Italy. Of course I do not want to draw any great conclusions from such an insignificant experience. But it is significant symbolically that somebody who organizes the Latin League — I am not judging or criticizing, merely reporting — and, in connection with this Latin League, causes the students of Innsbruck university to riot, should have in his sitting room, visible to all comers, the autographed portraits of Alexander Obrenovich and Draga Masin. Since the secret threads which link Rome and Belgrade were well known to me at the time, this experience did make an impression on me as being symptomatic in a certain way. Karma does, after all, lead us to whatever is important for us in the world, and if we are capable of seeing and understanding things in the proper way, then we realize that karma has brought us to a point where there is something to be 'sniffed out' in the furtherance of our knowledge.

Things now developed in such a way that in 1888, a year in which war could have broken out just as it did in 1914, the crisis was averted because Crispi remained loyal to the Triple Alliance. He remained loyal to the Triple Alliance because France was proceeding to spread herself in North Africa. France embarked at that time on a political tactic aimed at Italy, who was starting to turn away from her. The French themselves said this tactic was intended to bring about the 're-conquering of Italy by means of hunger', that is, a kind of trade war was attempted against Italy, and this trade war certainly played an important role at that time. The consequence was that Italy's practical links with Central Europe were increasingly strengthened. It is perhaps just as well if I give you the opinion of a Frenchman on this, rather than that of a German. He said that modern Italy was economically a German colony.

It has often been stressed, not only by Germans but by others as well, that Italy was saved by her close economic ties with Germany from the danger of being conquered by France through hunger — not a nice

prospect. All this contributed to the peaceful settlement of the crisis at the end of the eighties. It is most interesting to study this crisis in all its details. It reveals something quite special to someone who is inclined to take account of interconnections and not be deceived. I did the following: I called to mind the events of 1888 and superimposed on them the date 1914. The events are absolutely identical! Just as in 1914 the incitements in the press were started in Petersburg and then taken up in Germany, so it was in 1888. As then, so also in 1914, a conflict was to be brought about between Germany and Austria. In short, every detail is the same. It is interesting that I have read aloud to various people a speech made in 1888 in which I replaced the date 1888 by 1914. Everybody believed that the speech was made in 1914!

When such things are possible we are not inclined to speak of coincidences. We have to understand that there are driving forces and that these driving forces work in a systematic way. In 1888 the matter was averted in the manner I have described. Then the situation became more complicated. The complication arose particularly because the connection of the Apennine peninsula to Central Europe took on a most peculiar character as far as Italy was concerned. It is psychologically interesting to study these things. It really came to a point where Italy, political Italy, had to be treated like some hysterical ladies are treated. The most unbelievable things developed, particularly because the opinion grew and was propagated in Europe that Austria must break up. I am not criticizing, only reporting.

You may gain an impression of how this opinion was propagated in Europe by reading the publications of Loiseaux, Chéradame and others, all of which treat of the assumption that Austria will be divided up in the near future. Now these judgements of Loiseaux and Chéradame and the others were thrown onto what was smouldering away down in the South. Under these circumstances it was definitely not easy to carry on what is usually known as politics. For instance, Oberdank was much celebrated in Italy. He had attempted to assassinate Emperor Franz Josef. In Vienna, on the other hand, a picture in an exhibition had to be renamed for the visit of the Duke of the Abruzzi. Its title was *The Naval Battle of Lissa*. This battle had been won by Austria, and so as not to offend the Duke of the Abruzzi the picture had to be renamed *Naval Battle*. This is just one example among many. I am not criticizing, but I do wonder about the question of give and take. Would anyone in Italy have condescended to be so considerate as to omit the name of a sea battle Italy had won? In Vienna they were. Whether it is right or wrong, it does raise the question of give and take. I mention this in

order to characterize the different moods somewhat. For it is these moods which matter when streams such as that of the 'Grand Orient de France' come into play and when occult impulses of this kind start to take a hold.

Certain things of which people have taken no note so far will have to become things of which they take a great deal of note in the future, for it is not the case that the 'Massonieri', as also other secret brotherhoods, do not notice what is there; rather they set themselves the task of making use of those forces which are indeed there. They know where the forces are of which they must make use. So if on the Apennine peninsula there exists a certain stream, and if on the Balkan peninsula there exists another stream, then suitable use must be made of these two streams so that, at the right moment — that is, the right moment from the point of view of these people — one thing or another can be set in motion.

Let this be a preparation for the alchemical discussion I mentioned, which will take us further along our path. Please note that, in order to meet the wishes of our friends, I cannot but mention a certain amount of what is going on at the present time. What I have to say has to be linked to certain things which do exist, even if not everybody agrees that these should be brought out into the open. I am convinced that one of the chief causes for the painful events going on in the world today is the attitude that a blind eye can be turned to certain matters while others are discussed on the basis of an entirely false premise. Even in the face of large-scale matters of this kind, each individual should start from a foundation of self-knowledge. And a portion of self-knowledge is involved if we recognize that to claim no interest in these things and to want only to hear of occult matters is, in a small way, no different from all that adds up to the events we are experiencing today. For spiritual things are not only those which have to do with higher worlds. These, to start with, are of course occult for everybody. But much of what takes place on the physical plane is also occult for many people. We can only hope that much of what is occult and hidden on this plane may be revealed! For one of the causes of today's misery is that so much remains occult for so many people, who nevertheless persist in forming judgements.



Lecture 6

The Nature of the Fifth Post-Atlantean Period

17 December 1916, Dornach

In order to reach the goal of our discussions, we shall have to endeavour to comprehend the whole nature of the fifth post-Atlantean period in all its deepest significance. It is impossible to come to an understanding of events as deeply important as those of the present day by refusing to enter into concrete matters, and by insisting on considering only general aspects of the universe and man in the way that can be done when one is not concerned with specific circumstances. Unfortunately, I have to stress that an understanding for the deeply important nature of these events is largely lacking today.

For certain quite definite reasons which will become apparent, I yesterday spoke to you about two matters. First of all I told you how the book by Brooks Adams had been launched on mankind, a kite flown to gauge the scale on which such things are understood, at least by a few individuals. This book describes how a nation should be seen as a living organism which comes into being and passes through phases of childhood, youth, maturity and decline in a similar way to a human being, though of course only similar, not identical. Furthermore it is pointed out that at certain stages of their development nations evolve two characteristics which belong together, namely, at one stage those of an imaginative and a warlike nature, and at another those of a scientific and an industrial or commercial nature. So it is assumed that nations which are imaginative and warlike by nature, and others which are scientific and industrial or commercial, live side by side and that in the mutual interplay of such nations the universal development of mankind proceeds.

I told you that this was a one-sided view. How do such views surface in the first place? What does it signify that they are launched on the public?

Views of this kind have made an impression on individuals of a certain standing and therefore have become part of the impulses working today. In such matters it is always a question of disconnecting portions of the overall spiritual knowledge of man's evolution and planting them in the world when needed or wanted. By taking a portion of the total occult picture of

mankind's development it is possible to achieve definite things in the service of a particular group and its particular egoism. Knowledge of the whole picture always serves the whole of mankind. Portions taken out of context always serve the egoism of individual groups. It is significant and important to take into account that much that is launched on the public from occult sources is not untrue, but half true, a quarter true, an eighth true, and just because it bears within it a part of the truth it can be used to achieve one aim or another in a one-sided way. That is why those who see through these things gain a significant impression from the fact that, on the part of America, the twentieth century is introduced by the launching of certain ideas in the world via some channels of the bookselling trade serving certain movements which make use of occult means.

The second matter about which I spoke was the remarkable treatise by the noble Thomas More on the best form of public administration in the state and on the island of Utopia. Out of this treatise by Thomas More I quoted to you yesterday the passage in which More says through the mouth of a stranger what he wants to say about Utopia. This stranger is presented as a fictitious person; perhaps we shall get to know him better today, but he is not fictitious, as you will see. Out of a certain mood of his time, which I described yesterday, he develops the theme of his feelings and then describes Utopia itself.

This description of Utopia by Thomas More, who flings these particular ideas into the midst of human development at the beginning of the fifth post-Atlantean period, is indeed quite remarkable. I have found a number of people who have read *Utopia*, but not a single one who has read it carefully enough to become even partly aware of all the extraordinary ins and outs and unlikely details the book describes. People simply take the description of the island of Utopia as that of an imaginary island and just read on, page after page. This is understandable in the present age, which is void of all spirituality. But at least one should notice either that Thomas More is describing something incomprehensible, even if it is only meant to be imaginary, or that he must have been a complete idiot, an absolute fool. But such logical conclusions are not drawn in our time; people far prefer to pass over things by means of superficial judgements. I shall now call up before our souls an outline of the content of this work. If you want all the details, you must read *Utopia* yourselves.

It is significant that Utopia is described as having reached a certain maturity in its institutions. It is expressly stated that the situation being described did not exist in the beginning but has taken 1,760 years to

achieve, so that we are now presented with a kind of finished product of some maturity.

The first point to be particularly stressed is that property is common, nobody owns anything. The state is divided into certain families who, if we can put it like this, elect elders, and from among the elders a prince is elected. From time to time a council is called at which public matters are discussed in accordance with the instructions of the different sections of the population. Here we immediately come to an extraordinary arrangement: Public affairs may only be discussed in the prescribed manner. Anybody who privately discusses public affairs is liable to be condemned to death. Further, we discover a highly sensible arrangement: When a suggestion is made during the council meeting it may never be discussed immediately; people must first go home and think about it and it is then brought up again on a subsequent occasion. The one who is telling us the story says that in this way people have an opportunity to think about things, and do not make hasty judgements which they would naturally defend with stubbornness and egoism, just because they have become attached to their own judgement instead of thinking carefully and coming to the right conclusion.

In Utopia everyone has to learn farming while still a child. Later they also learn a trade, usually that pursued by their parents, though they may choose another if they have the skill for it. Work is strictly regulated and nobody need labour for more than six hours a day.

Everything else is also arranged in the best way; there are three hours of work in the morning but, before this, at sunrise, those who wish may gather to learn about spiritual and similar things. Games such as those we know outside Utopia do not exist there. They have, however, a competitive game something like chess, a kind of arithmetical battle, and also another competitive game, again similar to chess, in which the vices and the virtues compete with one another.

Under the supervision of the elected representatives those who are suitable are declared scholars. From among their number the ambassadors and the priests are elected. The dirtiest work is performed by slaves who are either recruited from amongst conquered peoples or else are criminals. Every true Utopian is free. There is another arrangement in Utopia which we, who are not from Utopia, have only just come to enjoy: no journey may be made without permission from the appropriate authority. A passport is necessary for even the shortest journey. Money does not exist.

Anything available for consumption is taken to the markets where anybody can help himself. Since this is so well arranged that no one takes more than he needs, there is no necessity to pay anything, for everyone receives what he requires. Money or anything like it is simply not necessary.

The only metal of any value is iron. Please take note of this, for it is very significant. Silver is valued less and gold least of all. Gold is not fashioned into the articles non-Utopians would use it for, but mainly into chains for criminals, and for similar objects. Gold is forged into chains for criminals; they have to wear them as a symbol of their shame. Certain receptacles which one does not mention in polite company are also made of gold, and so on. This had a curious consequence once, when some foreign diplomats visited Utopia and sought to impress the Utopians by festooning themselves in gold chains and jewellery. The Utopians thought them to be of very lowly origin, since such things were only used as toys for children, who discarded them as they grew older. When the diplomats came, the children watched them pass by in the street and said: Look at those old fogeys still wearing children's playthings!

No value is attached in Utopia to the wearing of fine clothes, for they say: How can anyone fancy it matters whether his clothes are made from this wool or that wool? The sheep were the first to wear them. How can you fancy there is anything special in wearing what the sheep first wore naturally!

In Utopia there is also another peculiarity; good and evil, virtue and vice are only judged in connection with religious ideas. A goal to be striven for in life is a kind of epicureanism in the pleasures one enjoys. The more fun one has in life, the more virtuous one is considered to be. The Utopians believe in the immortal soul of man and have a kind of religion of reason. They consider that everybody may use his common sense to see that God rules the world like an overseer, that man has an immortal soul and that after death this will enter into a spiritual world where there will be reward and punishment for virtue and vice.

The Utopians think nothing of jewels for they say: When somebody buys a jewel he has to seek the assurance of the seller that it is genuine; why on earth should something be valuable if you cannot see with your own eyes whether it is a genuine or a counterfeit jewel? This could only happen in Utopia. Hunting is also scorned as something undignified. Only butchers are allowed to hunt, and theirs is not an esteemed profession.

The man who tells all these things explains that he himself introduced the Utopians to Greek literature and art and that they proved to be extraordinarily intelligent. Indeed their language seems to have affinities with Greek, and their culture is unusual in that it seems to remind one of that of Greece mingled with something of Persia. The manner in which husband and wife are selected I shall not describe for reasons which you will understand if you read the book. There are no lawyers in Utopia; they are considered to be the most harmful people. Contracts are not entered into because the Utopians believe that if someone wants to keep an agreement he can do so without a contract, whereas if he does not, he can break it even if he has a contract.

In war, they avoid bloodletting if at all possible; it is considered the most shameful thing. They say: If one spills blood in war, one is no better than wolves and tigers. Other methods must be sought, for man has intelligence. Only in absolute extremity, if there is no other hope, will they spill blood. They set about the matter of making war on another nation by sending out scouts whose task it is either to bring about confusion among the enemy so that they start to quarrel among themselves, or to murder one or another member of the enemy force, or something similar. In other words they seek to use 'love and good sense' to bring about discord and dissension as well as mutual irritation among those on whom they wish to make war, and only if this fails will they decide to shed blood. And even then they use quite special methods which show that they intend to cease the bloodletting at the first possible opportunity.

Another point is that religious tolerance is a fundamental characteristic of the Utopians. So long as he does not break the law, anybody may belong to any sect or represent any religious view he likes. This was instituted by the founder of Utopia, Utopus himself. However, all must believe in a highest being, whom they call Mythra. The one who tells us this has himself attempted to introduce Christianity there. The A-94-Utopians proved to be most open to it and recognized it as being indeed the best religion. The utmost religious tolerance prevails, and all may believe whatever they will, except that someone who is a materialist or who does not believe in the immortality of the soul forfeits all civil and other rights, indeed is declared to be without rights.

There is a sect which holds animals to be creatures who have souls like people. There are priests who teach in special mystery churches and perform cultic rites. Festivals are celebrated at the end and the beginning

of each year. Musical instruments differ somewhat from those in other countries, for they are particularly suited to expressing in music what the human soul feels in its various moods. And so on.

I have told you all this just as it is described in the book. You will have noticed I said on the one hand that the Utopians have a religion of good sense, in which each individual believes what his good sense tells him is right; and yet, on the other hand, we are told that Christianity has been introduced and that all believe in a kind of Mythra. Further, it is said that tolerance prevails, and yet those who are materialists forfeit their rights as citizens. In short, you will find in the book one contradiction after another.

So what is this book really about? What is it describing? We can indeed only understand it on the basis of spiritual science. We must understand that Thomas More, like Pico della Mirandola and others, is a man who stands with part of his being in the fourth post-Atlantean period while another part already projects into the fifth. But he is also a man who knows that this is so and develops it in full consciousness because he possesses a certain spiritual life.

Thomas More spent many hours every day in meditation, and with his meditations he achieved certain quite definite results. But these results came about because, as I said, part of his being still lived in the fourth post-Atlantean period, so that atavistic elements joined in him with a conscious raising of his soul into the life of the spiritual world. Yet he lived a whole century after the beginning of the fifth post-Atlantean period and in his soul everything lived which was characteristic of that fifth period: intellectuality and reasoning as we know them today — which did not yet exist during the fourth period, contrary to the opinion of those whose view of history is utterly fantastic. All this worked and mingled in his soul. You can discover what must have gone on in such a soul if you study Pico della Mirandola and also the relationship of Pico della Mirandola to Savonarola.

We have, then, a man into whose soul we must penetrate a little if we are to understand what he meant with his description of Utopia. Such a man as this knew that occult impulses work and weave in the evolution of mankind, and also that at the turn of the fourth to the fifth post-Atlantean period it was necessary to provide the right impulse for many people. Whether they then make use of it is another question. What did such people know? We have often discussed that things are different nowadays, but this is what it was like then; so what did such people know? They knew that mankind must grow decadent if only those things were developed

which were, let me say, unspiritual, thought-out, merely reasoned. Such people know that human beings must become desiccated even down to their physical bodies — of course not during the course of a few centuries but over a long period — if only dry reasoning, if only that spiritual element is developed on which materialistic views are founded. Such people have quite a different concept of the truth from that which gradually evolved during the fifth post-Atlantean period. They know that thoughts must be thought which do not relate to the physical plane, because, quite apart from the truth of such matters, human beings, if they do not wish to wither, must think thoughts which do not relate to the physical plane. These are the thoughts which bring life, which make life possible and help it to make progress. This is why what is spiritual is so important, quite apart from the aspect of truth.

Through his meditations Thomas More had come to experience pictures of the higher worlds in a partly atavistic and partly conscious way, but these were mingled with the material aspect of the dream worlds. Out of these actual experiences arose what he relates in *Utopia*. It is not something he has thought out, it is not fantasy, but something he really experienced as the fruit of his meditation. He placed it before us just as he experienced it, in order to say: Behold! A man who lives in England under King Henry VIII, a man who is even a servant of Henry's state, a man who bears in his soul the feelings, the desires, the intimate goals of England at this time — when his visions stir up his inner being, he experiences what is here described to be a kind of ideal state. He wanted to express what are the wishes, the goals, the ideas lurking in the subconscious of those who are dissatisfied with the external world. This is what he wanted to express.

So it can be said: this is the astral self-knowledge of a man of that time. A wise man such as Thomas More does not simply set before his contemporaries a fantastic ideal for the future. He sets before them what he himself experiences because, through this, in his own way and in keeping with his own time, he wants to present them with the great truth that the external world perceived by the senses is maya and that this external world of the senses must be seen in conjunction with the supersensible world. But if one sees them in conjunction in this way — so that all the desires, all the wishes which belong to a particular age and are in keeping with that age, are allowed to play their part — then the outcome is something which, if looked at closely, is by no means a proposition that could be considered ideal. For I must admit, if I were to be born in Utopia I would probably see it as my primary task to overcome the prevailing conditions as quickly as possible and replace them with others. I might

even consider the conditions prevailing here or there on our earth — apart from those of the immediate present — to be more ideal than those in Utopia. But it was not Thomas More's aim to describe ideal conditions. His intention was to show what he really experienced under the conditions as I have described them. He wanted to say to people: If you could see your wishes, if you could see before your eyes what you imagine to be ideal conditions, you would find that you were not in agreement with them at all.

Now we have made the acquaintance of the stranger who describes Utopia: he is the astral self of Thomas More. These things must be seen as being much more real than is usually supposed. At certain points of human evolution the fundamental facts must be sought out if one wants to understand this human evolution. A judgement cannot be made simply by taking the few facts closest to hand. A valid judgement cannot be based on these, for it would merely relate to sympathies and antipathies. These are valid, of course, but they take us no further, and mankind cannot be served by them.

My purpose here — and we shall return to these things later — has been to place before you a man who is particularly typical of the turning point between two ages, namely, between the fourth and the fifth post-Atlantean ages: one who is able to bring to the surface what is characteristic of his deeper soul life in such a way that he has an experience of self. Let me just leave this as a fact for the moment.

In order to gain an understanding of the kind for which a number of our friends here have expressed a wish, we must now also work on achieving a comprehension of the concrete reality of a folk soul. For our materialistic age and way of feeling tends to make us confuse the folk soul with the individual soul. I mean, when we speak of a people, a nation, we believe that this has something to do with the individuals who constitute this nation. To use a rather rough-and-ready, though graphic comparison: To say that an Englishman or a German can be identified with the folk soul of his nation is, for the spiritual scientist, as nonsensical as saying that a son or daughter can be identified with father or mother.

This is a rough-and-ready comparison, as I said, because on the one hand we are dealing with two physical people, whereas on the other we mean one physical and one non-physical being, which differ totally from one another when examined concretely. Not until there is an understanding of the mysteries of repeated earth lives and of the karma which these

involve will there really be a comprehension of what underlies all this, which it is highly necessary to understand if one wants to speak on a firm basis about these things. An immensely important truth lies in the fact that one lives within a certain folk spirit only for a single incarnation, whereas one bears within one's own individual being something quite different, something immeasurably greater and yet also immeasurably smaller than that which lives within a folk soul. To identify oneself with a folk soul is, in reality, totally devoid of meaning once one goes beyond what is described by such words as love of the fatherland, love of the homeland, patriotism and so on. We shall only understand these things properly, once we can look earnestly and deeply at the truths of reincarnation and karma.

I have spoken recently in various places about the connection between the human soul between death and rebirth and what comes into being when man enters a new existence through birth. I pointed out that between death and rebirth man is linked with the forces which bring people together over many generations. Through the ever-repeated union of different pairs of parents and all that leads to descendants, as well as other aspects of the succession of generations, it comes about that the human being between death and rebirth finds himself within a whole stream which, in the end, leads him to the parents through whom he can incarnate. Just as in physical life one is linked with one's physical body, so between death and rebirth is one linked with the conditions which prepare for birth through a particular pair of parents. One is immersed in the forces which bring one to particular parents, and which brought father and mother to their parents, and so on back through the generations, in all their offshoots and ramifications, and whatever works together here in the most varied ways — in all this one is immersed for centuries!

Consider the imposing number of centuries one would remain within all this in order to pass through a mere thirty generations. The period from Charlemagne to the present day encompasses approximately thirty generations, and over all that time, in all that has taken place in the way of meeting, falling in love and begetting descendants which at last led to our own parents — in all this we have ourselves been involved, all this we have ourselves prepared.

I am repeating this because in connection with those personalities one calls leaders, those who can be recognized as leading personalities in some respects, it is important to understand that what makes them significant for mankind comes about through all that I have just described. I shall

draw your attention now to a leading personality, and the climax of what I have to say about him will be expressed in the words of another. You will see in a moment why this is so.

We see in Dante a most eminent personality who lived at the end of the fourth post-Atlantean period. We may juxtapose such an eminent personality with those personalities who gained a certain eminence after the beginning of the fifth post-Atlantean period, such as, for instance, Thomas More. Let us look closely at what may be recognized in general in a personality such as Dante. A personality such as Dante is of far-reaching significance, gives far-reaching impulses. It is therefore interesting to consider, or at least to guess, how such a soul before entering through birth into a physical existence that is to be significant for mankind, puts together — excuse this rather peculiar expression — what he is to become, in order to be born in the right way through the right parents. Obviously these conditions are brought about out of the spiritual world, but they are realized with the help of the physical tools. In a certain sense the spiritual world guides this blood to that blood, and so on.

As a rule, a personality like Dante cannot be born of homogeneous blood. To belong to a single nation is impossible for such a soul. It needs a mysterious alchemy; various blood streams must flow together. Whatever those over-patriotic people might say who claim great personalities for a single people, there is no great reality behind it!

As regards Dante, so that you do not think I am taking sides I shall now let another, who knows him intimately, describe what is clearly apparent in his being. It would be easy to imagine that I might be carrying on politically, which is actually furthest from my intentions. So for this reason I have made enquiries of Carducci, the great Italian poet of today, who is an expert on Dante. Behind Carducci — and this is why I am quoting him — stand what are called 'Massonieri' in Italy, and what is connected with all those secret brotherhoods to whom I have drawn your attention. Because of this, Carducci's theoretical arguments about the actualities of life are, to a certain extent, based on some deeper knowledge. I would not maintain that he has flaunted this deeper knowledge all over the market place or that he is in any way an occultist. But what he says does contain a certain amount of what has come to him via all kinds of secret channels.

Carducci says: Three elements work in Dante, and it is only because these three elements work together that Dante's being was able to become what it was. First, through certain branches of his lineage, there was an

ancient Etruscan element. This gave Dante whatever it was that opened the super-sensible worlds to him; because of this he was able to speak so profoundly about the super-sensible worlds. Secondly, there was in him a Roman element which gave him a proper relationship to the life of his time and a basis of certain legal concepts from which to proceed. And thirdly, says Carducci, there was a Germanic element in Dante. From this he gained the boldness and freshness of his views, a certain candour, and the courage of his convictions in what he had set himself. These three elements, says Carducci, made up the soul life of Dante.

The first element points to the ancient Celtic influence which pulses through him like blood in a certain way, leading him back to the third post-Atlantean period; for the Celtic element in the North leads back to what we have come to know as the third post-Atlantean period. After this we find the fourth post-Atlantean period in the Roman, and the fifth in the Germanic element. Carducci maintains that the elements in Dante's soul are composed of these three periods and their impulses, so that we really have three layers lying side by side — or rather one above the other — the third, fourth and fifth post-Atlantean periods: Celtic, Roman, Germanic. Dante experts of some stature have gone to great pains to discover how, from the spiritual world, Dante managed to mingle his blood in such a way as to obtain the final composition with which he was born. Of course, they did not express this in these words, but they went to great pains and came to believe that much may be put down to the fact that a great many of Dante's ancestors are to be found in the Grisons area of present-day Switzerland. This is borne out to some extent by history. The chain of Dante's predecessors points in every direction of the compass, including this district, where so much mixing of blood streams took place.

We now see how, in a single personality, the remarkable working together of the three layers of European human evolution is revealed. We also see how a man like Carducci, whose judgement is based on a certain objectivity and not on present-day nationalistic madness, points to the foundation on which Dante stands.

Herewith we touch on conditions which are well-known in circles familiar with the realities of life, conditions which may be reckoned with and which may be used as forces if one wants to do certain things. These conditions are by no means unknown to the secret brotherhoods, neither in their rightful use, nor in that other direction which uses secret knowledge in one way or another in the service of some group egoism. For the secret of how the three consecutive layers — which are exceedingly meaningful, mainly

for Europe — work together, is discussed most carefully in all secret brotherhoods worthy of the name, though naturally in some cases in a manner which deflects from what might be termed the good direction.

Please be sure not to forget that knowledge about such things exists, and that it is taught — even though, in the external, clever world no one wants to know much about it — very systematically and with great care, especially in the western and American secret brotherhoods.

Having now prepared the way and brought to your attention the teaching about what is, in a certain way, a mystery of evolution and which is taught, albeit with the most varying aims, I shall now point to some further teachings simply by describing them to you. These teachings formed the content of the instruction given in certain occult schools, particularly towards the end of the nineteenth century. They continued into the twentieth century, but it was particularly in the nineteenth century that they were taken up, at which time they gained a considerable degree of influence. Efforts were made to bring them into all kinds of situations in which it was felt necessary to use them for certain ends. So to start with I shall simply report, quite uncritically, on certain teachings from the secret brotherhoods of England, whereby I shall be alluding to what I have prepared.

The following was taught and is still taught: The evolution of Europe can be comprehended if, to start with, one looks at the transition from the Roman, the fourth post-Atlantean period, to the fifth post-Atlantean period. The teaching was — please remember that I am merely reporting — that the mystery of the transition from the fourth to the fifth period or, as was said in these brotherhoods, from the fourth to the fifth sub-race, must be understood. You know that we cannot use the term 'sub-race' for the reasons I have frequently expressed, for to use this term means to pursue one-sided group aims, whereas group aims can never be our concern, but solely the general aims of mankind. So the teaching was that the fourth sub-race is represented mainly by the Roman, the Latin peoples. Throughout human evolution it is the case that when things develop in sequence it is not a question of what comes after taking its place behind what came before. What came before remains and takes its place side by side with what comes afterwards, so that they remain side by side in space. Thus, the stragglers of the fourth sub-race, consisting chiefly of the Roman and Latin elements, have remained during the period of the fifth sub-race.

The fifth sub-race, which began at the start of the fifteenth century, is composed of those peoples who are called upon to speak English in the world. The English-speaking peoples represent the fifth sub-race, and the whole task of the fifth post-Atlantean period consists in conquering the world for the English-speaking peoples. It will be evident that the stragglers of the fourth sub-race, the peoples touched by the Latin element, will fall more and more into a certain materialism. They bear within themselves the element of their own inner dissolution, and even in the physical sense bear their own decadence within them. As I said, I am merely reporting and not saying anything which I myself maintain to be true. Further, it is said that the fifth sub-race bears within it a germ of spirituality, of a capacity to comprehend the spiritual world. It is necessary, it is said, to understand how the fourth sub-race affected the fifth, and for this purpose one must look back to where the Nordic peoples, who later became the Britons, the Gauls, the Germans, came towards the Roman Empire. The question was asked: What were these peoples at the time when the Roman Empire was making war on them; in other words, when the conflict between the fourth and the fifth sub-race began? As peoples they were at the stage of infancy! The important point is that the Romans, the Roman element, the fourth sub-race, came in order to be their wet-nurse. These expressions are needed to enable us to draw the analogy between the folk element and the element of the individual human being. So the Romans became wet-nurses and they remained so for approximately as long as they maintained their dominance over the peoples of the North who were going through their infancy.

Infants grow to be children. This is the age in which the Papacy is founded in Rome and in which the Pope in his reign becomes the guardian of the child, just as the Roman Empire was the wet-nurse of the infant. Again, I am merely reporting, and not maintaining that this is the case. So now we have the interplay between the Papacy and what is going on in the North, what developed through Central Europe right out as far as Britain. This is the education of these people under the guardianship of the Papacy, out of which the Roman element from the fourth post-Atlantean period is still working. Round about the twelfth century, when the Papacy began to be no longer what it had been, the youth of these various people commenced, this being characterized by the awakening of their own intelligence. The guardian now withdraws. The youth of these peoples continues until roughly the end of the eighteenth century. As a rule, when such things are taught the present is omitted, because for certain reasons

this is thought to be a good thing to do. People must not be told too clearly what one thinks about the present time; they learn about this more through suggestion.

Thus, in the course of time in the North, under the rule of the wet-nurse, the guardian, and so on, the present mature condition grew. This bears within it the germ of rendering Britain the ruling nation of the fifth post-Atlantean period, in the same way as were not only the Romans but also the Roman element in the form of the Papacy, which was derived from them. So, according to this doctrine, while the remains of the Latin element crumble away from the human race, a new fruitful element expands from the factor in which lives the British element. Now it is hinted that all external actions and measures which are to serve any purpose and be fruitful, must be made under the sign of these views. Anything that is undertaken without these views, anything that does not take into account that the Latin element is in decline and the British element ascending, is doomed to wither. Of course such things may be undertaken, say these people, but they are condemned to remain meaningless, they will not grow. It is like sowing seeds in the wrong soil.

In the doctrine I have sketched for you we have a foundation which seeped into all the brotherhoods, even the more esoteric ones — those who worked in the West as so-called high grade Freemasons and suchlike. These things were insinuated into public affairs by people who had either close or loose connections with these brotherhoods, often in such a veiled way that those concerned had no idea how they had come by their knowledge. Particularly since the sixteenth century these things have been carried from the West into much that can be experienced in human evolution.

Other things are also taught. It is said: Just as those people in the North during the time of the Roman element were preparing themselves to be the fifth sub-race, so today, in a similar way, the Slav people are coming towards the West as the developing sixth sub-race; in the same way the Germanic peoples came out of the North to meet the Roman element. Thus it is said that living in the East, under a despotic rule that is doomed to destruction, are a number of individual peoples who, like the Germanic peoples when the Roman Empire started to spread northwards, are not yet nations as such but still tribal peoples. These tribal peoples constitute the separate elements of the so-called Slav people, which for the moment is

only held together in an external way by a despotic government which is to be swept away. I am using the terms which are customary within these secret brotherhoods.

After saying so many positive things about the Slavs, let me just add in parentheses: It is true that these peoples are still tribal in a certain way. This became evident at the Slav Congress in Prague in 1848. Each group wanted to speak in their own language, but this proved impossible because they were then incomprehensible to the others; so they were forced to use standard German instead. I do not say this to amuse you but in order to show that what is taught in the West about the Slavs does have a certain basis of truth.

It is said further in the English brotherhoods that the Poles have evolved ahead of the other Slavs, for they have developed a homogeneous cultural and religious life of a relatively high calibre. The destinies of the Poles are described to some extent, but it is then maintained that they really belong to the Russian Empire. Then the Balkan Slavs are discussed. Of them it is said that they have thrown off the yoke of Turkish oppression and formed themselves into individual Slav states which, however — and this is repeated over and over again — are destined to remain as they are only until the next great European war. In the nineties particularly, these brotherhoods held this great European war to be imminent, and it was linked especially to evolutionary impulses which were to emanate from the Balkan Slavs, born of the fact that these states, which had come into being as a result of their disengagement from the Turkish Empire, had to undergo a transition to new forms. Only until the next great European war, it was said, would these Balkan Slavs be able to maintain their independence. After that they would meet with quite other destinies.

These peoples are at present, so it is taught, in their infancy. So it is hinted that since they are the future sixth sub-race, while the Britons are the present fifth sub-race, the Britons will have to play a role towards them similar to that played by the Romans towards the northern Germanic peoples, namely that of wet-nurse; to be a wet-nurse to these peoples is their primary task. This role of wet-nurse will cease to be necessary, it is said, at the moment when these peoples will have reached a point when the Russian Empire no longer exists and they have succeeded in creating their own forms out of their own dawning intelligence. But gradually the wet-nurse must be replaced by the guardian. This means that in the West a kind of papacy must develop out of those who form the fifth sub-race. For this, a strong spirituality must develop and, just as the Papacy stood in

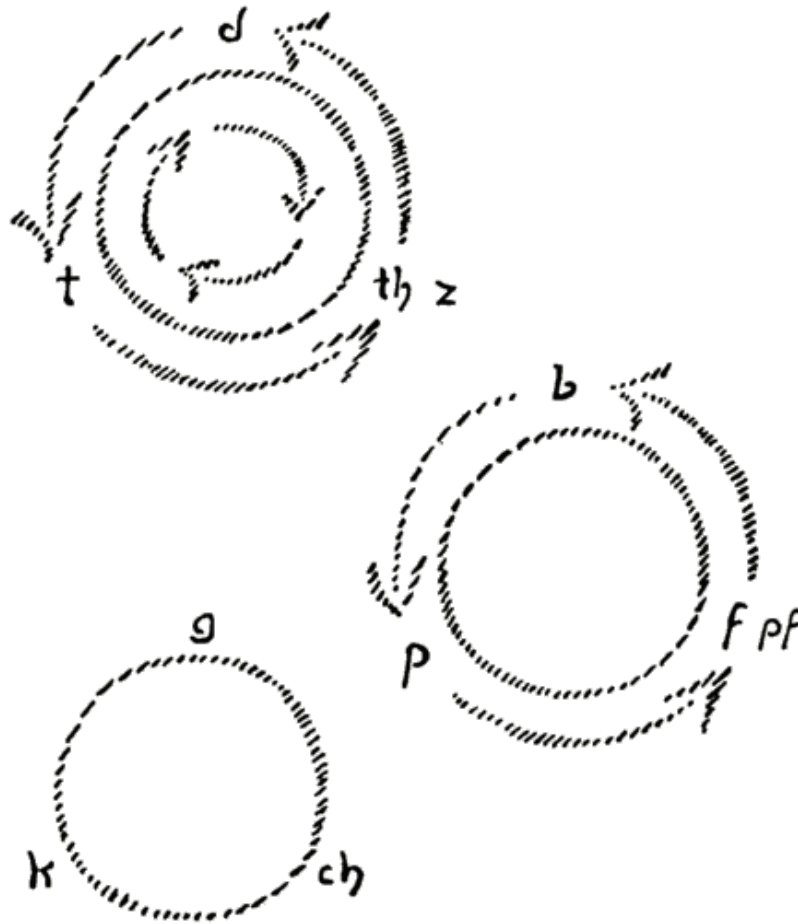
relation to Central Europe, so a configuration will have to come about which works comprehensively from the West over towards the East. This must result in the East being used as a place where certain institutions can be created in a manner similar to that in which the Papacy created its institutions in Europe.

Of course we have now progressed by one sub-race. The Papacy created churches and religious communities of all sorts. But now the western 'papacy', which is to develop out of the British element, will have the task of carrying out certain quite definite economic experiments, that is, of instituting a certain form of economic society of a socialist nature which, it is assumed, cannot be founded in the West because there the fifth and not the sixth sub-race has its being. The East, experimentally at first, must be used for such experiments for the future. Political, cultural and economic experiments must be carried out.

Of course these people are not so stupid as to maintain that the dominance of the West will last forever, for no serious student of spiritual matters would believe that. But they are quite clear about the fact that just as at first the services of the wet-nurse were offered, so must these be metamorphosed into the role of the guardian — in other words a kind of future 'papacy' on the part of western culture.

I have been reporting, my dear friends! These things are buried deeply in the teachings of western Freemasonry and it is a matter of recognizing whether the ones I have mentioned, which are very influential, are really justified as being for the good of mankind in general in its evolution, or whether it is necessary to think of them as needing correction in some way. This is what we are concerned with. We shall return to all this again.

Now I want to point out that certain stages of evolution are really not mere fantasy, but that the more deeply one enters into the real facts, the more does it become possible to prove in the external world what was found at first by spiritual means. External science, even today, is occupied with the search for theories which prove that evolution takes place in stages which follow one another. That there is really something correct in what the spiritual scientist says can today be confirmed in some of the symptoms of ordinary science, if only one has the good will to search for them.



Let me mention in this connection something of which I have repeatedly spoken already. Although external culture cannot comprehend these things there is, in spiritual development, something which is expressed in laws which are as definite as the laws of nature. I once drew your attention to a linguistic law. Human evolution from the fourth post-Atlantean period up to the present shows that Greek and Latin represent a particular stage of linguistic development; the next stage was then Gothic, and the one after that New High German. Evolution takes place here in a perfectly regular manner. I can only sketch this for you, but these things follow laws which are every bit as absolute as those of nature, and exceptions merely seem to be so.

The sound D in Greek or Latin is transmuted into T and this again into Th which, because of certain language laws, can also be Z. A Greek Th or Z becomes a Gothic D, and this becomes T in New High German. A Gothic Th or Z becomes a New High German T, and so the circle continues. Similarly,

a Graeco-Roman B becomes a Gothic P, and this in turn a New High German F or Pf. A Greek F or Pf would be a Gothic B and a New High German P. There is another circle which goes from G to K to Ch. Take for example *treis*, *three*, *drei*: T / Greek; Th / Gothic; D / New High German. This is so in every case and exceptions can be explained by special laws which complement the main laws.

We have three stages, one above the other: Greek-Latin, Gothic — which corresponds to the time when the Roman Empire was coming up against the Germanic tribes — and the further stage of New High German. The strange thing is, as I have said before, that English has remained behind at the Gothic stage. So if you want to find the English for a New High German word, you have to go back a stage. Take 'Tag'; to find the English for this you have to go, not forwards, but backwards: 'day'. Take 'tief'; again you have to go backwards to 'deep'; take New High German 'zehn'; if you want the English you have to go backwards: 'ten'. Take 'Zahn'; you have to go backwards if you want the English: 'tooth'; take 'Dieb', here too you have to go backwards: 'thief'. New High German 'dick', if you go backwards, becomes 'thick'. So, to go from New High German to English, the direction is opposite to the normal.

So we can say quite objectively: If we seek to find the evolution of language as a folk element in respect of English, we have to go back to the Gothic stage. New High German has risen in evolution to become a special element. This is not said out of any patriotic or nationalistic feeling but simply because it is true, just as there is no need to say the polar bear is white out of any sympathy or antipathy for him. The law I have demonstrated to you is a well-known linguistic law, Grimm's law. I have only demonstrated it with regard to some voiced and unvoiced plosives and some aspirated sounds, but it can be done for the whole system of sounds. The evolution of language proceeds in accordance with strict laws and it corresponds to the impulses that rule in human evolution. Little by little natural science discovers these things, though sometimes only sporadically. In spiritual science you may find the deeper foundations for all these things.

We shall come to other aspects of spiritual and cultural life which will show that what applies to the realm of language holds sway in other fields as well. Something unconscious, when it is brought to light, bears witness to objective laws. This cannot be turned and twisted according to sympathy or antipathy!

Do not imagine that this Grimm's law on sound-shifts is unknown to those secret brotherhoods of whom we have spoken. Tomorrow we shall see how they come to terms with such matters and how they have relevant things to say about them too. What they have to say is not foolish but perfectly in keeping with a certain kind of occultism. It will be up to you to decide, when you know more about it, how you want to judge it and whether it is something legitimate or not. Through the karma of human evolution it will come about that certain things are made more easily accessible to the public at large, in particular as a result of the circumstance that a certain amount of confusion has entered into the Masonic orders. Because of these circumstances a variety of things are coming to light for the outside world. We, however, want to understand, above all, the deeper foundations of all this.

Some quite bizarre symptoms are indeed coming to light. For instance there exists today an interesting dissertation by a man who met his death — this too is a remarkable karmic circumstance — on the battlefield of the present war. It is about the parallelism that exists between French politics and French secret societies, and it shows how the two run entirely parallel, how the same forces live in both. Much more intimate and concealed are the circumstances of English politics which are totally under the influence of what lies hidden behind them in this way. Here the main concern is to find ways of placing suitable people in the right places. The people in the background who are involved in occult manipulations are often like a number one; they do not amount to much on their own. They need something else: a nought. Noughts are not ones, but the two together make ten. If more noughts are added, so long as there is a one somewhere as well, a great deal can result — for instance a thousand — though every nought remains a nought. And if the one remains hidden, then only the noughts are visible. So the aim is to combine the noughts in a suitable way with the ones, whereby the noughts have no need to know much about the way in which they are combined with the ones.

There is, for instance, a certain man who is a perfectly honest fellow. I have often said that I in no way look on him as the wicked ogre — for which many in Central Europe want to take him. I think he is an honest, nice man who, in his own way, longs to speak the truth. Yet this does not prevent him from being a nought. This man's education began at Winchester public school, whence he proceeded to Balliol College, Oxford. Then he won something very important, the Marlylebone Cricket Prize, followed by the Queen Anne Tennis Prize. At the age of twenty-three he became a member of parliament. At that age one is susceptible to all kinds

of influences. At thirty he became Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. He had long been Foreign Minister when he set foot outside England for the first time in order to accompany the King of England on a journey to Africa. He also wrote a little book on angling entitled *Fly Fishing*. Sir Edward Grey then ascended the social ladder before sinking into obscurity. A fellow student at Oxford, ten years his senior, was Asquith, with whom he spent his years there.

This is how those appear who are the visible accomplices. We shall proceed thus far today and carry on tomorrow.



Lecture 7

Aversion Toward Germany

18 December 1916, Dornach

Let me begin by repeating yet again my urgent request that you do not take notes during these lectures. It is mystifying that my wish in this respect seems to meet with absolutely no compliance. Yet I must make this request particularly with regard to these lectures. Firstly, the current situation gives no opportunity for someone who is seriously concerned with human evolution to give properly rounded-off lectures; at best only isolated remarks are possible. Secondly, we all know what misunderstandings came about at the beginning of this painful time because parts of my lectures were taken down and disseminated in every direction, in some cases with the praiseworthy intention of saying: Look, the things he says aren't as bad as all that — but in others with the less praiseworthy aim of raising people's hackles so that they might build up all sorts of resentments.

Isolated sentences quoted out of context, especially when taken from a series of lectures, can never mean anything and can be interpreted in all manner of ways. I am concerned solely with the quest for the truth, in this case particularly because a number of our friends have requested discussions of this sort and have a real desire for them. I am not concerned that it might be possible to report here or there that what I have to say is really not so bad after all. What I am concerned with is the truth. Surely all those of us who take spiritual science seriously, and who are concerned with the findings of spiritual science with regard to human evolution in our time, should be concerned with the truth.

I shall continue today to give you some more of the viewpoints which furnish a basis on which to form a judgement fitting for today — that is, not for the next few days or weeks, or even for the next year, but for the present time in the wider sense. Let us remember above all that spiritual science is a serious matter and that to understand it in the proper way we must take it more seriously than anything else. If, on the other hand — as is so frequently the case when there is a society which serves as an instrument for the endeavours of spiritual science — if spiritual science is approached with all sorts of prejudices and premature feelings which lead to a state of furious zeal over all manner of things, then this proves a lack

of readiness for spiritual science. Yet it is perfectly possible to understand today that spiritual science alone is suitable for the development of that earnestness which is so needed in these tragic times.

Each individual must set aside his preferences for one direction or another and endeavour to accept things without any prejudice. It is impossible to say certain things without making one person or another feel uncomfortable. There are plenty of people today who regard it as a sin even to hint at certain facts, because they imagine that the mere mention of some fact or other is tantamount to taking sides — which is, of course, not the case at all. Some facts must be looked calmly and squarely in the face because only then can a valid judgement be reached. Of course, perhaps a person does not want to reach such a judgement, but he could reach it if he wanted to stand on the foundation of spiritual science.

I shall now present you with a number of preparatory remarks in order to bring forward, at the end of today's discussion, some points which may awaken an understanding for the manner in which certain — shall we say — occult knowledge is forcing its way into the present-day spiritual development of mankind. Actually, this knowledge is forcing its way to the surface of its own accord as a result of the process of human evolution, so that it is not necessary to make any extra effort to place it within the development of mankind. I shall take my departure from certain details, which I beg you will simply accept as the groundwork, so that later the main emphasis can be placed on what I shall put forward as the outcome of these considerations.

At the beginning of these discussions I said: If, as a good European, one makes every effort to go thoroughly through all the events and facts that have been taking place over decades and have also come to be known recently, if one makes the effort to go thoroughly into them without prejudice, and if one then examines the judgements made on the periphery as a matter of course — and I mean as a matter of course — by people who have rightly borne famous names during the period leading up to today's painful events, then one cannot but reach a certain conclusion. This conclusion is that certain judgements are such that, whatever one might say or assert, the answer is always the same: Never mind, the German will be burnt-after the old pattern: 'Never mind, the Jew will be burnt.' Many, many judgements contain nothing but a certain aversion — whether justified or not is open to question — against anything in the world that might be called German. I am weighing my words carefully.

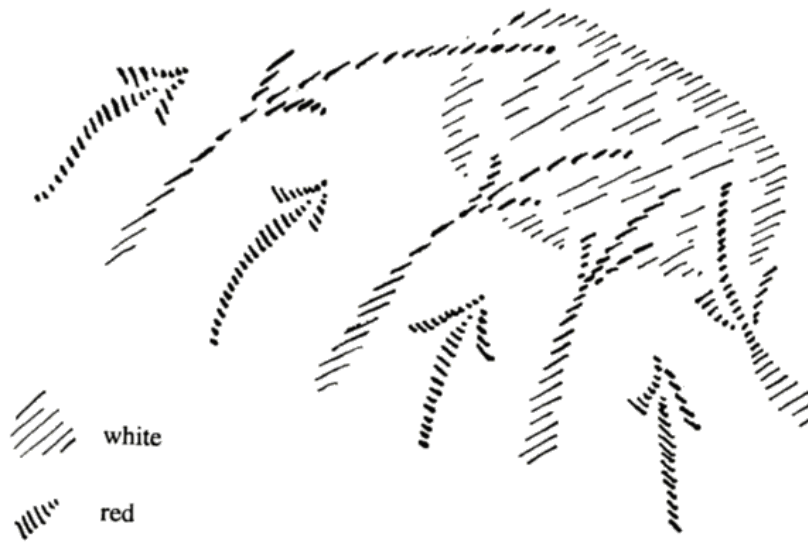
This aversion has recently intensified into a burning hatred which has no inclination whatsoever to scrutinize anything carefully, nor to accept anything that has been carefully scrutinized, but which finds its total justification simply in hating. Yet advantage is not necessarily taken of this justification. If someone says: I hate — and if he really wants to do so and announces that he intends to do so, then why not? Everyone has the right to hate as much as he likes; no objection can be made to it. But very many people are most concerned not to admit to their feelings of hatred in such a situation. They try to lull themselves into forgetting about them by saying all sorts of things which are supposed to wipe away the hatred and put in its place a supposedly objective and just judgement. But this puts everything into a false light. If someone admits honestly: I hate this or that person — then you can talk with him, or perhaps not, depending on the intensity of his hatred. Truthfulness, absolute truthfulness towards oneself and the world in all things is necessary, and if we fail to comprehend that truthfulness is necessary in all things, then we shall be unable to make what spiritual science ought to be for mankind into the most intimate impulse of our own heart and of our own soul. We then say: Certainly, we want a part of spiritual science, that part which is not concerned with our sympathies or antipathies, that part which is useful for us; but we shall reject those parts which do not suit us. It is possible to take this stance, but it is not a standpoint that is beneficial today for human evolution. What I have to say is based on certain remarks, but truly without anger!

It is a well-known fact that very many people see a connection between today's events and the foundation of the German Reich which lies in the centre of Europe. It is not my task to speak about the politics of the German Reich or about any other politics, and I shall not do so. I simply want to give you certain isolated facts as a foundation. It is possible to form an opinion about the events which led to the foundation of this German Reich. It is also possible to form the opinion — whether justified or not — that it is a calamity for mankind that Germans exist at all. Even this is open to discussion. Why not, if someone is open and honest enough to admit that he holds these views? But this is not our concern at the moment.

Let us look at the fact that this German nation led to the founding of the German Reich during the final third of the nineteenth century. There are people who challenge the founding of the German Reich from quite another point of view. They consider that the founding of this empire was not good for human evolution. But people who share the standpoint of the western empires have no right to form a judgement of this kind. For let us

not forget that these very nations of the West are exceedingly attached to the concept of empire, the concept of the state, and that their way of thinking with regard to nationality is very much linked to the various ideas about the state. Therefore, those who unite patriotism with the idea of the state, as do the western nations, have no right to question the idea of an empire at all. If they did they would be quite illogical, for they would be stating that another nation has no right to do what their own nation has done. In a discussion you have to take up a standpoint which provides a basis for discussion and also makes it possible to remain logical. It would be easy to have a discussion with Bakunin about whether a German Reich in Central Europe is something beneficial. But the basis for such a discussion would differ greatly if it were held, not with statesmen but with almost any member of a western nation, because they are so immersed in the idea of the state. So there must be one presupposition, namely, that the idea of empire as such is not rejected out of hand, otherwise there is no basis for discussion. But one's presuppositions must be known if one wants to arrive at valid judgements.

People today no longer think of the historical impulses out of which this empire in Central Europe arose. They do not consider, for instance, that the soil on which this empire has been founded was for many centuries a kind of reservoir, a kind of fountain-head for the rest of Europe. You see, something Roman, in the sense of a continuation of what used to be Roman, no longer exists today. What used to be Roman has, if I may say so, evaporated and has only entered into other folk elements in the form of isolated impulses. Take the soil of Italy. During the course of the Middle Ages all sorts of Germanic elements kept migrating to Italy. I might have an opportunity to define this more closely later on. In today's Italian population, even in their very blood, there flows a tremendous amount of what can be called Germanic. This was instilled into them by the Roman element, but not in any way which might make it possible today to call the people of present-day Italy a continuation of the old Roman people. It was always the case that from Central Europe, as from a reservoir of peoples, all sorts of tribes migrated to the periphery, to Spain, North Africa, Italy, France, Britain. And as the peoples rayed out in this way, something not of these peoples came to meet them: the Roman element. In the middle, as it were, was the reservoir:



A man such as Dante, about whom I spoke to you yesterday, is simply a characteristic expression of a general phenomenon. Who are today's French people? Not merely descendants of the Latin element. Franks, in other words former Germanic tribes, spread out over this land. Their make-up became mingled with folk elements no longer their own, elements containing Latin aspects, via Roman civic attitudes, mixed with ancient Celtic aspects; the result of all this being something in which many more Germanic impulses live than might be imagined. A great many Germanic impulses live in today's Italian population as well. If we wanted to, we could study the migration of the Lombards into northern Italy, a Germanic element which simply absorbed the Roman. Britain was originally inhabited by elements which were then pushed back into Wales and Brittany and even as far as Caledonia, but not before they had sent out messengers to draw the Jutes, Angles and Saxons over to the island so that they might deter the predatory Picts and Scots. Out of all this an element emerged in which the Germanic obviously predominates.

This spreading out took place in all directions. In Central Europe the reservoir remained behind. Connected with the fact that the centre had to develop differently is that jump — which I do not want to brag about as a jump forward — which is expressed in Grimm's law of sound shifts. This law need not be measured with the yardstick of sympathy or antipathy, for it is simply a fact. Anyone can imagine what led to it, but this need not be confused with sympathy or antipathy.

When the Roman Caesars were carrying out their campaigns against the Germanic tribes, those who were first conquered formed by far the greater part of the army, so the Romans fought the Germanic tribes with Germanic tribesmen. Even in later times the massed peoples of the periphery stood by what was to be found in the centre to the extent that it became necessary to form the empire which, in its final phase, was the Holy Roman Empire. You know the passage in *Faust* where the students are glad that they need not worry about the Holy Roman Empire. But, on the other hand, it also came about that the periphery made terrible war on the middle element, it was constantly rebelling against the middle element. One must also take into account that much of what is present in the consciousness of Central Europe is linked with the way the soil of this empire in Central Europe has constantly been chosen as the scene of battle for all the quarrelling nations. This was particularly the case in the seventeenth century, during the Thirty Years' War, in which Central Europe lost up to one third of its population through the fault of the surrounding peoples. Not only towns and villages but whole tracts of countryside were destroyed. The peoples of Central Europe were utterly flayed by those of the periphery. These are historical facts which must simply be looked at squarely.

Now it is not surprising that in Central Europe the inclination arose to want something other peoples had already achieved, namely an empire. But the population of this soil has far less of a relationship to the idea of empire than has that of western Europe, which clings particularly strongly to it, regardless of whether it is a republic or a monarchy. This is irrelevant. You have to look beyond the mere words and see how the individual, whether in a republic or some other form, stands in relation to the state he belongs to, whether his feeling for the way he belongs to it is of this kind or that. I said it is not surprising that the impulse arose in Central Europe to want an empire, a state which makes it possible, on the one side, to build up some protection against the centuries of attack from the West and, on the other, to put up a barrier against what comes from the East — which is something that is still necessary for Central Europe though not, of course, for the East. These things are, I believe, comprehensible.

The Central European population has a different relationship to what might be called the idea of a state; that is it differs from that of the Western European, especially the French, population. In Central Europe the idea of a state has not been living for centuries as it has, for instance, in France, and furthermore the idea of a state as it exists in France is not suitable for what has remained in Central Europe. On the other hand, in

what has remained in Central Europe something developed around the turn of the eighteenth to the nineteenth century which is of such spiritual stature that it will even be admired in the West when one day the hatred will have abated somewhat. And this spiritual stature, which mankind will continue to savour for centuries to come, was achieved in Central Europe at a time when the West was making it utterly impossible for Central Europe to build a coherent state structure. Lessing, Goethe, Schiller, Herder and all the others who are connected with this stream did not become great within a coherent state structure. They became great despite the absence of a proper state structure. It is hardly possible to imagine how different it was for Goethe, who became great without any coherent state structure, compared with Corneille, or Racine, who can scarcely be imagined without the background of that state structure which was given its brilliance and eminence by Louis XIV, the king who said: 'L'état, c'est moi!' These things should be looked at together.

However, during the course of the nineteenth century impulses arose among the inhabitants of Central Europe which were at first entirely inward, impulses which gave birth to the inclination to want some form of state structure also. This inclination first came into being in an intensely idealistic way, and those who are familiar with the development of the nineteenth century know that the idea of a state which moved the inhabitants of Central Europe was at first anchored, above all, in the heads of all sorts of idealists, people who were more idealistic than practical, who were most unpractical with regard to the idea of a state, compared with the practical westerners.

So we follow the development of the endeavours to form a German Reich which could encompass the German peoples of Central Europe. We see, particularly in the year 1848, how the idea takes on certain forms which have a definite idealistic stamp. But because the nineteenth century was the age of materialism, anything of an idealistic stamp was not favoured with much luck. The blame for this bad luck lay not so much with the nation as with the materialism of the nineteenth century. So then it became necessary to achieve in a practical way what could not be achieved in an idealistic way; in other words it had to be achieved just as it had always been achieved during the course of European history. For how did states come into being? States came into being through wars, and through all the other things which also led to the German Reich between the years 1864 and 1870.

Those who experienced the days when the new German Reich was being founded know how pain-filled were the hearts of the ones who were still imbued with the ideas of 1848, when the aim was to found this Reich out of feelings and ideals. There were, in the sixties and seventies, those who favoured a 'great German' arrangement, while others favoured a 'little German' arrangement. Those who favoured a 'greater' Germany stood by the old idealistic principles and hoped to found the Reich on idealistic foundations and impulses. They did not want to make any conquests; they simply wanted to unite everything that was German, including Austria, in a common Reich or state. Anyone who imagines that these people desired to make even the smallest conquest has failed to grasp the degree of national idealism that lived in them. For a long period they were in bitter opposition to those who favoured a 'little' Germany, and who, under Bismarck, founded the present German Reich-that is, the German Reich under the leadership of Prussia. But in the end the 'greater German' party made their peace with the others because they came to understand that in Central Europe in the nineteenth century things had to go the way they did. They came to terms with this and realized that in the end Germany had to be founded in the same way as had been France and England. In this way those who favoured a 'greater' Germany gradually came to terms with something that went utterly against their ideals. These things have to be taken into consideration.

Consider further: Whatever opinion one might have about the events that took place between 1866 and 1870/71, whomsoever one might blame or not blame for the war of 1870, one must not forget that on the side of France efforts were made to prevent the foundation of the German Reich, that French politics were aimed at preventing the creation of a German Reich. Of course this can be denied, but things which are denied nevertheless remain true. When I speak of the French side, or the English side, I never mean the people themselves. I mean the cohesion of those who are at the helm at any given time, those who cause the external events to happen. People may think what they like about the Spanish succession, or about a French or a German party in favour of war. But there is no disputing the fact that there were people in France who made every effort to implement their judgement: namely, that the creation of an independent German Reich in Central Europe was not in keeping with the 'gloire' of the French state. This was one of the causes of the war of 1870/71. As a counter-stroke another impulse developed, about which once again one may think what one likes. This was the opinion that the

German Reich might just as well be founded in the same manner as the French Empire, namely, by making war on a neighbour. These things must be looked at in cold blood.

So this German Reich was founded in the manner with which you are familiar, though there is little inclination today to examine the historical facts minutely. However, most of you know them, at least in outline. So we can say: The German Reich was founded, while France and Germany were at war with one another, in such a way that the forces generated by this war were those that brought the German Reich into being.

Let us look at the moment when Paris was not yet under siege but when the German victories were already making the founding of the German Reich seem a possibility. There was cause to view the resistance to the founding of this German Reich as broken, and so in Central Europe the idea arose to set in motion the founding of the Reich favoured by the 'little' German party. We are looking approximately at November 1870. In doing this we come up against the fact that, out of all that took place in what later became Germany — that is, the German Reich — there arose the feeling that this way of founding the German Reich has done great damage to Europe, the feeling that the structure of this Reich is a structure of menace. To speak of 'Germany' is no more than a want of tact on the part of those who live in the periphery. There is no Germany today, any more than there is a Kaiser of Germany. There are individual German states and the one who has been chosen to represent these states before the rest of the world is expressly not called 'Kaiser of Germany' but 'German Kaiser', which is something quite different. This has come about out of certain characteristics of the nature of Central Europe. I might point out that when the new Romanian state was recently formed there was much discussion on whether the king should be entitled 'King of the Romanians' or 'King of Romania'. Such things come to mean a great deal the moment one starts to look at realities and not only illusions. The title 'King of Romania' was chosen for quite specific historical reasons in place of the originally intended 'Romanian King' or 'King of the Romanians.'

Now if we allow judgements which have been in the making for some time to work on us, judgements which have recently in some cases reached new peaks of folly — again, we are not discussing what is justified, for everything is, of course, always either justifiable or unjustifiable in its separate parts — if we summarize these judgements we find that there has come into a being a feeling that great damage has been done to Europe by the founding of the German Reich, a feeling that the

structure of this Reich in Central Europe is, in a way, a structure of menace. In order to make this clear I should like to read to you a text which, in addition, contains a number of other things I am also concerned with at present. It has been said: Germany, or the Germans, feel themselves to be threatened in some way, and yet in fact it is Germany that poses a threat to the whole of Europe. A judgement has been expressed which is rather significant in connection with this. It was printed in the journal *Matin* dated 8 October 1905. Do not forget that when we are concerned with realities we need to know that behind the opinion of one person there always stand the judgements of countless others, and also that realities always proceed from realities. In *Matin* of 8 October 1905 we read:

'If Herr von Bülow wants to complain that Germany is being isolated, he ought first to ask himself whether perhaps Germany has not isolated herself from the rest of Europe by her actions. The authors of the mistrust and the suspicious hatred which are squeezing the German Reich ever more tightly by the day are not called Delcassé, Lansdowne, Edward VII or Roosevelt, but Bismarck and Moltke, Wilhelm II and von Bülow. These are the ones who have created and developed this prickly, irritable and provoking Reich, bristling with weaponry, which has been casting challenging glances at Europe for the past quarter century and which Europe in the end cannot help looking at with envy. By making her ever more Prussian, they are the ones who are turning away the sympathy which she was guaranteed in earlier days by her active scientific ways and her sober modesty. They are the ones who are sending out sparks of barbaric menace or brutal passion in this time of weariness. Europe is afraid of the fire that never stops smouldering in Berlin; Europe is taking precautionary measures.'

So where do we stand with this judgement that the German Reich poses a threat for the whole of Europe?

Among those in the West who express opinions today there are unlikely to be any who do not see Germany as a threat for the whole of Europe, or who do not consider that the worst thing that could possibly have

happened was to turn this people, who formerly shone through their sciences and their sober modesty — as is so aptly expressed here — into a threat for the whole of Europe. For that this is what it has become is repeated over and over again by countless voices and in rivers of printers' ink.

It is easy to say what is often said, namely that this Reich was not created out of a historical necessity but out of 'Germanic arrogance' — a misuse, incidentally, of the word 'Germanic' — and further that it is filled with people who never cease stressing that Germans lead the world, Germans are the saviours of the world, and so on. Countless times we have heard it said: The Germans have grown arrogant, they think they have been called to rule the world, they consider the Reich they have founded to be something urgently needed in modern times, and so on; the pride, the arrogance of the Germans has become utterly insufferable. Such are the judgements which one hears in ever-changing forms.

I have no intention of glossing over anything, but I now want to read to you a judgement which was made at the time the Reich was founded, a time I have already mentioned. I said: Let us return to November 1870. What I want to read to you might make some people jump up and down with impatience — pardon the flippant expression — and say: There you have it! This is the kind of idea people have about the importance of this German Reich! It had hardly come into being, indeed was still in the process of being founded, and already it was being presented as something beneficial, not only for Germans but for the whole of Europe, indeed for the whole world — even for the French themselves! To show you that I am not glossing over anything I shall read to you a judgement expressed in the year 1870:

'No nation ever had so bad a neighbour as Germany has had in France for the last four hundred years; bad in all manner of ways; insolent, rapacious, insatiable, unappeasable, continually aggressive ... Germany, I do clearly believe, would be a foolish nation not to think of raising up some secure boundary-fence between herself and such a neighbour now that she has the chance. There is no law of nature that I know of, no Heaven's Act of Parliament, whereby France, alone of terrestrial beings, shall not restore any portion of her plundered goods when the owners they were wrenched from have an opportunity upon them ... The French complain

dreadfully of threatened "loss of honour" ... But will it save the honour of France to refuse paying for the glass she has voluntarily broken in her neighbour's windows? For the present, I must say, France looks more and more delirious, miserable, blameable, pitiable, and even contemptible. She refuses to see the facts that are lying palpable before her face, and the penalties she has brought upon herself ... Ministers flying up in balloons ballasted with nothing but outrageous public lies, proclamations of victories that were creatures of the fancy; a Government subsisting altogether on mendacity, willing that horrid bloodshed should continue and increase rather than that they, beautiful Republican creatures, should cease to have the guidance of it: I know not when or where there was seen a nation so covering itself with dishonour ... The quantity of conscious mendacity that France, official and other, has perpetrated latterly, is something wonderful and fearful ... It is evidently their belief that new celestial wisdom is radiating out of France upon all the other overshadowed nations; that France is the new Mount Zion of the universe ... I believe Bismarck will get his Alsace and what he wants of Lorraine; and likewise that it will do him, and us, and all the world, and even France itself by and by, a great deal of good ... Bismarck seems to me to be striving with strong faculty, by patient, grand, and successful steps, towards an object beneficial to Germans and to all other men. That noble, patient, deep, pious, and solid Germany should be at length welded into a nation and become Queen of the Continent, instead of vapouring, vainglorious, gesticulating, quarrelsome, restless and oversensitive France, seems to me the hopefulest public fact that has occurred in my time ... The appearance of a strong German Reich brings about a new situation. If the military states of France and Russia were to join forces, they could crush a splintered Germany lying between them. But now their arbitrary actions are faced with a considerable restraint ...'

Now I am going to omit a phrase for a reason which you will understand in a moment:

'What every English statesman has longed for has left the realm of ideas and become reality ...'

You could ask, is this megalomania? Dear friends, I have just read to you a leading article which appeared in *The Times* in November 1870, but I omitted one word in the final sentence. The complete sentence reads:

'But now their arbitrary actions are faced with a considerable restraint. The strong Central Power every English statesman has longed for has left the realm of ideas and become reality.'

As you see, it is necessary to look at things as they really are. Those who read *The Times* today should to some extent take into account the opinion of *The Times* of November 1870. They might even attain to an unusual view of that most ghastly phrase ever coined, that of 'German militarism', if they were to think a little about what was said from the English side at that time: that the appearance of a strong German Reich brings about a new situation. If the military states of France and Russia joined forces, they could crush a splintered Germany lying between them.

Times change, as you see. But people still believe they can make absolute judgements, and they are so happy in their absolute judgements. It is truly not enmity towards the English being and the English people if one passes a judgement which may seem wrong to many people from England, such as the one I passed yesterday about Sir Edward Grey. Those English who think it is enmity are, in fact, their own worst enemy. But I am not in the habit of passing judgement without any support from what can be regarded as a reliable source. You could say that whoever said what I said about Sir Edward Grey was no Englishman and cannot have known him. So now let me read to you a judgement about him by an Englishman who knew him well because he was a fellow minister. During the winter of 1912/13 this man said about Sir Edward Grey:

'It is amusing for those of us who have known Grey since the beginning of his career to note how much he impresses his Continental colleagues. They seem to assume there is

something in him which is, in fact, not there. He is one of the foremost sporting anglers of the kingdom and also quite a good tennis player. He does not, however, possess any political or diplomatic capacities, unless a certain wearisome tediousness in his manner of speaking and also an extraordinary tenacity, were to be seen as such. Earl Rosebery once said of him that the impression he gives of great concentration stems from the fact that there is never a thought in his head which might distract him from whatever paper he is studying. When recently a somewhat more lively diplomat expressed admiration for Grey's modest bearing, which never reveals what might be going on in his head, a rather pert secretary said: "A money box filled to the brim with gold sovereigns does not rattle when you shake it. Neither is there a sound if it contains not so much as a single penny. In the case of Winston Churchill, a few coppers rattle so loudly that it gets on your nerves. In the case of Grey there is not a sound. Only the one who holds the money box in his hand can tell whether it is full to the brim or completely empty!" Though impertinent, this is well put. I believe that Grey has the most decent character, though he does sometimes allow a rather unfortunate vanity to mislead him into getting involved with affairs which it would be better to leave alone in the interest of keeping his hands clean. He is always excused by the fact that on his own he is unable to comprehend or think anything through properly. On his own he is no kind of schemer, but the moment a skillful schemer takes possession of him he can appear as the most accomplished schemer. This is why political schemers have always been tempted to choose precisely him for their tool, and to this alone he owes his position.'

We must take note of these things so that we are not tempted to believe that the peace of Europe in July 1914 was in particularly good hands. By using a number of documents referred to in various books anything can be proved. What matters is whether these things were used in the right way in the handling of those forces which are important.

Another thing you must note is that historical processes grow out of one another, they gradually take shape. What led to the events of 1914 had been in preparation for a long time, a very long time. Much has been said about this preparation, for instance, that the countries of the Triple Entente did not have any agreement which was against Central Europe; that the only purpose of the Triple Entente was to cultivate peace in Europe. All sorts of facts have been paraded as ostensible proof for this supposition. I would have to tell you some very long stories if I wanted to prove fully what I have to say. This is not possible, but I want to give you a few points of reference. For instance, I should like to read you some passages from a speech made in France in October 1905, because in the future this will have a certain part to play in history. Such speeches are always one-sided, of course, but if one bears everything in mind — and here there are a number of important points to bear in mind — a judgement can be made. A number of important things may be taken from this speech by Jaurès from the year 1905. I am able to choose this example because I have recently spoken about Jaurès in quite another context. As you know, Jaurès was a democrat, indeed a social-democrat and, whatever else one might think of him, he was certainly a man who was seriously concerned not only with peace which would have been so necessary for Europe, or at least western Europe, but with calling together all those people in the world who seriously longed to keep peace. So in a way Jaurès had a right to speak as he did. In October 1905, shortly after the French democratic government had ditched Delcassé — pardon the flippant expression — when it had become apparent during a session of the chamber that he was capable of endangering peace in Europe in the near future, Jaurès commented as follows:

'England has recognized Delcassé's dream and is quietly preparing to make use of it. The threat posed by German industry and German commerce, in all markets of the world, to English trade and English profits, is increasing daily.

It would be cynical, it would be scandalous, if England were to declare war on Germany merely in order to annihilate her military might, destroy her fleet and send her trade to the bottom of the ocean.

But if one day a conflict were to arise between France and Germany in which France brought forward legal reasons and the demand for the restoration of her national integrity, then

behind these splendid pretexts the calculations of the English capitalists, who want to remove German competition by force, could creep in and use this as a means of achieving their aim.

So when difficulties arose in the Moroccan affair between France and Germany, and the latter, suspecting a coalition between France and England, made a brusque intervention in order to force the two to make declarations, it turned out that England — I have to say this I'm afraid — was all too inclined to fan the flames. It is a fact that, at the very moment when events were reaching a climax, England offered France an offensive-defensive pact in which she guaranteed us the fullest support and committed herself not only to sink the German fleet but also to occupy the Kaiser Wilhelm Canal and land one hundred thousand troops in Schleswig-Holstein. If this pact had been signed — and Monsieur Delcassé wanted to do so — this would have meant immediate war. This is the reason why we socialists demanded the resignation of Monsieur Delcassé, and by doing so we have rendered a service to France, Europe and mankind in general.'

Above all, Jaurès knew those things which many people do not know when they arrive at judgements — most essential and important things. He was even careless enough to express these essential and important things in such a way as to hint that he might say more in the future. It is well known to occultists that in the last third of the nineteenth century a member of a certain brotherhood made known to the world certain things which, in the opinion of the brotherhood, should not have been made public. One day soon after he had done this he disappeared; he had been murdered. Jaurès was not an occultist, but we may be excused for being curious as to whether the world will ever hear what led to his death on the eve of the war.

The things which Jaurès said go back to the session of the chamber during which Delcassé, the creature of Edward VII, as well as other creatures who worked behind the scenes, was ditched by the government, perhaps not so much because he wanted to smooth the way for war as for quite another reason.

We are in the year 1905. Russia is still engaged over in the East and it is, therefore, to be hoped that if the flames being fanned by Delcassé in the West really start to flare up the outcome will not be what it would be if Russia were no longer busy in the East. But Delcassé is not a person who takes things lying down. When those who did not want a war accused him of driving matters to the brink of war, he replied that England had let it be known to France that she was prepared to occupy the Kaiser Wilhelm Canal and attack Schleswig-Holstein with 100,000 troops and, if France so wished, this offer would be repeated in writing. This piece of news, which Delcassé presented to his ministerial colleagues who were about to turn him out was, of course, the upshot of negotiations he had been conducting behind their backs and in which King Edward VII had also been heavily involved.

I could quote many items which would verify this fact, which was published in *Matin*, and later also in other journals. But I only want to draw your attention to the fact that at least there was someone, even at the time, who looked at the matter more closely and found it suspicious. This was a personality who is possibly not at all liked by people, particularly in France. He was the clerical senator Gaudain de Villaine who, on 20 November 1906, when Clemenceau's ministry had already begun, asked what was the situation between France and England about which so much was being heard. Clemenceau answered that so far as the idea of revenge was concerned, he was indignant that a French senator could have set such a trap for him, obliging him either to disappoint the Orange Lodge or make a declaration of war, and he would therefore refuse to reply. So Clemenceau responded to the question from a senator as to whether anything existed in the way of a coalition between France and England, which could lead to a European war, by refusing to reply. For if he were to reply he would either have to disappoint the Orange Lodge with regard to the idea of revenge, or he would have to make a declaration of war. So you see: If Clemenceau had been open about the relationship at that time between France and England he would have had to make a declaration of war — not a declaration of peace but a declaration of war. He said this himself in 1906.

We must not forget that what works in every case in the world is what one person hears from another. Can you imagine that it was possible in Central Europe to believe in the 'peaceful' intentions of western Europe, while at the same time having to listen to not one, but to countless such facts? To judge such things a number of factors must be taken into account. One of these is the utter absurdity of speaking of Central

European militarism in the context of Central Europe in its widest sense. For any such militarism is an obvious consequence of being sandwiched between two military states.

People with absolutely no sense of reality might ask: Were not all sorts of proposals made about disarmament? You need only look at these suggestions for disarmament! A particular goal can be achieved by quite a number of different routes. Of course some people — I do not say nations, I say people — in western Europe would have preferred to achieve what they wanted, and still want, without a war which would spill the blood of hundreds of thousands on all sides. They would have preferred to gloat gleefully and say: Look, we have created peace!

One of the means preferred by western European politicians of a certain calibre was the disarmament proposal, for this was simply a different means of achieving the goal. When it turned out that no headway was made with disarmament proposals, this particular route had to be abandoned as impassable. If it had been possible to fetter Central Europe by means of disarmament this would, of course, have been preferred. But this was only one of several possible methods.

One must not be misled by words or by illusions; one must be clear about what people want. So ever and again it is necessary to stand up for people with a healthy way of thinking, people who really want what they say they want, even if, under the influence of hate and all sorts of other feelings, they are identified as those who are to blame for something. One must stand up for them and be clear about how unfair it is to say: The English did this or that, the English are to blame for this or that. This is not a sensible judgement. But neither is it sensible if an English person feels hurt when facts such as the one just discussed are revealed. One must sit up and take notice when, on a basis of good sense, fingers are pointed to certain factors in the great complex of causes. Thus we find under the heading 'The German Scene' in the *Daily News* of 13 October 1905 a declaration that says the following about the British government of the time, which bears so much of the blame for what is still going on today. I must add that Sir Edward Grey's predecessor was not a nought. Lord Lansdowne knew much more about what was what. But from a certain point onwards, those who stood behind the scenes needed a nought, in order to be able to operate more easily:

'And it is high time that Lord Lansdowne should explain and defend this chapter in the diplomacy for which he and his colleagues are constitutionally responsible. There has been a tendency of late to place Lord Lansdowne upon a pinnacle, but the country will have little reason to thank him if it be found that he has permitted this country to drift into entanglements directly involving a risk of European war ... The best of courts will sometimes harbour fleeting family feuds, but what have the people of Great Britain or the people of Germany to do with these things? ... The anti-German hotheads in this country and the anti-British hotheads in Germany alone stand in the way of such a consummation [of friendly and stable relations] and for their tempestuous fads vast populations may one day have to suffer dearly.'

You have to take into account the essential things in the right places. But never mind all the facts; good sense alone could prove that the two Central European states had not the least cause to bring about a war. How would the prospect of war have seemed to those who thought about it? France would have had to say that in the event of a European war, unless certain conditions came about, she would be likely to suffer a great deal. However, this was not believed in France because there was still such a strong faith in the France which had ruled Europe for centuries. In Italy the conditions are rather special. Perhaps if we have time we shall discuss them further in another connection. But Italy also, under certain conditions, could not imagine that any great advantages would come of a war which would throw everything in Europe into chaos. In Russia, too, conditions are rather special, as I have already told you in connection with Russia's relationship to the Slav peoples, the Slav race.

This gives me an opportunity, by the way, to quote you an example of the depths of Sir Edward Grey's thoughts. What did his colleague Rosebery say? That the impression he gave of great concentration stemmed from the fact that he never had a thought in his head to distract him? Well, once a thought was infiltrated into his meditating mind by those who worked by infiltrating thoughts into his mind, the upshot was that he suddenly said: The Russian race has a great future and is destined to accomplish great things. He had forgotten that it was the Slav peoples who had been meant

and that there is no such thing as a Russian race. When speaking of realities it is absolutely necessary to distinguish between Russianism and the Slav peoples.

In Russia only those who represented Russianism could imagine any great outcome for a European war, namely, the realization, at least partially, of the testament of Peter the Great. Apart from that, a great deal of suffering was expected, but not that suffering on which the representatives of Russianism would have placed any value.

England was able to say to herself that she would lose and risk the least. Now that the sorrowful events of war have been going on for many months, if an assessment were to be made of who had suffered least, or indeed hardly at all — at least in regard to the opinion of world history — the answer would be: England. England will be able to continue waging war for a long time without suffering to any great degree.

But the so-called Central Powers would most certainly have had nothing to gain from a war and they had no desire for such a war. They always displayed two tendencies. On the one hand there was a certain carefree air which arose, not out of a knowledge of what was going on but out of a basic characteristic; for the Austrian character is fundamentally carefree. On the other hand emphasis was always placed on the statement that all they wanted was to keep what they already had, and that any other suggestion was nonsense. There is no question, for instance, that any part of Serbia was to be annexed, if those who attempted to do so had succeeded in localizing the war between Austria and Serbia.

If England had been led by a statesman who had not said as early as 23 July: If Austria makes war on Serbia, this could lead to a European war; if England had been led by one who had said: We shall do everything possible to make sure that the war is localized; then events would have taken quite a different turn. But this would have had to be someone who formed his judgements in a different way from Sir Edward Grey, who was hypnotized from the start by the thought: If Austria makes war on Serbia, there will be a European war. He never asked what Russia had to do with the whole matter of war between Austria and Serbia. This never occurred to him and the suspicion cannot be detected in anything he said. All he ever saw was the justification for Russia's influence in Serbia, a justification for an influence which had been prepared in a remarkable way and was borne on remarkable currents, as I have shown you.

Nothing that has taken place in this connection, including the 364 assassinations between the years 1883 and 1887, has anything whatever to do with any kind of judgement about the Serbian people. All they have done is to fight bravely, and in their present condition they are still doing so. To them alone is owed the only success achieved in recent weeks down there by the Entente. No one who understands these matters will judge against any people, let alone one who, right into its most tragic days, has shown that it is not only willing — to the extent of sacrificing its own blood — but also able to stand up for its true nature, always present and at the ready in grave times, if only it is allowed to be. But we must remember also that the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand was only the last great blow in a whole series of assassination attempts against Austrian government officials to have taken place within the space of a few months. This was in fact a particular campaign, which was even quite comprehensible and in keeping with certain people. You remember what I told you about the occult background of this individuality, Archduke Franz Ferdinand. You also remember that it is a fact, a paradoxical fact, that this couple, kindly disposed towards the Slavs in the highest sense, were slain by Slavs — or seemingly so. The deeper connections are made more approachable by a certain understanding of the heart. We see a human being, kindly disposed in the highest sense towards the Slavs, slain — together with his wife — by Slav bullets. At the last moment the Duchess spies from her carriage a young female standing quite near; smiles at her, seconds before the bullets strike, because she notices she is a Slav woman, and exclaims: 'Look, a Slavka!' Then the bullets strike. What a strange karma this reveals! Before the bullets strike her down, the Duchess exclaims in delight, because her eye has fallen on one of her beloved Slav people.

I described earlier the far-reaching connection existing between machinations in the Balkan countries and a number of well-prepared situations on the Apennine peninsula. And I now want to ask once again a question I have already put to you: Why was it written in a rather inferior Paris journal in January 1913 that it was necessary for the good of mankind for Archduke Franz Ferdinand to be killed? Why was it said twice in this so-called 'Occult Almanac' that he would be killed? It is necessary to look at all the facts at once. We will find that the alchemy of the bullets which were used for this assassination was exceedingly complicated and that, although they stemmed from a Serbian arsenal, they had been 'anointed' from quite another quarter — if I may put it symbolically.

These are things which expressed themselves in what could be seen, for instance, in Austria. Imagine Switzerland surrounded only by those who hate her. I doubt whether this would have a particularly reassuring influence, especially if the hatred were expressed in sayings such as those which have become current in Romania: *Jos Austria perfida!* — That is: Down with perfidious Austria!; or: Rather Russian than Austrian! — and so on. If this is how things stand, and if you consider all the things that were written in Italy quite a long time before the war against Austria broke out, then you will understand that the situation was far from reassuring. In this way an extensive campaign was organized which spread far and wide in the countries surrounding Austria. I am not defending any particular state, but merely mentioning facts.

Consider, for instance, also the following: At the Berlin Congress, Austria received, through the significant influence of Lord Salisbury, a mandate to occupy Bosnia and Herzegovina. When England gave Austria the mandate to undertake this action in the Balkans during the seventies, it turned out that in Austria there was passionate opposition to the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina because the Germans in Austria said: We have enough Slavs already; we cannot possibly absorb any more Slavs. If the idea had arisen in Austria to seize some fragment of Serbia by an act of war it would have met with the sharpest opposition in the interests of Austria, which were well understood, for nothing would have been more stupid than to covet some fragment of Serbian territory. The only desire was to hold the empire together in order to counteract the campaign. This was perfectly honest, though it may have been careless. Seen objectively, it becomes perfectly obvious that the war would not have started as a consequence of the ultimatum of Austria to Serbia if Russia had not taken up the stance we all know about, despite knowing perfectly well that Austria was not bent on any form of conquest. In all this, however, we must remember the moods. The consequence of everything we have been discussing was that moods arose, not only in the periphery but also in Central Europe.

Now I want to give you a small example to show you how, despite everything, it is possible to form a judgement about these things if one really sets out in earnest to achieve a valid judgement. It is interesting to look at certain points at definite times, for only in this way can one recognize something. For example, we might ask: What must it have looked like in the soul of someone who felt responsible for Austria, let us say round about the time of the assassination of the heir to the throne — I mean immediately before and immediately after this?

In order to reach a valid judgement with regard to the mood amongst honest people in Austria, the best moment to choose would be that which immediately preceded the assassination, for people were not then influenced by what happened in the aftermath of the assassination. You see how cautious I am trying to be. I am not going to consider the nervous and anxious souls as they were immediately after the assassination. Instead, let us look at what lived in the soul of the honest Austrian under all the influences which, since Delcassé, had made themselves felt coming from western Europe and connecting up with eastern Europe, with Russia. Now, I can place before your souls such a judgement by reading to you a passage from an essay which was written just at the moment in question. Though it appeared after the assassination it was already in the process of being printed when it happened. So it was written by an Austrian in the weeks immediately preceding the assassination:

[Gap in the shorthand report.]

Here you have the judgement of a man whose thoughts are based on common sense, someone who saw all the factors at work in Europe just before the final event, the assassination, took place. Everyone knew that at the instigation of Russia the Balkan states would be forced to declare war on Austria. Therefore, the right thing to do in order to avoid war would have been to start just at this point with attempts to localize the situation, for externally the prospects looked quite good.

It is necessary when making judgements according to one's own feelings — for us, judgements are facts — to look at the facts themselves and use them as the foundation. Today I have only been able to give you a few isolated facts in order to explain what I mean. But I gave them to you expressly for the purpose of developing the facts; nothing more. Let us be clear about the purpose of introducing such facts: the purpose is to promote the truth. The truth, even if, paradoxically, it may be damaging, can never be as damaging as an untruth.

Those who understand the facts know what unending lies were fabricated, from the moment it became possible to lie, unhindered, as a result of the possibility of making oneself heard above the other side — that is, of drowning out the other side by means of the various methods which came to the fore in such a grievous way. But we are concerned with

truth and with the admission of the truth. It is quite definitely not the truth to maintain that this war was provoked by Central Europe. Perhaps people cannot speak the truth because they do not know it. Obviously, when something like this war comes about, both parties are usually partly to blame, but in different ways. But I am not talking about blame, I am talking about the uselessness of judgements which have been made, which take no account of the actual truth of the matter. Of course, I do not expect that these judgements will cease to be made, for obviously I know what happens in the course of human evolution and that, especially in our time, there is no inclination to base judgements on valid foundations; for there is so much in our time that prevents judgements being based on valid foundations. But one really ought to state properly what one is talking about.

Those who are connected with certain sources of these grievous world events, which from sheer negligence of thought still tend to be called 'war', those who therefore feel connected with what is emanating in the periphery from certain centres, should admit quite openly: Yes, we want what certain centres in the periphery want, we want the people of Central Europe to be partly exterminated and partly condemned to serfdom.

Certain people in these centres, however, do not want the cultural life of Central Europe to perish. They talk of the wonderful science and culture and of the sober modesty which used to exist. In other words, they would be happy to lord it over these territories of culture and modesty by acting in the way the Romans behaved towards the Greeks. Obviously, Greek culture was higher; and the Romans did not destroy it. Similarly, no one in the Entente wants to destroy German culture. On the contrary, these people will be only too pleased if German culture continues to flourish vigorously, but they want a relationship similar to that of the Romans to the Greeks: that is, they want to make a kind of cultural helotry out of what exists in Central Europe. All right, then let them say so! Why deck it out with something so utterly ridiculous! For German militarism — which is not to be denied — has its true origin in French and Russian militarism. Without French and Russian militarism there would be no German militarism.

Let them say that what they want is to helotize Central Europe! Let them say they would be quite content if this could be the outcome! Let them admit that they hate the presence of such a people in the middle of Europe who want to do what all the other surrounding peoples are doing! If someone says: I hate everything German; I do not want the Germans to

have what other peoples have — well and good. You can then talk with him about it, or not if he does not want to, but he is nevertheless telling the truth. But if he keeps repeating: I want to destroy German militarism, I don't want the Germans to oppress other peoples, I want the Germans to do this or that — as is said today and has been constantly repeated for years — then he is lying. Perhaps he does not know that he is lying — but he is lying, he really is lying. Objectively he is lying, even though perhaps subjectively he is not.

What matters is to stand on the foundation of truth, even if this truth is perhaps harmful, even if it is embarrassing. It is necessary to admit these things and not anaesthetize oneself with empty phrases about German militarism for which one has a hatred to which one does not want to admit, even to oneself. One must admit that one wants to helotize the German people, yet cannot face up to wanting this. Perhaps an anaesthetic is needed; but it is not the truth! It is most important to stand on the foundation of truth. To have the courage to face the truth always leads one a little step further. But one must have the courage to stand by the truth.

It is a fact that every people, as a people, has a mission within the total evolution of mankind. Every people has a mission, and all these various missions together create a whole, namely, the evolution of mankind. But it is equally true that certain individuals, especially those who come to be familiar with the mission of mankind, have the arrogance to set in train certain things which are in the interest of a limited group, and for this they make use of what lies in human evolution.

Let us take the English people. If what is necessarily meant to come about in the fifth post-Atlantean period through the English people really does come about, then it will never be possible, through the very nature of this English people, for England to start a war. For the true being of the English people in their mission in world history is opposed to any kind of warlike impulse. The real nature of the English people makes them the least warlike nation possible. And yet for centuries there have never been ten consecutive years during which England has not been involved in war. We are living, after all, in the realm of maya. But despite this, truth is truth. In the nature of the English people lies the exclusion of any kind of war, just as for centuries it has been in the nature of the French people — not any longer; now it has to be artificially incited — to conduct war over and over again. It is not in the nature of the English people to wage war, and the reason for this is that the special configuration of the English folk spirit means that its purpose is to evolve what is to be incorporated into

the consciousness soul of the fifth post-Atlantean period. This in turn is achieved through all those connections between people arising from logical and scientific thinking on the one hand, and on the other, from commercial and industrial thinking. And when Brooks Adams placed before the world the ideas I mentioned to you earlier, this was an advance thrust, coming from America, pointing towards what the English people must recognize as their mission in world history, based on their deeper nature which contains none of those warlike and imaginative characteristics such as those present, for instance, in the nature of the Russian people.

Now much will depend on whether this deeper nature of the English people will one day come to be understood in a deeper, spiritual scientific sense. In a more external way some individuals have understood it. The work of Herbert Spencer and John Stuart Mill shows that the most inspired spirits have fully understood it, though from their more materialistic standpoint and not, as yet, from a spiritual scientific standpoint. I can recommend that you read with some enthusiasm the political essays of Herbert Spencer and John Stuart Mill, for you can learn a very great deal from them. This spirit of peace which, among other things, makes possible in a special way a certain kind of political thinking, in the manner I have already described, has indeed overflowed to Europe from England. Someone who has entered into European life, from as many and varied points of view as I can really claim to have done, knows, for instance, that all the political sciences of Central Europe have certainly been influenced from the direction of England. And it is no coincidence that the founders of German socialism, Marx and Engels, founded this German socialism from England.

It happens very easily that the nature of Central Europe is misunderstood. The true nature of Central Europe is still almost always misunderstood in western Europe. How might it be otherwise? The culture of Central Europe was so permeated by the French element that one of the greatest, most important works of German literature, one which set the tone at the zenith of German culture, Lessing's *Laokoon*, had a peculiar destiny: Lessing considered seriously whether he should write it in German or French. Educated people in Central Europe in the eighteenth century wrote German badly and French well. This must not be forgotten. And in the nineteenth century Central Europe was in danger of becoming totally anglicized, of being fully taken over by Englishness. It is no wonder that the nature of Central Europe is so little known, since it is constantly being submerged from all sides, even spiritually and culturally. Think, for instance, of Goethe's theory of evolution in respect of animals and plants.

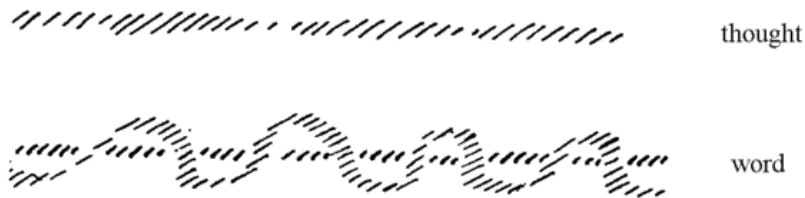
This is truly a stage in advance of Darwin's materialism just as, in respect of Grimm's law, the German language is a stage ahead of Gothic-English. Yet in Germany herself materialistic Darwinism was favoured by fortune, and not her own German Goetheanism. So it is not surprising that the German spirit is poorly understood and that little effort is made to really understand it as it should be understood, if justice is to be done to it.

As I said, the political sciences, in particular, were strongly influenced by the English way of thinking. But what is urgently needed now is that the different peoples should come to a certain degree of self-knowledge. Without this self-knowledge, for which Herbert Spencer and John Stuart Mill are not adequate — but which must be based on spiritual science and on a sense for what spiritual science can give — without this, no healing can come.

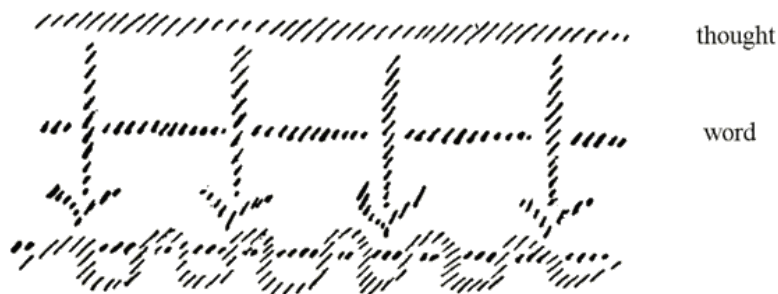
Just consider how difficult it is, for example, to grasp the following — whereby no arid theory is meant, but something at the basis of life: There exists in the soul a certain relationship between the thought and the word. This is a fact. Let us imagine that in the structure of the soul the word lies in this field, and the thought in this one:



The French people have the tendency to push the thought right down to the word; thus, when they speak, the thought is pushed right into what they are saying. That is why, especially in this field, there is so easily an intoxication with words, with phrases — and I mean phrases in the best sense:

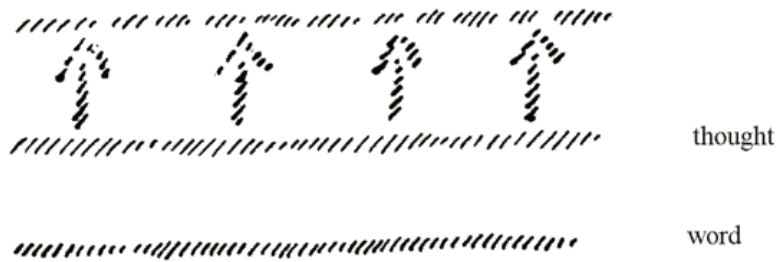


The English people press the thought down below the word, so that the thought mingles with the word and seeks reality beyond the word:



The German language has the peculiarity of not taking the thought as far as the word. Only because of this was it possible for philosophers such as Fichte, Schelling, Hegel — who it would be impossible to imagine anywhere else in the world — to do their work. The German language does not take the thought as far as the word, it retains the thought in the thought. Because of this, however, people will very easily misunderstand one another. For a true translation in this situation is impossible, it is always only a substitute. It is not possible to say what Hegel said, in English or French. It is impossible; such translations can only ever be a substitute. The fact that some understanding is possible comes about solely because certain basic Latin elements are common to more than one language, for it is the same whether you say 'association' in French, or 'association' in English; both go back to the Latin element. Such things build bridges. But every people has its own special mission and it is only possible to approach this through a longing to attain such an understanding.

The Slav people push the thought inwards so that it is here:



There, the word is quite far away from the thought. It floats, separately.

The strongest coincidence of thought with word, so that the thought disappears over against the word, is in French. The strongest independent life of the thought is in German. Therefore, a saying formulated by Hegel and the Hegelians: 'The self-consciousness of thought', is meaningful only in German. Something that is an abstraction for non-Germans is, for a German, the greatest experience it is possible to have, if he understands it in a living sense. The German language sets out to found a marriage between what is of itself spiritual and what is spiritual in the thought. Nowhere in the world, by no other people, can this be achieved except by the German people.

This has nothing to do with any kind of a Reich, but it will be endangered for centuries to come if people reject what is at present going through the world as the thought of peace. For then not only will a Reich in Central Europe be endangered but also the whole essence of what is German. That is why these times are heavily pregnant with destiny for those who understand these things. Let us at least hope that things will be judged differently this time, differently from the previous time when an impulse of destiny came into play, an impulse of destiny to which much thought should have been given — but was not — when Austria voluntarily declared her willingness to give to Italy what she needed to help her extricate herself from Irredentist ideas and the Grand Orient. But there was no thought in the periphery for what it meant at that time to think little of what Italy, or rather those three people, were doing. Let us hope that, whatever happens, the world will be more inclined this time to take these things seriously.

The German element has its particular task because of the special situation of German thought. If this independently living thought is not brought into play it will never be possible to accomplish the spiritual

evolution which must be accomplished. Things must be seen as they really are. The English folk element makes it to a certain extent necessary to materialize what is spiritual. This is not something to be held against the English people; it is simply a fact. Within the English folk element things that are spiritual have to be made material to a certain degree. That is why there will be a greater understanding there for what comes from the folk element as opposed to the element of mankind as a whole, namely mediumistic and other atavistic activities. It is just there that ancient things have their source: the ancient Rosicrucians, the ancient Indians, and so on. This must always be revered there in a certain way, just as the language itself has remained behind at the Gothic stage, where 'remained behind' is not a moral judgement, nor one involving sympathy or antipathy, but simply an indication of a position in relation to others. It is a question of how things are arranged, not of getting left behind in evolution.

Let us take things as they are. Obviously every nation today can understand everything. Yet it is true to say that all really fruitful English spiritualism, in the best sense of the word, stems from Central Europe and has been imported. Its origin is in Central Europe, or else it is taken from elsewhere. Since intellectuality is so well-developed in England, this is where spirituality can be systemized, organized. A mind such as that of Jakob Böhme would be impossible, for instance, in France. But while Jakob Böhme was born entirely out of the spiritual thought of Central Europe, he gained a great following through Saint-Martin, the so-called *philosophe inconnu*, the unknown philosopher, the follower of Jakob Böhme.

Thus, these things have to work together, so there is no point in making judgements on the basis of national feelings. One has to take what is presented to mankind at face value. The moment one takes into account that karma is something serious, that one is connected to one's nation through karma in the way I described yesterday, the moment one sees these things from the point of view of karma and not of passions, one will find the proper attitude. I can imagine a time when even a people as passionate about national matters as the French will come to understand the fact of nationality as something karmic. I can even imagine that with their great talent for spirituality the English nation will come, through a certain science of the spirit, to recognize that there exist other nations who might be accorded some degree of equal status, something for which at present there is not the slightest understanding. This is not a reproach; least of all is it a reproach! But one never knows how often one keeps on saying things which one understands perfectly well oneself, while others think them curious beyond belief. That attitude is surpassed by that of the

Americans. With them the total lack of awareness, that there might be others who intend to evolve in accordance with their own characteristics, is even more paradoxical; of course, only for those who do not share the same standpoint.

Because of the great talent possessed particularly by the English people for spirituality, a good deal could be expected to enter this people via the detour of spirituality, especially taking into account that in them there also lies the greatest talent for purely logical, that is, unspiritual thinking, as well as for systemizing everything. Nothing could be a better expression of this organizational talent than the writings of Herbert Spencer. In regard to everything scientific the English people have the greatest organizational talent. That is why they have such a flair for instituting systems for everything all over the world. Only those who prefer empty phrases can say that the Germans have a particular talent for organization. Such people leave unconsidered the fact that the talent for organization is most removed of all from the true nature of the German people.

It must not be forgotten that what has seemingly been achieved recently by Germans in certain directions, both territorially and culturally, has come about as a result of the way Germany is wedged between East and West. Because of this, during the course of the nineteenth century certain characteristics came to be developed more precisely in Germany than among those peoples to whom they really belong. This is eminently understandable. Self-knowledge has not penetrated to every corner yet, and since the Germans are so capable of assimilation and are able to take in and absorb so much in certain respects, the peoples of the West — not the East — have had an opportunity to discover, in certain respects, much about themselves through what the Germans have absorbed from them. Such characteristics, when seen in oneself, are always found to be excellent and obvious — naturally enough! But when they are met in another, one notices for the first time what they really are. You have no idea how much of what the West finds objectionable in Central Europe is no more than a reflection of what has been absorbed from there by Central Europe.

People have no idea what mystery lies hidden here. Looking at the matter objectively, it is most remarkable to discover how some members in particular of the French nation are quite incapable of seeing in themselves things which they find terribly objectionable in others who had absorbed them under French influence in the first place. Perhaps it is not all that nice if it comes to meet you as an imitation. But if mankind is to progress at all

then, as I described it in my recent book *Vom Menschenrätzel* ('The Riddle of Man'), it will be essential for this collaboration of Central European thought to take place. This is necessary and it cannot be eliminated; and it must not be brutally destroyed either.

Mankind is now faced with having to solve certain quite specific problems. This applies, above all, to something I have already spoken about, which is connected with today's much-admired technology — a consequence of natural science — which is also much admired by spiritual science. In the comparatively near future, this much-admired modern technology will reach a final stage where it will, in a certain way, cancel itself out. In contrast, something will come into being — I have mentioned it in passing here — which will enable people to make use of the delicate vibrations in their etheric bodies as a driving force with which to run machines. Machines will exist which are dependent on people and people will transfer their own vibrations to the machines. People alone will be capable of setting these machines in motion by means of certain vibrations stimulated by themselves. People who today see themselves as practitioners of science will, in the not too distant future, find themselves faced with a complete transformation of what they today call the practical application of science; for the human being is to be tuned in with his will to the objective sphere of feeling in the universe. This is one of the problems.

The second is, that people will, in a certain way, understand what we call the forces of coming-into-being and dying-away, the forces of birth and death. First of all they will have to make themselves morally ready for this. And to this will belong the gaining of insight into things about which nothing but nonsense is talked today. I have pointed this out before in connection with the questions people ask about how to improve the birthrate when it is declining. But they talk utter nonsense because they know nothing about the matter, and because the methods they suggest will certainly not achieve what they are talking about.

The third matter I want to mention is, that in the not too distant future a total reversal in the whole way people think about sickness and health will become apparent. Medicine will become filled with what can be understood spiritually when one learns to see illness as the consequence of spiritual causes.

I have already said it is not as yet fair to say to the spiritual scientist: Show us what you can do with regard to sickness and ill health! First his shackles must be removed! So long as the field is still totally occupied by

materialistic medicine it is impossible to do anything, even in individual cases. In this field it is indeed necessary to be truly Christian — that is Pauline — and to know that sin comes from the law and not, conversely, the law from sin.

But none of these things which are supposed to come to mankind within the fifth post-Atlantean period will, in fact, come unless an effort is made to allow the spiritual thinking to work with us on human evolution. We need this spiritual thinking. But for it to be possible it will have to cease being the preserve of the few and become common knowledge. Thus it is necessary, particularly in the English folk element, that a basic reversal in a definite direction should take place. To show you that what I am saying is founded in reality, I want to quote to you a judgement by Lord Acton which you will find very revealing. Lord Acton says: The foreigner has no mystic fabric in his government, and no *arcanum imperii*. We see how, in the nineties of the last century Lord Acton was thinking in a healthy way by combining most beautifully English rationalism with the English capacity for what is spiritual — even though he himself does not yet possess anything spiritual: he sees the mystic element that underlies English imperialism. Imperialism is a product of recent times; but it has received its stamp from the mystic appearance it gains from English imperialism. And this mystical element — strange though it may seem that I call it 'mystical', nevertheless it is correct to do so — has also found expression in external events.

Right up to the nineties, England was the perfect example of honest and upright parliamentarianism, since it was the task of Parliament to give its impulses to external politics. Through the various parliamentary institutions in England the people were able to play a genuine part in external politics. During the time when the things I have hinted at were beginning to take a hold it became necessary to create a special institution, for it was not possible to pull all sorts of strings if everything had to come before Parliament. For this reason the conduct of foreign affairs was taken away from Parliament and also from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and made the preserve of a committee whose members consisted exclusively of the Cabinet and certain officials in the Foreign Ministry. In such a committee far more goes on than what seems to be presided over by someone like Grey. In the nineties the place where all the threads came together was separated from 'external' politics, which became nothing much more than a kind of shadow politics, no longer having anything much to say and revealing only what was really going on if one happened to look at it at the right moment. So, at the moment when it became necessary to commence

pulling threads, the scene of action was transferred from external view to a hidden place, to a so-called committee of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Lord Acton said:

'The foreigner has no mystic fabric in his government, and no arcanum imperii. For him, the foundations have been laid bare; every motive and function of the mechanism is accounted for as distinctly as the works of a watch. But with our indigenous constitution, not made with hands or written upon paper, but claiming to develop by a law of organic growth; with our disbelief in the virtue of definitions and general principles and our reliance on relative truths, we can have nothing equivalent to the vivid and prolonged debates in which other communities have displayed their inmost secrets of political science to every man who can read. And the discussions of constituent assemblies, at Philadelphia, Versailles and Paris, at Cadiz and Brussels, at Geneva, Frankfort and Berlin, above nearly all, those of the most enlightened States in the American Union, when they have recast their institutions, are paramount in the literature of politics, and proffer treasures which at home we have never enjoyed ...'

And, despite this, it is the country with the perfect example of parliamentarianism, the country with the perfect example of political life, because none of this is actually necessary, since it could be mystical if only it were devoted to the people themselves, the people who, since the nineties, have been left out of account.

Because England has a quite specific task with regard to the consciousness soul of the fifth post-Atlantean period, certain ways of thinking belong to the people as a whole; they need not be the way of thinking of individuals, they belong to the whole people. This is something for which there is no place at all in Central Europe. Let me give you an example.

One of the greatest spirits of all time is Faraday. Michael Faraday expressed how he, as a natural historian, related to matters of religion and his sentences are, I really must say, monumental:

'Before entering upon this subject, I must make one distinction which, however it may appear to others, is to me of the utmost importance. High as man is placed above the creatures around him, there is a higher and far more exalted position within his view; and the ways are infinite in which he occupies his thoughts about the fears, or hopes, or expectations of a future life. I believe that the truth of that future cannot be brought to his knowledge by any exertion of his mental powers, however exalted they may be; that it is made known to him by any other teaching than his own, and is received through simple belief of the testimony given. Let no one suppose for a moment that the self-education I am about to commend, in respect of the things of this life, extends to any considerations of the hope set before us, as if man by reasoning could find out God. It would be improper here to enter upon this subject further than to claim an absolute distinction between religious and ordinary belief. I shall be reproached with the weakness of refusing to apply those mental operations which I think good in respect of high things to the very highest. I am content to bear the reproach. Yet even in earthly matters I believe that "the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead," and I have never seen anything incompatible between those things of man which can be known by the spirit of man which is within him, and those higher things concerning his future, which he cannot know by that spirit.'

With convictions similar to these, Darwin, too, was able to found his materialistic Darwinism and yet remain a pious man in quite a bigoted sense. Newton was the most bigoted man in the world in a dogmatic sense. When Darwinism had been carried to Central Europe and taken up by Haeckel it could no longer be separated from religious feelings. This was because of the characteristic nature of thought in German. In the thinking of Haeckel, Darwinism became a religious system. All these things have the deepest foundations. They show us how people can work together without differentiating between religions, nationalities and so forth, if they are able to distinguish between the missions of the different peoples. Mankind as a

whole will have to come to an understanding of this. When this has been achieved, on the one hand justice will be done to the deeper natures of the different peoples and, on the other hand, sad times such as those of today will no longer occur: times which are sad, not only because of all the blood that is being spilt but also because they prove how little sense for truth there is in mankind quite generally. This is why we are allowed to speak about such things here. For our motto is: 'Wisdom lies solely in truth'. Especially in times as grave as these it is permitted to draw attention to such things, times in which our hearts bleed terribly. Instead of passing time with all sorts of things people do under the influence of journalism, it would be more useful to make a start on a great many other things.

One positive thought on which to found a judgement is, for instance, the terrible fact that this war is not only being waged from the periphery but is being waged in such a way that it is lasting longer than it need, not because of unavoidable circumstances but because of culpable actions. This is utterly scandalous when you consider how much it matters that the war should not last too long, if it has to be waged in the first place. The war is being conducted from the periphery, not merely conducted, but conducted in a way that would never be possible if only people would see that, under the influence of their own dilettantism and incapacity, they keep avoiding any useful action, and by the very fact of doing nothing they are causing it to drag on so endlessly.

But a time has now come which could reveal whether those who matter — not the people themselves, who will only show whether or not they have learnt anything in all these months of war — whether those who matter are expressing even the semblance of a spark of truth when they say that they, too, want some kind of peace. I say a semblance, for in reality it is something else. For if peace does not come very soon, every child will be able to see who does *not* want peace! Indeed every child can already see how laughable are the excuses being made at this moment. There is no need to go so far as to set any store by a report in a journal in one of the Entente countries — and the story seems to be true — that, among others, the sentence was printed: To all the missiles Germany has sent us is now added the worst missile of all — peace.

There was no need for it to come to such excesses of madness as are expressed in the saying that peace is the worst missile of all. It would be enough to say that the Germans have invented this or that refinement, have this or that intention. Briand or Lloyd George would be quite capable of thinking up all sorts of motives the Germans might have, but it is not a

question of these motives; indeed, they might just as well be presumed to exist. If you were to take the trouble to analyse all the different motives which have so far been mentioned, you could not fail to reach the conclusion: If things really are as Monsieur Briand, or whoever else, presumes them to be, then any true friend of peace must be longing to achieve peace as soon as possible! If only, my dear friends, far from influencing people's judgements, it were possible at least to clear away the huge mountains of rubble piled on top of people's ability to judge!

You cannot imagine how the hearts of those who see what is going on bleed when they see people still capable of listening to or reading, without any kind of holy indignation, what is written so paradoxically today. For if these things were not rooted in something that exists, they could not be written. So merely to complain about the journalists will not get us very far either. It is perfectly possible, perhaps not exactly to throw sand in certain people's eyes, but certainly to obscure the eye of their soul by saying: Watch out, they are about to scatter poison amongst us! It is child's play to convince oneself what nonsense this is, for even if one assumes it is true — why not assume it? — it is still no reason for not doing what must be done for the good of mankind, namely, bringing the bloodshed to an end! None of the allegations that have been made so far have been sufficient reason for not doing this.

I can only think of one category of people who, as a result of their delusions, would not come to their senses, namely, those who still exist even now and who say: We want absolutely permanent, totally perfect peace, and until we can have that we cannot end the war. There are many such people; quite often they call themselves pacifists. Some have just begun to be ashamed of their extreme views and are starting to express more sensible judgements. But it really has happened during all these terrible events that people have said: We are fighting for permanent peace. They do not notice that this is rubbish, for it is quite possible to talk rubbish while giving the impression of proclaiming the highest ideals.

No, my dear friends! The ideal of perfect peace can never be achieved if even the smallest drop of blood is shed by means of an instrument of war. Perfect peace must come into the world in quite another way! And whoever says he is fighting for peace, and must continue to make war till the enemy is annihilated in order to achieve peace, is lying, even if he does not realize it, and regardless of who he may be!

These are things which are hardly considered today. What we all need is spiritual science to be our teacher in forming judgements. Therefore, I do not hesitate from time to time to call a spade a spade and express a judgement that has truly not been arrived at lightly. However, we had better not go on till midnight today, so let us draw to a close for the moment.



Lecture 8

Christmas at a Time of Grievous Tragedy

21 December 1916, Basle

The yearly celebration of the physical birth of the Being Who entered earth-evolution in order to give that evolution its meaning, has for many people become a matter of habit. But if, conformably with the task of our spiritual-scientific movement, we are not content with celebrating a festival of mere custom — as is so general nowadays — it will be opportune at this grave time to turn our minds to many things that are connected with the physical birth of Christ Jesus.

We have often pictured how in Christ Jesus, so far as human comprehension goes, two Beings merge as it were into one: the Christ Being and the human Jesus Being. In the evolution of Christianity there has been much conflict, much conflict of dogma, about the meaning of the union of Christ with Jesus, in the Being whose physical birth is celebrated at the Christmas Festival. We ourselves, of course, recognise in the Christ a cosmic, super-earthly Being, a Being Who descended from spiritual worlds in order, through His birth in a physical man, to impart meaning to earth-evolution. And in Jesus we recognise the one who, as man, was predestined after thirty years of preparation, to unite the Christ Being with himself, to receive the Christ Being into himself.

Not only has there been much strife, much conflict of dogma, about the nature of the union of Christ with Jesus, but the relationship of Christ to Jesus contains a hint of significant secrets of the earthly evolution of mankind. If, in the endeavour to understand something of the union of Christ with Jesus, we follow events up to the present day and reflect upon what has still to take place in the evolution of humanity before this relationship can be rightly understood, then we touch upon one of the deepest secrets of human knowledge and human life.

At the time when Christ was about to enter the evolution of humanity, it was possible, through faculties that were a heritage from the days of the old clairvoyant wisdom, to form certain conceptions of the sublimity of the Christ Being. And at that time there existed a wisdom of which people often speak nowadays in a way that is almost blasphemous, but of which

they are scarcely able to form any true idea. There existed something which up to this day has been completely exterminated from human evolution, rooted out by certain currents running counter to the deeper Christian revelation: this was the Gnosis, a wisdom into which had flowed much of the ancient knowledge revealed to men in atavistic clairvoyance. Every trace of the Gnosis, whether in script or oral tradition, was exterminated root and branch by the dogmatic Christianity of the West — after this Gnosis had striven to find an answer to the question: Who is the Christ?

There can be no question to-day of reverting to the Gnosis — for the Gnosis belongs to an age that is past and over. True, its extermination was caused by malice, ignorance, enmity towards knowledge and wisdom ... but for all that it happened out of an underlying necessity. When anthroposophical spiritual science is accused of wanting to revive the ancient Gnosis, that is only one of the many expressions of ill-will directed towards it to-day. The accusation is, of course, made by people whose ignorance of the Gnosis is on a par with their ignorance of Anthroposophy. There is no question of reviving the Gnosis, but of recognising it as something great and mighty, something that endeavoured, in the time now lying nineteen hundred years behind us, to give an answer to the question: Who is the Christ?

Before the inner eye of the Gnostic lay a glorious vista of spiritual worlds, with the Hierarchies ranged in their order, one above the other. How the Christ had descended through the worlds of the spiritual Hierarchies to enter into the sheaths of a mortal man — all this stood before the soul of the Gnostic. And he tried to envisage how the Christ had come from heights of spirit, how He had been conceived on earth. The best way to get some idea of the knowledge then existing is to reflect that everything produced by the world after the extermination of the Gnosis was paltry in comparison with the grandeur of the Gnostic idea of the Christ. The Mystery-wisdom behind the Gospels is infinitely great — greater by far than anything which later theology has been able to discover from them. To realise how paltry and insignificant compared with the Gnosis is the current conception of the Christ Being, we have but to steep ourselves in the ancient Gnostic idea of Him. Picturing this, one is filled with humility by the grandeur of the conception of the Christ Being entering into a human body from cosmic heights, from far distant cosmic worlds.

This majestic, sublime concept of Christ has fallen into the background, but all the dogmatic definitions handed down to us as Arian or Athanasian principles of faith are meagre in comparison with the Gnostic conception, in which vision of the Christ Being was combined with wisdom relating to the universe. ^[1] Only the merest fragments of this great Gnostic conception of Christ have survived.

This, then, is one aspect of the relationship of Christ to Jesus: that Christ came into the world at a time when the wisdom capable of understanding Him, yearning to understand Him, had already been rooted out. People who speak of the ancient Gnosis as oriental phantasy that had to be exterminated for the good of Western humanity, have always believed themselves to be good Christians, but the real cause was that the mind of the age lacked the strength to unite earthly with heavenly concepts. One must have a feeling for the tragic if human evolution is to be understood.

How long after the Mystery of Golgotha was the Temple at Jerusalem, the sanctuary of peace, destroyed? The Temple of Solomon was within the precincts of the city of Jerusalem. What the Gnosis contained in the form of *wisdom*, Solomon's Temple contained in the form of *symbolism*. Cosmic secrets were presented in symbols and pictures. And it was intended that those who entered the Temple, where the pictures all around them were reflected in their souls, should receive something through which alone they became truly *man*. The purpose of the Temple of Solomon was to inculcate the meaning of worlds into the souls of those who were permitted to enter it. What the Temple revealed was something that the earth as such did not reveal, namely, all the cosmic secrets that ray into the earth from the cosmic expanse.

If one of the old Initiates possessing real knowledge of the Temple of Solomon had been asked: Why was the Temple of Solomon built? — the answer would have been somewhat as follows: 'In order that here on the earth there shall be a beacon light for those Powers who accompany the souls seeking their way into earthly bodies.' Let us try to grasp what this means, realising that these old Initiates of the Temple of Solomon knew that when men were being accompanied into earthly bodies in conformity with all the signs of the stars, then particular souls must be guided to bodies in which the great symbols of Solomon's Temple could be mirrored.

This, in the nature of things, might give rise to arrogance. If the knowledge was not received with humility, with the humility of the *Essenes*, it led men into *Pharisaism*! But at all events, this was the situation: The

eye of earth looked up to the heavens, beholding the stars; the spiritual eyes of those who were guiding souls from cosmic worlds to the earth gazed downwards and beheld the Temple of Solomon with its symbols. The Temple was like a star whose light enabled them to guide the souls into bodies which would be capable of understanding its meaning. It was the central star of the earth, shining out with special brightness into the spiritual heights.

When Christ Jesus had come to the earth, when the Mystery of Golgotha had taken place, the great secret that was intended to be mirrored in every single human soul was this: "My kingdom is not of this world!" It was then that the external, physical Temple of Solomon lost its significance and its destiny was tragically fulfilled. Moreover at that time there was no living person who would have been capable of apprehending the full compass of the Christ Being from the reflections of the symbols in Solomon's Temple. But the Christ Himself had now entered earth-evolution, had become part of it. That is the all-important fact. The Gnostics were the last survivors of the bearers of that ancient, atavistic earth-wisdom which was comprehensive and powerful enough to make some understanding of the Christ possible.

That, then, is one aspect of the relation of Christ to Jesus. In those days the Christ Being could have been understood through the Gnosis. But according to the world-plan it was not to be — although the Gnosis teemed with wisdom concerning the Christ. And it may truly be said that the path now taken by Christianity through the countries of the South, through Greece, Italy, Spain and so on, led more and more to the obliteration of insight into the essential nature of Christ. And Rome, sinking into decline, was destined to bring about the final extinction of understanding.

In regard to this relation of the Christ to Jesus it is strange that on the one hand we find lighting up in the Gnosis a sublime conception of the *Christ* which died away as Christianity passed through the Roman system, while on the other hand, when Christianity encountered the peoples from the North, the concept of *Jesus* came to the fore. In the South, the concept of Christ flickered out. The form in which the concept of Jesus emerged was by no means very sublime, but it gripped men's hearts and feelings in such a way that something wonderfully absorbing stirred in their souls at the thought of how the Child who receives the Christ is born in the Holy Night. Just as in the South the concept of Christ was inadequate, so in the North was man's feeling for Jesus. But for all that it was a feeling that stirred the very depths of the human heart. Yet in itself it is not quite

comprehensible. For if we contrast the immeasurable significance of Christ Jesus for the evolution of humanity with all the sentimental trivialities about the 'dear little Jesus' contained in many poems and hymns commonly used to move the human heart — for in their egoism men believe that these trivialities kindle emotions capable of storming the heavens — then we have a direct impression that something is striving to make its home but is not fully able to do so, that one element is mingling with another in such a way that the deeper meaning, the far deeper significance, remains in the subconsciousness.

What actually is it that remains in the subconsciousness while the Jesus-thought, the Jesus-feeling, the Jesus-experience, is coming to the surface? The process takes a strange and remarkable course. The understanding for Christ sank into the subconsciousness and there, in the subconsciousness, the understanding for Jesus began to glow. In the subconsciousness — not in the consciousness, which was dim — the consciousness of Christ that was flickering out and the consciousness of Jesus that was beginning to stir were destined to meet and counter-balance each other. Why was it, then, that the peoples who came down from Scandinavia, from the North of present-day Russia, received Christianity without the Christ-idea which, to begin with, was wholly foreign to them? Why was it that they received Christianity with the Jesus-idea? Why was Christmas the festival which above all others spoke to the human heart, awakened in the human heart feelings of holy bliss? Why was it? What was present in this Europe which in truth received from the South a completely distorted Christianity? What was it that kindled in men's hearts the idea which then, in the Christmas Festival, created such a deep, deep fount of experience?

Men had been prepared — but had largely forgotten by what they had been prepared. They had been prepared by the old Northern Mysteries. But they had forgotten the import and meaning of these ancient Mysteries. And we have to go very far back into the past to discover from the source and content of the Northern Mysteries the deep secret of the penetration of the Jesus-feeling into the soul-life of the European peoples.

The principles underlying the Northern Mysteries were quite different from those underlying the Mysteries of Asia Minor and of the South. The experiences underlying the Northern Mysteries were more intimately and directly connected with the existence of the stars, with nature, with earthly fertility, than with the wisdom represented in symbols within a Temple. The Mystery-truths are not the childish trifles presented by certain mystic sects to-day; the Mystery-truths are great and potent impulses in the evolution

of mankind. Present-day Anthroposophy can no more revert to the Gnosis than mankind can revert to what the ancient Mysteries of the North, for example, signified for human evolution. And to believe that such Mystery-truths are now being revealed because of some kind of hankering to go back to what was once alive in them, would be a foolish misunderstanding. It is for the sake of deepening self-recollection, self-knowledge, that mankind to-day must be made aware of the content of such Mysteries. For what linked the Northern Mysteries with the whole evolution of the universe, arose from the earth, just as the Gnostic wisdom, inspired from the cosmos, was connected with happenings in the far distances of the universe. How the *secret of man*, linked as it is with all the secrets of the cosmos, comes into operation when a human being enters physical existence on the earth — it was this that, with greater depth than anywhere else at a certain period of earth-evolution, lay at the root of these ancient Northern Mysteries.

But we have to go very far back — to about three thousand years before Christ, perhaps even earlier — to understand what was alive in the hearts of those in whom, later on, the feeling for Jesus arose. Somewhere in the region of the peninsula of Jutland, in present-day Denmark, was the centre from which, in those ancient times, important impulses went out from the Mysteries. And — let the modern intellect judge of this as it will — these impulses were connected with the fact that in the third millennium before Christ, in certain Northern tribes, he alone was regarded as a worthy citizen of the earth who was born in certain weeks of the winter season. The reason for this was that from those places of the Mysteries on the peninsula of Jutland, among the tribes which at that time called themselves the Ingaevones, or were so called by the Romans — by Tacitus ^[2] — the Temple Priest gave the sign for sexual union to take place at a definite time during the first quarter of the year. Any sexual union outside the period ordained by this Mystery-centre was taboo; and in this tribe of the Ingaevones a man who was not born in the period of the darkest nights, at the time of greatest cold, towards our New Year, was regarded as an inferior being. For the impulse went out from that Mystery-centre at the time of the first full moon after the vernal equinox. Only then, among those who might believe themselves united with the spiritual world as became the dignity of man, was sexual union permissible. The characteristic virility — even in its aftermath — marvelled at by Tacitus, writing a century after the Mystery of Golgotha, was due to the fact that the forces which enter into such sexual union were preserved through the whole of the rest of the year.

And so those who belonged to the tribe of the Ingaevones (and in a lesser degree this was also true of the other Germanic tribes) experienced the process of conception with particular intensity at the time of the first full moon after the vernal equinox. They experienced it, not in wide-awake consciousness, but as it were heralded in dream. Yet they were aware of its significance in regard to the connection between the secret of man and the secrets of the heavens. A spiritual being appeared to the woman who was to conceive and in a kind of vision announced to her the human being who, through her, was to come to the earth. There was no clear consciousness, but only semi-consciousness, in the sphere experienced by souls when the entry of a human being into the physical world is taking place; subconsciously men knew that they were under the direction of the Gods, who then received the name of the *Wanen*, connected with *wähnen*, that is to say with what takes its course, not in clear, intellectual, waking consciousness, but in cognitive dream-consciousness.

What was once in existence and fitting for its own epoch, is often preserved in later times in symbols. Thus the fact that in those ancient times the holy mystery of the generation of a human being was wrapped in subconsciousness, and led to all births being concentrated in a particular period of the winter season, so that it was regarded as sinful for a man to be born at another time — this was preserved in fragments which passed over to a later consciousness as the Hertha or Erda or Nertus Saga. No erudition, as scholars themselves openly admit, has hitherto been able to interpret these fragments, for actually all that is known externally of the Nertus Saga, with the exception of a few brief notes, comes from Tacitus, who writes as follows about the Nertus or Hertha cult:

"The Reudigni, Aviones, Anglii, Varini, Eudoses, Saurini and Nuitones — Germanic peoples living amidst rivers and woods" (that is, roughly the several tribes who belong to the Ingaevones) "specially revere Nertus, that is, Mother Earth, and they believe that she intervenes in human affairs, makes journeys to the peoples." (Germania 40).

In the ancient cult of the Wanen it became known in dream-consciousness to every woman who was to give a citizen to the earth that the Goddess worshipped later on as Nertus would appear to her. The Divinity was, however, represented not exactly as female, but as male-

female. It was not until later, through a corruption, that Nertus became an entirely feminine principle. Just as the Archangel Gabriel drew near to Mary, Nertus on her chariot drew near to the woman who was about to give a citizen to the earth. The woman concerned saw this in the spirit. Later, when the Mystery-impulse in this form had long since died out, echoes of the happening were celebrated in symbolic rites which Tacitus was still able to witness and of which he says the following: —

"On an island of the ocean is a sacred grove and in it there is a consecrated chariot covered with a veil. Only the priest may approach it." — This priest was taken to represent the 'Initiate' of the Hertha-Mystery — "He knows when the Goddess appears in the sacred chariot. He becomes aware of the presence of the Goddess in her holy place, and in deep reverence accompanies her chariot drawn by cows. Then there are days of joy and feasting in all the places which the Goddess honours with a visit. Then there are joyous days and wedding feasts. At those times no war is waged, no weapons are handled, the sword is sheathed. Only peace and quiet are at those times known or desired, until the Goddess, tired of her sojourn among mortals, is led back into her shrine by the same priest." (This was actually the form taken by the vision)

"Then there are joyous days and wedding feasts." In such ancient records the descriptions are accurate and exact, only men do not understand them. "Then there are joyous days and wedding feasts. At those times no war is waged, no weapons are handled, the sword is sheathed." And so it was in very truth at the time which is now our Easter, when human beings believed in their inmost soul that the time of earthly fruitfulness had come for them too; it was then that the souls who were born at the time that is now our Christmas, were conceived. Easter was the time of conception. The experience was regarded as a holy, cosmic mystery, and it was this that was symbolised later on by the Nertus cult. The whole experience was veiled in the subconscious region of the soul, might not rise up into consciousness. This is hinted at in the description of the cult given by Tacitus: "Only peace and quiet are at those times known or desired — until the Goddess, tired of her sojourn among mortals, is led back into her shrine by the same priest. Then the chariot and the veil and even the Goddess herself are bathed in a hidden lake. Slaves perform the cult,

slaves who are at once swallowed up as forfeit by the lake, so that all knowledge of these things sinks into the night of unconsciousness. A secret horror and a sacred darkness hold sway over a being who is able to behold only the sacrifice of death."

Everything that comes into the world calls forth a Luciferic and an Ahrimanic counterpart. The event which — as experienced by the Ingaevones — was part of the regular, ordained evolution of mankind was connected with the time of the first full moon after the vernal equinox. But owing to the precession of the equinox, what had remained from olden days as a dream-experience was transferred to a later date and therefore became Ahrimanic. When the experience that had arisen in ancient times in the true Hertha cult was advanced about four weeks, it became Ahrimanic. This meant that the union of the woman with the spiritual world was sought in an irregular way — at the wrong time. Here lies the explanation of the institution of the *Walpurgis Night* — between the 30th April and the 1st May. It is nothing but an Ahrimanic transposition of time. Luciferic transposition of time goes backward; Ahrimanic transposition of time runs in the opposite direction, being connected with the precession of the equinox. Thus the Ahrimanic, Mephistophelean form of the Hertha cult, the perversion into the diabolic, later became the Walpurgis Night; it is connected with the most ancient Mysteries of which only faint echoes remained.

Much of the content of the ancient Northern Mysteries lived on — if the matter is rightly understood — in the Scandinavian Mysteries. There, instead of Nertus, we find Friggo, a god who, according to the symbolism associated with him — but this can become intelligible only through spiritual science — turns into the very betrayer of what lies at the root of this Mystery.

One more thing must be mentioned in regard to these Mystery-practices. You can see that if the human seed was ripening from the time of the vernal full moon to winter time, *one* such human being would be the *first* to be born in the 'Holy Night.' Among the Ingaevones the first to be born in the Holy Night — the Holy Night of every third year in the most ancient times — was chosen as their leader when he reached the age of thirty, and he remained leader for three years, for three years only. What happened to him then I may perhaps be able to tell you on another occasion.

Careful investigation reveals that not only are Frigg, Frei, Freiga, merely additional designations for Nertus, as is the Scandinavian 'Nört,' but the name 'Ing' itself, whence Ingaevones, is another name for Nertus. Those who were connected with the Mystery called themselves "Men belonging to the God or the Goddess Ing" — Ingaevones. Only fragments of what really lived in this Mystery survived in the external world. One such fragment consists of the words of Tacitus already quoted. Another fragment is the well-known Anglo-Saxon rune of a few lines only. These famous lines are known to every philologist of the Germanic languages, but no one understands their meaning. They are approximately as follows:

"Ing was first seen among the East Danes. Later he went towards the East. He walked over the waves, followed by his chariot."

In this Anglo-Saxon rune there is an echo of what lay behind the old Mystery-customs of the Easter conception with a view to the Christmas birth. What happened then in the spiritual world was known best on the Danish peninsula. Hence the rune correctly says: "Ing was first seen among the East Danes."

Then came the time when this ancient knowledge fell more and more into corruption, when it was to be found only in echoes, in symbolism. This was the time in the evolution of humanity when what originated in the warm countries spread abroad. And what comes from the warm countries is something that is not connected — as is the case in the cold countries — with the intimate relation between the seasons and man's own inner experiences. From the warm countries came the impulse which resulted in the distribution of conceptions and births over the whole year; this of course had already happened in the South even in the days of the old, atavistic clairvoyance, although it was still to some extent pervaded by the old principles, the principles which prevailed in the times when in the cold regions the Women held sway and in the South the Temple Mysteries had long since superseded the old Nature-Mysteries. The Southern practice spread towards the North, although an intermixture of the old still remained at the time when the Wanen gods were superseded by the *Asen* gods. Just as the Wanen are connected with *wähnen*, so are the Asen connected with the German *sein* (being) — that is to say, being or existence in the material world which the mind tries to grasp externally.

And when the men of the North had entered into an age when individual intelligence began to assert itself, when the Asen had supplanted the Wanen, the old Mystery-customs fell into decay. They passed over into isolated, scattered Mystery-communities of the East. And one Being only — he in whom the whole meaning of the earth was to be made new, he in whom the Christ was to dwell — he alone was destined to unite within himself what had once been the essence and content of the Northern Mysteries.

Hence the origin of the account in St. Luke's Gospel of the appearance of the Archangel Gabriel to Mary, is to be sought in the visions of spiritual realities once reflected in the Nertus-symbol of the ancient Northern Mysteries. The symbol had moved eastward. Spiritual science discloses this to-day and this alone explains the meaning of the Anglo-Saxon rune. For *Nertus* and *Ing* are the same. Of Ing it is said: "Ing was first seen among the East Danes. Later he went towards the East. He walked over the waves, followed by his chariot," — over the waves of the clouds, that is, just as Nertus moved over the waves of the clouds.

What had once been general in the colder regions, here became *singular*, individual. It occurred as a single, unique event, and we find it again in the descriptions given in the Gospel of St. Luke.

But whatever has once existed in the world and has taken root, whatever is anchored in the heart's understanding, remains a possession of the soul. And when knowledge of Christianity was received in the North from the Roman South, men felt — not in clear consciousness but in the subconsciousness — it had some connection with an ancient Mystery-custom. Hence in the North, men were able to develop a particularly intense feeling for *Jesus*. The reality that had lived in the old Nertus Mystery had already sunk into the subconsciousness, yet in the subconsciousness it was present, it was sensed and dimly experienced.

When in those long past times in the far North, when the earth was still covered with forests that were the home of the bison and the elk, families came together in their snowcovered huts and under their lantern-lights gathered around the new-born child, they spoke of how with this new life there had been brought to them the new light announced by the heavens in the previous spring. Such was the ancient Christmas. To these people, who were one day to receive the tidings of Christendom, it was said: In the hour that is especially holy, one destined for greatness is born. It is the child who is the first to be born after midnight in the night designated as

holy. And although men no longer possessed the ancient knowledge, when the tidings came that such a one had been born in far-off Asia, one in whom lived the Christ Who had come down from the world of the stars to the earth, something of the old feeling came alive in them.

It is incumbent upon the present age to understand such things more and more deeply and thereby grasp in concrete reality the meaning of the evolution of earthly humanity. Truths of mighty, awe-inspiring significance are contained in the Holy Scriptures, not just the trivialities of which we so often hear in religious teachings to-day, but sacred truths which thrill through the very fibres of our being, stirring our hearts to the depths. These are truths which flow through the whole evolution of humanity and resound in the Gospels. And as spiritual science reveals their deep, deep source, the Gospels will one day become a precious treasure, prized at their true worth. Men will know, then, why it is recounted in the Gospel of St. Luke:

"And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria).

And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David).

To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for him in the inn."

It was for Him, the first-born among men in whose souls true ego-hood was to awaken, that the holy Mystery-power of ancient days had passed over from the Danish peninsula to the distant East.

"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid."

Nerta too, moving across the land, had announced to the old Wanen-consciousness, that is to say, in the subconsciousness of atavistic clairvoyance, the arrival of human beings on the earth.

"And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying ..."

And now the heavenly Powers proclaimed what the Nerta-Priest in the old Northern Mystery-cult had proclaimed to the woman about to conceive.

"The revelation of the Divine from the Heights takes place at the time when there is peace among men who are of good-will."

As Tacitus narrates: "Then there are joyous days and wedding feasts. At those times no war is waged, no weapons are handled, the sword is sheathed."

The great goal for which man must strive is the attainment of the power to gaze into the course of the evolution of humanity. For the Mystery of Golgotha, too, through which earth-evolution received its deeper meaning, will become fully comprehensible when its place in the whole evolution of humanity is understood. In future times, when, with the disappearance of materialism, man will know, not in abstract theory but as a concretely real experience, that he is of *divine* origin, the ancient, holy Mystery-truths will again be understood; then the intervening time will be over, a time in which the Christ, it is true, lives on earth, but can be understood only by the awakened consciousness. For the Gnostic conception of Christ faded away; understanding for Jesus developed in connection with the old Nertus cult, but in unconsciousness. In the future, however, humanity will have to bring both the unconscious streams to consciousness, and unite them. And then an ever greater understanding of the Christ will take foothold on earth, an understanding that will unite the Mystery-knowledge with a great and renewed Gnosis.

Those who take the anthroposophical view of the world seriously, and the movement associated with it, will see in what it has to say to mankind no child's play but great and earnest, soul-shaking truths. And our souls must submit to this because it is right that we should be shaken by greatness.

Not only is the earth a mighty living being; the earth is an exalted spirit-being. And just as the greatest human genius could not stand at the height he reaches in later life if he had not first developed through childhood and adolescence, so the Mystery of Golgotha could not have taken place, the Divine would not have been able to unite with earth-evolution, if at the beginning of earthly days the Divine — in a different manner but in a manner still divine — had not descended to the earth. The form taken by the revelation of the Divine from the heavenly heights was not the same in the ancient Nertus cult as it was at a later time, but for all that it was a true revelation.

The knowledge contained in this ancient wisdom was, it is true, atavistic in character, but for all that it was infinitely more exalted than the materialistic view of the world which, in the sphere of knowledge, so brutally reduces humanity to the level of the animal.

In Christianity we have to do with a *Fact*, not with a theory. The theory is a necessary consequence and of importance for the consciousness that has had to develop in the further course of human evolution. But the essence of Christianity as such, the Mystery of Golgotha, is an accomplished Fact. The impulse entered, to begin with, into subconscious currents, as was still possible in Asia Minor at the time when the union of Christ with the earth took place.

Shepherds, men bearing a similarity with those among whom the Nertus cult flourished, are also described in the Gospel of St. Luke. I can give only very brief indications of these things. If we were able to speak of them at greater length you would find that there are deep foundations for what I have told you to-day. The human being has descended from spiritual heights ... hence the revelation of the Divine from the heavenly heights ... The revelation had to be expressed in this form to those who out of the ancient wisdom knew the destiny of man to be united with the secrets of the stars of heaven. But what must live on earth as the result of Christ's union with a man of earth — that can be understood only very gradually. The message is twofold: 'Revelation of the Divine from the heights' — 'Peace in the souls on earth who are of good-will.' Without this second part, Christmas, the Festival of the birth of *Christ*, has no meaning!

Not only was Christ *born* for men; men have also crucified Him. Even behind this lies necessity. But it is none the less true that men have crucified the Christ! And it may dawn upon us that the crucifixion on the wooden Cross on Golgotha was not the only crucifixion. A time must come when the second part of the Christmas proclamation becomes reality: 'Peace to the men on earth who are of good-will.' For the negative side too is discernible. Men are very far indeed from a true understanding of Christ and of the Mystery of Golgotha.

Does it not cut to the very heart that we ourselves should be living at a time when men's longing for peace is shouted down? ^[3] It seems almost a mockery to celebrate Christmas in days when voices are raised in outcry against the desire for peace. To-day, when the worst has not actually befallen, we can but fervently hope that a change will take place in the souls of men, and a Christian feeling, a will for peace supersede these demonstrations against the desire for it. Otherwise it may not be those who are struggling in Europe to-day, but those coming over from Asia, who will one day wreak vengeance on this rejection of the desire for peace; it may be they who will have to preach Christianity and the Mystery of Golgotha to humanity on the ruins of European spiritual life. And then the

indelible record will remain: that at Christmas time, nineteen hundred and sixteen years after the tidings of peace on earth to men of good-will, humanity came to shout down the desire for peace.

May it not succeed! May the good Spirits who are at work in the Christmas impulses protect luckless European humanity from such a fate!



Lecture 9

Christmas During Wartime

24 December 1916, Dornach

Today I would like to request you once again, without exception, to refrain from taking notes. This applies to all three days.

Most of you were present last Thursday at our discussion in Basel. I now want to bring to your attention once more quite a short extract of what we talked about then, as I consider it not unimportant for these thoughts to become known to us.

I described how the wisdom about Christ was destroyed root and branch by dogmatism, namely, that wisdom which was present in Gnosis which itself was rooted out, since what remains of it now is no more than a fairly good number of fragments. Gnosis was a remnant of ancient wisdom arising out of an atavistic knowledge of the spiritual worlds in the days of early mankind. Those who possessed this ancient wisdom, which was still understood by the Gnostics at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha, knew that it contained a view — the names were different then — of the hierarchies which underlie the creation of the world, and they were thus able to conceive of the significance of Christ. Together with Gnosis there disappeared the possibility of comprehending the Christ-Being as a cosmic being. Instead there remains dogma which has perpetuated certain incomprehensible concepts — the Credo and so on — about the Christ-Being.

What was important in centuries now gone by was not so much the wisdom about Christ as the fact itself, the fact that Christ turned towards the earth and fulfilled the Mystery of Golgotha. A true understanding of the Christ-Being will first have to be won through the new Gnosis, which is something entirely different from the old Gnosis, for it is anthroposophical Spiritual Science.

More important for our point of departure today is something else I introduced last Thursday, namely that in the North in very early pre-Christian times — I said 3000 years BC — there was a certain custom among peoples whom Tacitus called the Ingaevones. This custom was

guided by Mystery priests in a Mystery centre focused on what is today Jutland, part of Denmark. This Mystery centre was able to work at that time and in those parts because all the climatic conditions in those colder regions differed from any in the southern, warmer regions — for all material conditions also have their own spiritual background. While the warmer regions were more suited to developing an understanding of the Christ-Being in Gnosis, the colder parts lent themselves more to evolving feelings about Jesus because of ideas still prevalent about ancient customs.

Thus it was that, in the South, Gnosis had more of an understanding of the Easter Mystery, the Christ Mystery. But the understanding, as I have said, was destroyed root and branch by dogma. In the North, in contrast, there was more of a comprehension of the Jesus Mystery, a feeling for the child who comes into the world to save mankind. This was based not so much on actual ideas, which had died out, but on feelings which live longer than ideas. The feeling of these ancient customs made comprehension possible. So it came about that in the South it was the task of the church to root out the Christ Mystery, whereas in the North it was its task to root out the Christmas Mystery, to transform it into something innocuous. Thus later, in the Middle Ages, the idea of Christmas came into being which, one might say, reckoned with the rise of bourgeois values of more recent times, which appeared increasingly as the age of materialism dawned. For bourgeois values in the widest sense are a concomitant of materialism. We have to be clear, though, that greater, more significant ideas, in the form of feelings, lived in Central Europe right into the eighth, ninth and even the tenth centuries, for these feelings originated from prevalent usages, such as processions and other folk customs.

Let me briefly sketch these ancient customs once again. Among the Ingaevones the life of the people was firmly guided by the Mystery centre which laid down the season when provision could be made for procreation. The union of man with woman was permitted only in the days of spring, around the first full moon after the spring equinox. It was approximately the time we now call Easter time. The remainder of the year was taboo as far as human reproduction was concerned, and those born at a time which showed that their conception had been out of season were regarded, in a way, as not quite proper people.

So the births of people conceived at the correct time all came together in the middle of winter, just after our present Christmas time. All those regarded by the Ingaevones as fully human had to be born at this time. The births had to fall at the time of the darkest winter days, when the

trees were covered in snow and the people confined to their primitive homesteads. To use the language of today, every child was in a way a Christmas child, a child of the winter solstice.

This affected people's frame of mind and soul. Because nothing to do with procreation occurred at other times of the year, the old dream-conscious clairvoyance was preserved. And when the time of conception approached as the permitted spring days drew near, conditions of unconsciousness took over. Conception was brought about in a state of unconsciousness, not in waking consciousness. The woman who was conceiving was truly conscious, however, of the visionary appearance of a spiritual being descending from spiritual worlds to announce the coming child. These women even foresaw the face of the coming child. And this annunciation, as we saw, is echoed in the time of the Luke gospel in the annunciation to Mary by the Archangel Gabriel. We saw that there even exists a fragment of an Anglo-Saxon rune song which tells of what existed in the old consciousness and that on the Jutland peninsula there really was a Mystery centre which then migrated eastwards.

Now mankind is, of course, developing, and development is a part of mankind. So this Mystery centre could only exist in most ancient times, for, had it persisted, there would have been no development of the type of consciousness needed as the task of the fourth, and then of the fifth post-Atlantean period. To clairvoyant consciousness the custom is hardly to be found anywhere in northern regions, where it flourished, even in the second millennium BC, and it is seen to have disappeared fully by the first millennium BC. By then, human conception and birth were spread more or less over the whole year and there is no more knowledge of a coming-down out of cosmic worlds via the starry constellations, nor of how much depends for a person's destiny on earth on the constellation under which he is born. Human conception and birth are spread over the whole year.

Parallel with this development is the rise of a new consciousness, the rise of the possibility of freedom for the human being and so on.

One last thing remained, however. Something had existed in the region where Denmark is today; it migrated from tribe to tribe until it reached the East, where the Christ-Being was to be incarnated in one last body still seen in connection with the constellations. The first-born of many brothers became the last-born of those who were seen in connection with the starry constellations. In evolution the last remnant of the old always links up with what is new.

Because in northern regions the feeling had evolved that the human being appears on the earth during the consecrated season, it came about that here, too, surrounded by the echo of those atavistic feelings, the feeling for Jesus could evolve. Thus you will find in these northern regions that the paramount feeling and better understanding was for the Luke gospel, and that the Christmas Mystery worked more strongly than the Easter Mystery, which was imprisoned among the secrets of the church, whereas the Christmas Mystery became quite general.

I hinted last Thursday, and shall perhaps be able to follow through in more detail during these three days, that every three years special attention was paid to the one born first after the twelfth hour of the night that we now call Christmas Eve, the first-born of every fourth year, the first to be born after three years. This first-born was destined to undergo certain procedures until his thirtieth year. Until his thirtieth year he was kept apart and brought up by the Mystery priests. His soul was given a distinct direction. His soul was destined to undergo experiences in a quite special way during the first thirty years of his life. These experiences and procedures were to lead him — this is barely comprehensible today — in his thirtieth year to an inner understanding of the link between the human being and the surrounding spiritual world. Certain quite specific inner experiences during these thirty years were to lead him gradually to this point.

First of all this first-born was to understand, even as a tiny child, how the human being is linked to the spiritual world through his angel. Separated from the rest of the world, undisturbed by the concepts which usually enter a child's soul from his environment, he was to remain close to spiritual workings and spiritual events and, to start with, develop a profound awareness of his links with the angel-being who was his guide — his angelos. In this way this child was equipped with a soul which was taught something very special, about which we may perhaps speak during the next few days. This special learning was expressed by saying that the child had become a 'raven'. This was a stage of initiation which was disseminated over wide regions and was contained particularly in the Persian Mithras initiation, of which I have spoken in past years. Then this soul was to ascend to an even more intense feeling for its connection with the spiritual worlds; this first-born was to relive in his soul the secrets of the spiritual worlds.

This would not be possible today, for our consciousness develops under different conditions. But, in those ancient times, when it was possible to develop a dream consciousness this was still perfectly possible. When the child had grown into a youth — it was always a boy, a girl did not count — he was given the leadership over individual districts, smaller sections of the tribe. Finally, he had to serve in the administration and government of smaller communities. But it is important to remember that these affairs of government were always conducted in such a way that the youth was ever protected from external influences, especially shielded from the influences of various egoisms; he was most carefully shielded from the influences of egoisms, from influences which came about on the basis of external experiences.

Thus it was achieved that, towards the end of these thirty years, he could take on the role of representative of the whole tribe. When he reached the age of thirty he was ready to absorb consciously the connections of man with the whole cosmos. He became what is called in the Mystery centres a 'sun hero'. Now he was destined to rule the tribe for three years. None but a 'sun hero' could rule the tribe. He was permitted to rule for only three years. At the end of the three years something else, about which I shall speak, was done with him under the guidance of the Mysteries. In particular, in all the arrangements that emanated from the tribe of the Ingaevones, nobody was allowed to be king for longer than three years, and none was allowed to become king who had not undergone what I have described.

You see, forming in these tribes, as it were the skeleton, out of which the gospels later created the life of Christ Jesus. These communities lived in very ancient times. Only symbols of what had gone before come down to later ages. Thus the vision of the annunciation of the child to the mother came down to later ages as the worship of Nerthus, of Ertha. And the fact that the act of conception had to take place unconsciously in olden times is still hinted at in the Nerthus myth told by Tacitus a hundred years after the birth of Jesus. He describes how Ertha — who is male-female, not only female, for she is the same as the god Nerthus — arrives in her chariot; in other words, she is none other than the angel of the annunciation. Then those who have served her have to be drowned in the sea — slain. This is an echo of the submergence into unconsciousness of the act of conception in those ancient days.

In this myth of Ertha in her chariot and the slaves who accompany her but are drowned as soon as their service is concluded, in this myth of Nerthus, we have in the feeling-life an echo of something that was formerly an astral reality, something that had been experienced astrally. Nerthus processions were held in some districts until quite recently in history, right into the early Christian centuries. There were Ertha processions even in Swabia. These were echoes of ancient days. Those who in olden times, through certain rites which still existed as an echo of ancient heathen times, knew something about these earlier millennia, felt and thought about these processions of Ertha in her chariot: This is what our ancestors did. And when that single event then occurred which was the life of Jesus, it was brought into connection with what had been more general in ancient times. This was then better understood in the feelings, at the level of the feelings.

Therefore the monks and priests made every effort to root out anything which might remind their flocks of these things. Such things were rooted out just as carefully in the North as was Gnosis in the South. Otherwise people would have known, by bringing together these ancient customs with the Mystery of Golgotha, that this Mystery, in so far as it is a Christmas Mystery, was not an ancient, natural custom brought into the present but rather that it was replaced in the feeling for the Christmas Mystery by something at a higher level of consciousness. But this was not to be known consciously. This was to be suppressed into the subconscious, for there are always certain powers who reckon with the unconscious. A great part of what happens in history comes about because things conscious and things unconscious are brought together by those who know how to bring such things together.

We rightly speak of what happens in going from the fourth to the fifth post-Atlantean period. But even in the transition from the third to the fourth there was a step forward in human consciousness towards increased ego-consciousness, increased waking consciousness. The ancient dream visions of the spiritual world have disappeared. In the North this was expressed by saying that the Vanir, who were connected with what is given in visions, had been replaced by the Aesir, who are indeed gods for a well-developed day consciousness. This is what was said in the North during the fourth post-Atlantean period, until all such memories had been rooted out by the priests. In the fifth post-Atlantean period, when materialism, or rather 'Christianityism', appeared, these things had already disappeared. While in the South the Greeks had their gods: Zeus, Apollo and the others, the people of the North had the Aesir, a word which is connected with

esse, to be, which in turn is connected with being seen, being seen with the eyes. But during the third post-Atlantean period the ancient peoples who inhabited the North of Europe had the Vanir. These Vanir were far closer to the people. Nerthus, which became Nört in the North, is one of the Vanir, who announced every conception or birth. Now I said that what had existed earlier was always preserved in later times in symbols. Thus something that I have so far only sketchily described to you and which we may be able to go into more deeply in the next day or two, namely, the knowledge bound up with becoming 'king', becoming the 'sun hero', was carried over first into the cult-myth and then into the myth. We have to distinguish between the cult-myth and the myth as such. The cult-myth is something that is still performed in external customs like a 'dream performance' of what reminds people of the ancient clairvoyant visions.

Thus, at a time when what I described to you no longer worked, we have in the Baldur myth, the myth of the god Baldur which was performed in many tribes as a mystery play, an echo of what was involved in 'becoming king'. First it existed as a reality. Later it was performed as a mystery play. Then it became a myth that was merely recounted. And finally it was rooted out by the monks and priests. Baldur is one of the Aesir, that is, he was one of the ruling spiritual powers at a time when man had already awakened to ego-consciousness. The Vanir had already faded, and yet Baldur remains as a representative of that being who was to become king, the first-born who came every three years.

It is told that, at a certain time in his life, Baldur had dreams announcing his death. Later these dreams came true. But this did not mean merely that he had felt the approach of his physical death. It meant that, having accomplished three years of service as king, he was raised from the consciousness appropriate for that, to a higher level of consciousness. Until then he had been shielded from contact with the outer materialistic world. A king such as this was to live within the priesthood so that all egoism should depart from his soul and none could enter in. He was not permitted to be king for more than three years. Towards the end of the three years Baldur sensed the approach of the end of his time of kingly dignity. This meant, according to the ancient beliefs, that he was ready for contact with the outside world. First he had to rule, but he had to do this solely in accordance with the wishes of the spiritual world. After that he was to become something else; he was to enter the outside world.

For someone who had never had such contact before this was, in truth, a kind of death. This is what was expressed in his dreams. The myth describes how the gods heard about these dreams and became uneasy. We must always think of the human element in relation to the divine element in the way that the two are united in the ancient Mysteries. When, towards the end of his time as king, Baldur felt the moment approaching, the gods — that is the Mystery priests — became uneasy and made all the creatures and all the conditions of the earth swear that they would not harm Baldur. They forgot only one insignificant little plant — mistletoe, the Christmas plant. Loki, the enemy of the Aesir, found the mistletoe. And he made use of it at the festival of the gods, that is, at the event of the god Baldur's first contact with the outside world.

Here we have an ancient Christmas festival, and the mistletoe custom linked with Christmas is still today a memory of this ancient custom which had to do with establishing a new king in place of the old. The contact of the old king with the material world is depicted in the mystery play and the myth. All created things have sworn not to harm Baldur. They are now used by the gods who throw them at Baldur and shoot them at him. Nothing — no plant, no animal, no illness, no poison — can harm him. Only Loki has discovered the mistletoe, which he has brought amongst the community of gods — that is, the priests — and given to the blind god Hödr. Hödr says: What shall I do with the mistletoe? I am blind and cannot see where Baldur is standing, I cannot shoot at him as the other gods do. But Loki showed him the direction and he shot at Baldur with the mistletoe twig. Baldur was wounded and died.

So Hödr is the one who appears as the representative of the outside, material world, in so far as this material world is not comprehended in its connection with the spiritual world but lives like a parasite. 'Höd' is the ancient name for battle or war, while 'Baldur', as it still exists today, can be traced back to another designation of which the best, still preserved, appears in Anglo-Saxon. As I showed recently, 'Tag' appears at an earlier stage of the sound shift as 'day'. 'Bal day' is a possible name, even though Anglo-Saxon. It means 'shining day', which expresses Baldur's connection with daytime consciousness, that consciousness which did not come to mankind until the fourth post-Atlantean period. Hödr is a representative of matter, of darkness, but also of battle and conflict. Baldur is the representative of understanding, of knowledge, of light — namely, that light which shines in the human soul in the state of consciousness which has developed since the fourth post-Atlantean period.

So in the Baldur myth we have a special version of the Christmas Mystery. Awareness of the connection between the Baldur myth and the Christmas Mystery was also rooted out by the monks and priests. For Baldur has some of the good qualities of Lucifer, and Hödr has some of the good qualities of the later Mephistopheles-Ahriman. I do not mean 'good' in the moral sense but rather in the sense of what is necessary for evolution. Such things, too, are connected with evolution as a whole. During the fourth post-Atlantean period it was still possible for a human being to be guided into the spiritual world in the ancient way as was the case in the old northern Mysteries. This had to be changed as time went on, for the tentative way, later only present in an atavistic form, the tentative, clairvoyant way — still with a certain echo of dream consciousness, which was fitting for the fourth post-Atlantean period — could not resist the more robust demands of the materialistic age. This relationship of ancient clairvoyance from the fourth post-Atlantean period to what came later is expressed in the myth depicting the contrast between Baldur and Hödr. What is working here, what is behind the fact that Baldur — the representative of human consciousness, which can be illuminated by the divine — can be killed through the influence of the evil power of Loki over Hödr, the god of battle, of war and of darkness? Behind all this lies the fact that in our age, as it has been for a long time and as it will still be for some time to come, there must always be a working together of light and darkness. To try and make people believe that anything in the physical world, the world of maya, can be totally good, is nothing but religious egoism. Every light has its shadow, and a thorough comprehension of this fact is extremely important and significant.

Let us take an example. Under the influence of the Christmas Mystery it will be possible for us to go more deeply into a number of matters we have discussed recently. So let us take an example. I have often suggested that if Spiritual Science comes to be taken up more fully by people then, for instance, it will influence medicine, the art of healing. Certain more physical methods of healing will be found for sicknesses of the soul, and more spiritual methods for bodily illnesses. I told you why this is not yet possible: It is simply because the sins have been created by the law and not the law by the sins. So long as the laws work in such a way that materialistic medicine is considered to represent them — and that is the case today — so long will individuals, however thorough their insight, be unable to do anything and, indeed, they ought not to do anything. But a time will come in the not too distant future when medicine, the art of healing, will incorporate the impulses which come from spiritual

knowledge. I merely want to point this out for the moment, since I am actually leading up to something else. Knowledge of the healing forces is inseparable from knowledge of the forces of sickness. One cannot be taught without the other. No one in the world can gain knowledge of the healing forces, without at the same time learning about the forces of sickness. So you can see how important it is for people to be morally good through and through as regards such serious matters. For someone who can heal a person's soul can also make a person's soul sick in the same degree. Therefore such truths may not be imparted by the gods to man until a stage of morality has been reached at which the healing medicine cannot be transformed into poison.

This applies not only to the situation in which we are dealing with abnormal states of body or soul but also to what goes on in social life. In what has been said in recent lectures you will have seen quite clearly that impulses work in the social life of human beings, good and bad impulses, which can be guided by those who understand such things, and are indeed often guided in rather extraordinary ways. You will realize that it is simply necessary for this to be so, for mankind must learn on its own account how to achieve the good. I know very well how little these things are taken seriously, even in our circles, and how narrow-minded are the excuses and objections. But this also has to be so at present.

As with the individual, so is it also in social life: Certain impulses can be steered and guided to one side or the other. In social life, in particular, it is still possible nowadays to make use to a considerable extent of the unconscious, for every age has its unconscious aspect. As soon as you start to reckon with the unconscious or the subconscious it is possible to achieve effects which differ considerably from what can be done consciously, for today's consciousness will not achieve its natural connection with the cosmos until the sixth post-Atlantean epoch. Today, those who reckon with the unconscious bring things over from the fourth post-Atlantean epoch in either a mephistophelean or a luciferic way. Now, it fits in well with our present endeavours in these grave times to apply general truths of this kind to specific situations, for it is appropriate not just to play theosophical games but to gather serious knowledge which affects reality, even though this serious knowledge might make demands as to the degree of prejudice existing in our feelings. Also, we are in accord with a feeling for Christmas if we make the decision to approach the earnestness of life. Nowadays we cannot allow ourselves to indulge luxuriously in sentimental Christmas-tree feelings, for a true Christmas mood involves feeling one's way to its connection with the grave and shattering experiences of the present time.

You can see, particularly in people's everyday lives, what happens if they are being influenced at a subconscious level. You can hypnotize an individual person, so that once he is hypnotized he is in your power, and you can make him do things he would never even consider doing in a waking state. You can hypnotize him, which means putting him into a state of consciousness belonging to ages long past, and you may have all sorts of intentions for doing so. In the same way it is possible to hypnotize whole communities. An individual person is stronger in the physical world than is a group, and it is therefore necessary to lower his consciousness considerably more in order to work through him while he is in this other consciousness. In the case of a community or group of people the lowering of consciousness need not even be noticeable, for it can be far more slight. Yet certain things would not be achieved by continuing to speak, for instance, in the way we speak with one another. Therefore I must stress again and again: I shall never consider speaking other than in difficult concepts which require intellectual understanding, so that each person is forced to follow the line of thought and form concepts of what is being said. If we take the fifth post-Atlantean period and its requirements seriously, there can be no question of wishing to bring about any kind of intoxication, or of intending to work on anything other than the intellect. Even someone who knows nothing of Spiritual Science, but has a certain awareness of what it means to be in the fifth post-Atlantean period, will respect the inner freedom of the human being and speak in a way which does not dupe the feelings or create disturbances in the soul.

It would be different with a person who wanted to achieve effects different from those I have described, that is, if someone wanted to make use of a lowered consciousness, which can be achieved far more easily with a crowd than with an individual, since for a crowd no hypnosis is needed. You know how a crowd, a group, can be seized by a certain intoxication if it is handled in a suitable way. I have said on earlier occasions that I have met orators who knew by instinct how to speak in a way which does not directly address the intellect but uses slogans and telling images to speak to a consciousness that is somewhat askew, somewhat delirious. As I said, the approach has to be stronger in the case of an individual, but for a crowd no more is needed. I have given you examples of this.

It is entirely fitting to contemplate these things in a mood of inwardness which befits these days, for they are deeply bound up with the Christmas and Easter Mysteries. I described some time ago how I was moved in my youth when I met with such an effect in a certain situation. I have

recounted this example quite often: My karma led me at the right time to hear the sermons of a very important Jesuit father. I could watch as a certain image was intensified in the people by means of particular words; I saw them being convinced in a manner that did not involve their intellect but brought about a certain kind of delirious mood. Let us look at the example. The Jesuit was preaching about the necessity of believing in the Easter confession and he said, in effect, the following: Well, of course non-believers think that the Easter confession was instituted by the Pope or the college of cardinals. What an idea, my dear Christians! Someone who maintains that the Easter confession has been established by the Pope and the priests might be compared with somebody watching a trooper standing beside his cannon, with an officer next to him giving orders. The trooper only has to light the fuse and the cannon goes off. My dear Christians, compare the trooper with the Pope in Rome and the officer giving the orders with God! Just imagine the officer standing there shouting 'Fire', and the trooper lighting the fuse without any will of his own. The cannon goes off. This is what the Pope does. He listens to God's commandments. God commanded — the Pope was like the trooper who lit the fuse — and there was the Easter confession. Would you say that the trooper standing by the cannon and lighting the fuse had also invented the gunpowder? It is as unlikely that you would say the trooper invented the gunpowder as it is that you would maintain that the Pope invented the Easter confession! And all the people were convinced, of course! It was perfectly obvious.

In certain communities these things have to be learned, namely, how to describe things in pictures, how to use images, bring about intensifications, and employ comparisons. This is a special art which is diligently practised in the grey brotherhoods. But there is no need to belong to a grey brotherhood in order to practise such an art. One can be dependent in one way or another on the grey brotherhoods, perhaps without even knowing how dependent one is, and then one can use these methods.

What is all this based on? It is based on the fact that a different kind of soul life is present when we speak with one another in a manner suited to the fifth post-Atlantean period, for then we direct ourselves to the intellect and not to a kind of delirium which would be brought about if we used some of the means I have just sketched. In the fifth post-Atlantean period we have to learn to withstand Hödr, we have to learn to withstand the remnants of an earlier time that resemble the mistletoe which has become a parasite in the plant world. We have to learn to withstand Hödr, the unconscious one, the blind one, the passionate one, the delirious one.

We can only win this capacity by making our understanding such that we feel quite isolated from the world, whereas those who develop a delirious type of consciousness immediately attract to themselves cosmic effects; they draw cosmic effects down into the present. With the consciousness of the fifth post-Atlantean period we stand in isolation on the earth. In a delirious consciousness, cosmic effects are drawn into the soul. And these, of course, have to be utilized in an appropriate way. Let us take an actual case.

Someone who today wants to work on others, on those whose consciousness is delirious, with the aim of achieving a particular end, can do the following: He can remember when something similar existed in an earlier age when the starry constellations were also similar. Now since everything goes in waves in the world, so that a particular wave returns to the surface after a certain time, in order to achieve certain effects he can make use of an event which under similar cosmic conditions is like a copy of an earlier event; he can make it a copy of an earlier event. Let us assume that someone wants to achieve something by influencing others in their delirious consciousness, by carrying out certain procedures involving certain facts. He goes back in history and recalls something which happened at an earlier date under a similar starry constellation.

Assume someone wants to bring something about on a day in the spring of a particular year. Having established that it is Whitsuntide, he goes back through time until he finds an event that is similar to the one he wants to bring about. And it must fall in a year when the date of Whitsun fell approximately on similar days of the month. Then the starry constellation will also be roughly the same. By utilizing all this it will then be possible to work on those in a delirious state of consciousness. In a sense it will be possible, by bringing about a state of delirious consciousness under a particular starry constellation, to hit the target of a group of people who are always a kind of Baldur in the fifth post-Atlantean period; in other words, to play Loki with blind Hödr, or through blind Hödr.

Now let us take an actual case: In an earlier age Whitsuntide fell on 20 May 1347. At this time on a particular day the heralds, flourishing their trumpets, marched with a crowd — it does not matter that their relationship to the Whitsun Mystery differed from ours today — leading Cola di Rienzi, who made the proclamation, from that important place in Rome under that very starry constellation which fell on 20 May, which was to give him the title of tribune of Rome. The impression he made was comparable to the impression made on a group or crowd in a state of

delirious consciousness. For the crowd believed that Cola di Rienzi had brought the Holy Ghost; and utilization of the starry constellation of the time made it possible, though for a very short time only, for him to achieve what he intended.

A remarkable copy of this event took place under the same starry constellation in 1915 when, not Cola di Rienzi, but Signor d'Annunzio called together a crowd on the same spot in a very similar way! Again a delirious consciousness was affected by ideas and symbols which conjured up pictures that were eminently suitable for speaking to this delirious consciousness. I am not criticizing anybody's consciousness but merely reporting facts — facts which, if you like, have been pushed as far as possible down into the unconscious. But this does not alter their effectiveness. On Whitsun-day 1915 the same happened in Rome as had happened on Whitsun-day 1347, which also fell on 20, 21 May. One day makes no difference. On the contrary, the constellation was all the more identical. At Whitsun 1915 there was a repeat performance of what had happened under Cola di Rienzi in 1347. The new event was thus particularly effective, for it was borne on the same vibrations, the same waves, the same conditions.

History will only be understood when such facts are known, when it is known what can be achieved with the help of such facts. Regardless of what the influences were, Signor d'Annunzio, through the life he had led so far, had the potential of succumbing to all sorts of influences, and he had the strength to put these influences to use. Let me remark merely that, because of his earlier poetry, this poet was called by a number of critics representing the healthy side of Italy 'The singer of all shameful degeneracy'. In ordinary life his name was Rapagnetta, which I am told means 'little turnip', but he called himself d'Annunzio.

Under this starry constellation Signor d'Annunzio gave a speech which you may judge for yourselves because I am going to read it aloud to you to the best of my ability. To put you in the picture: There were two parties in Italy at that time, the Neutralists and the Interventionists, and Signor d'Annunzio set himself the task of transforming all the Neutralists into Interventionists. The Neutralists wanted to preserve neutrality, and Giolitti, a man who had been very active in Italian political life for a long time, was for neutrality. That speech by d'Annunzio, which was like a repetition of the one made long ago by Cola di Rienzi under the same starry constellation, went as follows:

'Romans!

Yesterday you presented a noble show to the world! Your never-ending, well-ordered procession resembled those solemn processions of ancient days which gathered here in the temple of Jupiter Maximus; and every street through which such power marches, such power coupled with such dignity, becomes a Via Sacra. Invisible in your midst you drew, on an invisible carriage, the statue of our great mother.

Blessed be the Roman mothers I saw in the procession yesterday, the mothers who bore their sons in their arms and wore on their foreheads the mark of resigned courage and silent sacrifice.

Is there any need for exhortations when the very stones are eloquent? The people of Rome were prepared to tear up the paving stones trampled by the horses which ought long since to be standing firm at the borders of Istria, instead of remaining here, humbled by shame, to defend the nests of poisonous creatures, the houses of traitors! What must have been the sadness of our young soldiers! — What a show of discipline and self-denial they gave, when they protected, against the just anger of the people, those very men who denigrate and slander them, humiliating them before their brothers and before the enemy. Let us cry: "Long live the army!" That is the call of this hour! Of all the vile actions committed by Giolitti and his pack this is the vilest: the denigration of our arms and of our national defence. Until yesterday they got away with the dissemination of doubt, suspicion, and disregard for our soldiers — our handsome, good, strong, brave, impetuous soldiers, the flower of our people, the reliable heroes of tomorrow. With what heavy hearts did they fix their bayonets in order to repulse the very people whose only purpose was to avenge them!

O my admirable comrades! Today every good citizen is a soldier for the freedom of Italy! Through you and with you we are victorious, we have brought confusion to the ranks of the

traitors. Hear, O hear! The crime of high treason has been declared and proved, and publicly announced. The dishonourable names are known; punishment is needed!

Do not be taken in, do not be moved to pity. A rabble like that has no twinges of conscience, no remorse. Who can teach another taste to the beast who is accustomed to the filth in which he rolls and the trough from which he gorges?

On the twentieth of May in the solemn gathering of our union, we shall not tolerate the shameless presence of those who, for months, have been negotiating the sale of Italy with the enemy. Clowns may not be permitted to clothe themselves in the tri-coloured mantle, and bellow from unclean throats the holy name of the fatherland. Write out your list of proscription without pity. It is your right, it is your duty! Who saved Italy in her hour of darkness, who but you, her people, pure and profound?

Never forget that! The others may escape punishment only by flight! Let them go! This is the only leniency permitted towards them. Was not a certain one, even this morning, still inclined to join in the plots whose net is being spun among the blossoming rosebeds of the villa on the Pincio — now to be confiscated — by the fat German spider who lives there? We never believed for one minute, of course, that a ministry formed by Herr Bülow could have received the approval of the King — or rather, that the King could have become an accomplice to such a thing.

In his great heart the King has heard the exhortation of Camillo Cavour: The hour of the House of Savoy has come!

The hour has come. It tolls under the high heavens which arch over your Pantheon, O Romans, and over this eternal Capitol! Here, where the plebeians held the meetings of their council; here, where every increase in the empire of Rome was consecrated, where the consuls exacted the levies and received the oaths of the soldiers; whence the magistrates of the republic departed to take over command of the armies and control the provinces; where Germanicus set up the trophies of his victory over the Germans; where the triumphant

Octavian solemnly confirmed Roman dominance over the whole of the Mediterranean basin; here, at this place, the starting point and the goal of all our victories, we celebrate the voluntary sacrifice, we cry the words of consecration and desire: Long live the war, long live Rome, long live Italy, long live the army and the fleet, long live the King! Glory and victory!

Thus spoke the new Cola di Rienzi. Then he received the #8224 presented to him as a special souvenir of Nino Bixio. This #8224 stemmed from ancient days and had been treasured by the Podrecca family. The #8224 is presented — pardon me, but this is really true — by the editor of *Asino!* *Asino* is a particularly obscene satirical journal. But d'Annunzio takes hold of the #8224, kisses it solemnly, strides through the crowd and enters — not, like Cola di Rienzi, a horse-drawn triumphal chariot, for times have changed — he enters a motor car, having first commanded all the church bells to be rung. The delirious consciousness must not be allowed to fade too soon. All the bells are rung to keep it going a little longer. Then d'Annunzio halts his car at the telegraph office and sends a telegram to the editor of *Le Gaulois* who answers — I am sorry I do not know how to pronounce this in French so I shall have to say it in the German way — who answers to the name of Meier:

'Rome, 1 p.m., great battle fought. Have just spoken on the Capitol to an enormous, delirious crowd. The bells are sounding the alarm, the cries of the people rise up to the most beautiful sky in the world. I am drunk with joy. After the French miracle I have now witnessed the Italian miracle.'

Without making any comments or taking sides I simply wanted to point out certain facts in order to show, by the way in which they are connected, how things happen that are hardly noticed by our unobservant contemporaries. I wanted to show that although the 'singer of all shameful degeneracy', as he was called in Italy, probably did not believe very strongly in the miracle of Whitsun, he nevertheless succeeded very well in working on certain unconscious impulses by using a repetition of an event which made available considerable forces within a delirious consciousness.

This man, who in his own country is called 'the singer of all shameful degeneracy' and who has succeeded in writing a novel which trumpets forth his relationship with a famous woman in the most contemptible way — this man found another whole series of effective images in another long speech, this time in the Constanzi theatre. The image of the cannon, which I have already mentioned, is rather less significant. I cannot read the whole speech to you as this would take too long. Let me give you a passage from the beginning and another from the end. It begins:

'Romans, Italians, brothers in faith and in yearning, my new friends, and my companions of old!'

Well, so he says 'of old'!

'Your greetings of warm kindness, of generous recognition, are not intended for me. It is not the homecomer in me you are welcoming, I know, it is the spirit that leads me, the love that fills me, the idea that I serve.

Your welcome goes through me and beyond me to a higher goal. I bring you the tidings of Quarto, Roman tidings to the Rome of the Villa Spada and of Vascello.

This evening the daylight has not gone from the Aurelian walls and it will not go: the glimmer remains on San Pancratio.

Let us this evening confront cowardice with heroism and remember that sixty-six years ago today the leader of men led his legion, already destined to become the June miracle, from Palestrina back to Rome. Let us this evening confront shame with fame and remember that fifty-five years ago at this very hour the thousand on the march from Marsala to Salemi were bivouacking, their muskets stacked together, eating their bread or sleeping quietly. In their hearts they carried the stars and the words of their leader which still sound vital and commanding to this day: "If we unite, our task will be easy. To arms!" It was the call of Marsala, which continued with the robust threat: "Those who do not arm are cowards or

traitors!" If he, the saviour, could but descend from the Janiculus into the plain, would he not brand with one or the other of these signs and charge with shame all those who secretly or publicly work towards disarming Italy, shaming our fatherland, returning it to a state of servitude, nailing it back on its cross or leaving it to die in a bed that has sometimes seemed to us a grave without a cover?

Some need fifty years to die in their beds, some need fifty years to complete their disintegration in their beds. Is it possible we would allow strangers in our midst or from without, enemies who live in our house or who have entered it forcibly, to impose this kind of death on a people who yesterday raised with a shudder of power an image of their highest myth upon their shore, a monument of their true will, their Roman will, O citizens? For three days now an indefinable stink of treachery has been seeking to suffocate us.'

And so it goes on. Then, at the end we find a new, warmed-up version of something we know so well from the gospels. D'Annunzio of all people dares to speak the following words:

'Blessed are they who have more, for all the more shall they give, all the more shall their enthusiasm be inflamed! Blessed are they who have for twenty years a pure spirit, a hardened physique, a courageous mother!

Blessed are they who refrained, waiting and trusting, from squandering their strength, preserving it instead with a warrior's discipline!

Blessed are they who scorned unfruitful dalliance, saving their virginity for this first and last love!'

D'Annunzio of all people says: 'Blessed are they who scorned unfruitful dalliance, saving their virginity for this first and last love!'

'Blessed are they who shall tear out the hate rooted in their breast with their own hands and then offer their sacrifice!

Blessed are they who yesterday still resisted the event, yet today silently accept it as a profound necessity, desiring now to be no longer the last but the first!

Blessed are the young men who hunger and thirst for glory, for they shall be satisfied!

Blessed are the compassionate, for they shall wipe away the shining blood and bind up the lustrous pain!

Blessed are the pure in heart, blessed those who return victorious; for they shall see the new countenance of Rome, the re-crowned head of Dante, the triumphant beauty of Italy.'

So even in our own time such things are sometimes said! And it is so important, my dear friends, not to pass by these things. For not all people act in accord with the One Whose birth we celebrate in the holy night — not those who scream out such beatitudes into the world. To belong, not to the darkness, but to the light which has entered into the world: This is a feeling with which to fill our souls at the time of this holy feast. To dedicate ourselves to the light, instead of to that inattentiveness which brings us only darkness: This, too, can be something in these grave times which it is important for us to inscribe in our souls on Christmas Eve.

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Lecture 10

Flight from the Truth; The Living Connection Between Word and Reality

25 December 1916, Dornach

Yesterday we began by considering the Baldur myth which, as we saw, goes back to ancient customs, and it is precisely such considerations that make clear for us how Christianity had to, and indeed should, link on to what mankind had previously understood. The three great festivals of the year, as they are still celebrated today, are very much linked with things which have slowly and gradually come about during the course of human evolution. We can only completely understand what still wants to express itself in the Christmas, Easter and Whitsun Mysteries if we do not shy away from linking these things with the thinking and feeling and experience of mankind gradually developing during the course of evolution. We saw how the Christ idea goes back to early, early times.

To understand this more exactly you only need to call before your soul what is contained in the book *The Spiritual Guidance of Man and Humanity*. There you will learn how the foundation of the Christ idea can be traced back to the mysteries of the spiritual worlds. In the book is shown the path followed in the spiritual worlds by the Being Who underlies the Christ idea before He revealed Himself in physical human incarnation at a certain point in earthly evolution. In coming to grips with these concepts concerning the spiritual guidance of mankind it is possible to sense what connection, or even lack of connection, there exists between anthroposophical spiritual science and ancient Gnosis. To describe the path of Christ through the spiritual worlds in the way it is done in *The Spiritual Guidance of Man and Humanity* would not yet have been possible for ancient Gnosis. But this ancient Gnosis also had its own image of Christ, its Christ idea. It was capable of drawing sufficient understanding out of its atavistic or clairvoyant knowledge to comprehend the Christ in a spiritual way, saying: In the spiritual world there is an evolution; the hierarchies — or, as Gnosis put it, the aeons — follow one another; and one such aeon is the Christ. Gnosis showed how, as aeon after aeon evolved, Christ gradually descended and revealed Himself in a human being. This can be shown even more clearly today, and you may read about it in the book *The Spiritual Guidance of Man and Humanity*.

It is good, in our spiritual scientific Movement, to feel many aspects of the deeper connections in order to free oneself of purely personal affairs. For in this fifth post-Atlantean period mankind has reached a stage in evolution at which it is very difficult for the individual to escape from his personal affairs. The individual is in danger of mixing up his personal instincts and passions with what is common to mankind as a whole.

Even the various festivals have deteriorated into purely personal affairs because mankind has lost the earnestness and dignity which alone make it possible to approach the spiritual world in the right way. It is perfectly natural in our fifth post-Atlantean period, in which man is supposed to comprehend himself to a certain extent and become independent, that there should exist such a danger of man to some extent losing his connections with the spiritual world. In earlier times man was aware of his connections with the spiritual world, yet unaware of certain other things, such as I pointed out yesterday. Today man is, above all, unaware of those things I have mentioned in these lectures by saying: People are no longer inclined to pay attention to them; they allow them to pass by without being concerned about them.

It is a good thing on occasions such as the Christmas festival to say to oneself: Spiritual impulses, both good and evil, play into the evolution of our world. We have seen how these impulses can be used in an evil way by individuals who know about them either for some personal, egoistic purpose, or in the interests of the egoism of a group. We must learn to adjust our feelings to more comprehensive affairs and more comprehensive conditions. Even though we cannot always advertise such feelings, we must nevertheless cultivate them.

I am now going to give you the opportunity — in connection with a certain matter — to, as it were, tear your soul away from any sort of personal interpretation of Anthroposophy and turn instead towards something general which is connected with our Anthroposophical Movement. If you understood properly what I said yesterday, you will say to yourself: That twentieth day of May in 1347, that May Whitsuntide when Cola di Rienzi accomplished his important manifesto in Rome, was repeated in a certain way at Whitsuntide in the year 1915. Those who have been following the events will soon notice, or would soon notice, that this May Whitsuntide was selected entirely purposely and entirely consciously by those who brought this about. It was known to these people that these old impulses would once again revive, and that the hearts and souls who succumb to the blindness of Hödr can be caught when Loki approaches

them. But people can only be caught so long as they do not have the will to accustom themselves to look at, and be impressed by, connections that are perfectly obvious and comprehensible. One is only at the mercy of connections that remain in the unconscious so long as one is so tied up in personal matters that one cannot see proper connections — connections in the good sense — so long as one has no interest for those things which involve mankind as a whole, which are things that inevitably lead into the spiritual realm.

I explained to you that in Gnosis there was still an understanding of the Christ idea; that when Gnosis was rooted out the Christ idea degenerated into dogma and that, in the South, therefore, the genuine Christ idea more or less disappeared. Now spiritual science has the task, in accordance with spiritual evolution, of once again comprehending this Christ idea, of forming a Christ idea that is not an empty phrase but filled with content, with real content.

In the North the very thing that could take root there has disappeared, namely, the feeling for Jesus. As I said the day before yesterday, the feeling for Jesus was really formed in the North and lingered on into the eighth, ninth, tenth centuries after the Mystery of Golgotha. In ancient times the Christ-child was welcomed wherever a birth took place, wherever a worthy new member could be taken into the tribe, especially among the Ingaevones, while those born at the wrong time were out of place — of course I am not being pedantic. We then saw how, as external Christianity spread, all things connected with the ancient feeling for Jesus, even the myths and processions — in other words, any remnants of religious customs — were pushed aside. We also saw how, since the Middle Ages, strenuous efforts have been going on to obliterate all that spread from Jutland across Europe, especially Central Europe.

Situated in the region of Denmark was the chief Mystery centre which laid down and watched over the conditions which then appeared in the regulation of conception and birth. There it was that a general consciousness of the social connections of human beings grew up, connections that were also sacramental, a true social sacrament. The year as such was arranged as a sacrament and human beings knew they were contained within this sacrament of the year. For people in those days the sun did not for nothing go in different ways across the dome of heaven at different seasons, for what took place on earth was a mirror image of heavenly events. Where human beings as yet have, or can have, no influence, where elemental and nature beings still regulate what is now

regulated by human beings in social life — there the sacrament can exist. Today, though people are not as yet aware of it, quite strong ahrimanic impulses live in individual human beings. I mean it when I say that people are not yet aware of this. These ahrimanic impulses are directed towards seizing from certain elemental nature spirits their sacramental influence on earthly evolution.

When modern technology has made it possible to warm large areas with artificial heat — I am not finding fault but merely telling you of something that will of necessity come about in the future — then plant growth, above all that of grain, will be taken away from the nature and elemental spirits. There will be heating installations, not only for winter gardens and smaller spaces for plants to grow, but for whole cornfields. Deprived of cosmic laws, grain will grow in every season, instead of only when it grows of its own accord — that is, when it grows through the working of the nature and elemental spirits. For the seeds this will be similar to what happened when the ancient consciousness of sacramental laws about conception and birth faded so that these events came to be spread over the whole year. The task of Mystery centres such as that in Denmark, which I described as regulating, as a sacrament, the social life of the people, was to search for ways in which spiritual beings could work in the social and sacramental field, just as they work on the sprouting and growing of plants in the spring and their fading in autumn. From this centre in Denmark there spread what we were able to find in the third millennium before the Mystery of Golgotha, but which then faded gradually to make way for something new, without which human beings would have been unable to ascend to the use of their intellect. These things are necessary and we ought to recognize them as such, instead of trying to meddle with the handiwork of the gods by saying: Why have the gods done it like this, why did they not arrange things like that? — which always means: Why have they not made things more comfortable for human beings!

So in Jutland, in Denmark, originated the receptivity for the feeling for Jesus. You see, it is important to think about what is happening, not only in connection with events which are more or less important, but also to consider the connections. But this thinking must be straight and true, not full of fantastic aberrations. Many people like to brood on the weird and wonderful, but proper thinking means to consider how actual events are linked and then to wait and see what arises in the way of understanding.

After all I have said in the last few days it might occur to you to ask the following question, and those of you who have already asked yourselves this question have definitely sensed in your soul something that is right. If you have not yet asked it, you could strive in future to ask yourselves this kind of question. For such questions are to be found everywhere when there is determination that there shall be truth, not only in what is said, but also in what is done. The World Logos, Whose birth we celebrate in the Christmas Mystery, can only be understood rightly if we think of It as being as general and universal as possible, if we think of this World Logos actually vibrating and pulsating in all things that happen, in every event. And when we have the humility and devotion to feel ourselves interwoven with this universal process, then we recognize the connections and links which hold sway.

What is the question our soul might place before us? In recent days you soul might have thought: We have now seen that in Gnosis there was an important Christ idea; it disappeared in the South and, in a certain way, was unable to make its way to the North. To meet it came the Jesus idea, which is linked as a feeling to the Mysteries of Jutland. This is what we have seen.

Having recognized this and having seen the links between these two, would it not be natural to have the desire to bring together what has been unable to come together? In the world evolution of the West the Christ idea has been unable to come together with the Jesus idea. Out of this must surely come the desire to unite them.

In all modesty, modern Anthroposophy is to take on this task. It is the affair of Anthroposophy to endeavour to do what is right in this matter and bring these things together to some extent in the constellation of the universe. So in attempting to describe how modern Anthroposophy, as a Gnosis brought forward into the present day, can once again understand the Christ, the wish might arise to unite this Christ idea with something that can live again in a certain place where once it lived as the feeling for Jesus in such an intense way. To do this, one would endeavour to speak about the Christ idea and how it fits in with the spiritual guidance of man exactly at that spot, or as near to that spot as possible, whence the feeling for Jesus originally emanated.

This is why, years ago, in response to an invitation from Copenhagen I spoke particularly there about the path of Christ through the spiritual evolutions. Why did the need arise just at that time, to develop at that

particular place the theme of the Christ idea as it is woven into *The Spiritual Guidance of Man and Humanity*? It is a statement, expressed not in spoken words but in the constellation! It is up to people to understand such things. There is no need to speak about it publicly everywhere, but one must understand that not only what is said but also what is done will bring things to expression, and that in these things the Universal Logos lives in a certain way.

It seems to be the case nowadays that people obviously bring more feeling to bear on what is not right, on what is evil, seen universally, than they do when, by expressing a real fact, one endeavours to incorporate something that is essentially good in the sense of human evolution. But the feeling one really wants to inspire, especially now in connection with the Christmas Mystery, is that of participation in the Anthrosophical Movement, the feeling of living within something that is above mere external maya. Also one hopes that people will take seriously the knowledge that what happens on the physical plane, the way things happen on the physical plane, is maya, and not reality in the higher sense.

Not until we feel that what takes place on the earth also, in a way, takes place in 'heaven' — to use a Christian expression — not until we feel that the full truth only comes about when we bring the two together in the human spirit — that is, in this fifth post-Atlantean period, the human intellect — are we seeing the full reality. The full reality lies in the bringing-together of what happens on earth and in heaven. Without this, we remain held fast in maya. We have, today, this great desire to remain held fast in maya because, in the fifth post-Atlantean period, we are far too exposed to the danger of taking the word for the fact. To a great extent words have lost their meaning, by which I mean the living soul-connection of the word with the reality that underlies the word. Words have become mere abbreviations, and the intoxication in which many people live with regard to words is no longer genuine ecstasy, because only a deepening as regards the spiritual world can make genuine the words we speak. Words will only regain real content when human beings fill themselves with knowledge of the spiritual world. Ancient knowledge is lost, and for the most part we speak in the way we do just because the ancient knowledge is lost and we are surrounded by maya, which gives us nothing but mere words. Now we must once again seek a spiritual life which gives the words their content. We live, in a way, in a mechanism of words, just as externally we shall gradually completely lose our individuality in a mechanism of technology until we are at the mercy of external mechanisms.

It is our task to bring together what lives in the spiritual world with what lives in the physical world. To do this we have to tackle very seriously the grasping of reality. In this materialistic age people are too much accustomed to living within narrow horizons and to seeing things confined within these horizons. They have even arranged their religion so comfortably that it gives them a narrow horizon. People today avoid wide horizons and do not want to call a spade a spade. That is why it is so difficult for them to understand how a karma could come about that is as terrible as that besetting Europe today. Everybody regards this karma — today, at least — from a narrow national standpoint, as it is called, although there is much that is untrue in this too. But at the foundation there lies the karma of mankind as a whole, something that is everybody's concern, which can be expressed in a single sentence with regard to one particular point — though there are many other points as well. People are inclined to pass by the very thing that matters. This thing that matters is the flight from truth into which souls have fallen today! Souls run away from the truth; they have a terrible abhorrence of grasping the truth in all its strength and intensity.

Consider the following: We have gradually built up a picture for ourselves of the evolution of mankind and we now know how to assess the fact that, during a certain period in this evolution, wars came upon the scene, that wars were what fired mankind. But it was a time when mankind believed in war. What do I mean when I say that it was a time when mankind believed in wars? What does it mean: to believe in wars? Well, a belief in wars is very similar to a belief in the duel, in the fight between two. But when does a duel have a real meaning? It has a meaning only when the two concerned are inwardly fully convinced that, not chance, but the gods will decide the outcome. If the two who take up their positions in order to fight a duel fully believe that the one who is killed or wounded will receive his death or wound because a god has sided against him, then there is truth in the duel. There is no truth in the duel if this conviction is lacking; then, obviously, the duel is a genuine lie. It is the same in the case of war. If the individuals who constitute the warring peoples are convinced that the outcome of the war is divine, that the gods govern what is to happen, then there is truth in the actions of war. But then the participants must understand the meaning of the words: A divine judgement will come about.

Ask yourselves whether there is any truth in such words today! You need only ask: Do people believe that actions of war express divine judgements? Do people believe this? Ask yourselves how many people believe that the

outcome is divine! How many people truly believe this, how many honestly believe this? For among the many lies buzzing about in the world today are the prayers to the gods, or to God, offered up — naturally — by all sides. Obviously, in this materialistic age there cannot be a real belief that a divine judgement is going to take place. So it is necessary to look seriously and soberly at this matter, and admit that one is doing something without believing in its inner reality. One does not believe in this inner reality, and one believes all the less in this inner reality the further westwards one goes in Europe — quite rightly, because the further westwards one goes, the more does one enter western Europe, which has the task for the fifth post-Atlantean period of bringing about materialism.

Things are different going eastwards, however. I am not in the habit of constructing theories about such things or of saying such things lightheartedly. When I say something of this kind it is based on actual facts. It is nowadays already possible to make a remarkable discovery. Coming from the West to Central Europe you discover that here there exists a sporadic belief in divine judgement. In the West this is impossible unless it has been imported from Central Europe. But in Central Europe there are isolated individuals who have a kind of belief in destiny and who use the word 'divine judgement'. And if you go right to the East where the future is being prepared, you will, of course, find numerous people who regard the approaching outcome as a divine judgement. For Russian people are not averse — as are the people of the West — to seeing a divine judgement in what takes place.

These things must be faced with full objectivity. Only then can we speak truly; only then do our words have meaning. Mankind has the task of learning to give meaning back to words.

Some time ago I drew your attention to what almost amounts to a religious cultivation of something that is entirely without thought or feeling, namely, the lack of desire to know that modern religions, when they speak of 'God', actually only mean an angel being, an angelos. When human beings today speak of 'God' they mean only their angel, the angel who guides them through life. But they persuade themselves that they are speaking of a being higher than an angel. It is maya that modern monotheism speaks of a single god for, in reality, seen from a spiritual point of view, mankind has the tendency to speak of as many gods as there are human beings on the earth, since each individual means only his own angel. Under the mask of monotheism is hidden the most absolute polytheism. That is why modern religions are in danger of being atomized,

since each individual represents only his own idea of God, his own standpoint. Why is this? It is because, today, in the fifth post-Atlantean period, we are isolated from the spiritual world. Our consciousness remains solely in the human sphere.

In the fourth post-Atlantean period human consciousness reached some way into the spiritual sphere, namely, as far as the region of the angeloi. In the third post-Atlantean period it penetrated as far as the archangeloi. Only in this third period could such a thing as the Mysteries of Jutland, of Denmark come into being. What kind of a being was it who announced to each individual mother the coming birth of her child? It was the being about whom the Luke gospel speaks: an archangel, a being from the region of the archangeloi. One who can see only as far as the angeloi and calls an angel-being his god — regardless of whether he believes this is really God, for it is reality and not belief that matters — such a one is incapable of finding any connection that goes beyond the time between birth and death to those regions which are today hidden by external maya. In the third post-Atlantean period, however, he was still able to look into the region of the archangels, for there was still a living connection with that region. In the second post-Atlantean period, the ancient Persian period, what was open to human consciousness was still connected with the archai. Then man did not feel himself to be in what we today call nature. He felt himself to be in a spiritual world. Light and darkness were not yet external, material processes, but spiritual processes. In the original Zarathustra religion, in the second post-Atlantean period, this was so.

So mankind gradually came down to the earth. In the second post-Atlantean period his consciousness reached up into the region of the archai, so that he was then still able to say: As a human being I am not solely an articulated doll consisting of muscles and flesh — which is what modern anatomists, physiologists and biologists maintain — but a being who can only be understood in connection with the spiritual world, immersed in the living weaving of light and darkness, for I belong to the weaving of light and darkness.

Then came the third post-Atlantean period. Nature began to take hold of man in so far as it worked on him. For the processes of birth and death link the soul life of man with nature. For external maya these are natural processes. Birth, conception, death are natural processes for external maya. They are only spiritual processes for one who can see where

spiritual reality intervenes in these natural processes, and that is in the region of the archangeli. This connection was seen during the third post-Atlantean period.

Gradually, nature itself became reality for man. This was from the fourth post-Atlantean period onwards. Before that nature was not spoken of in the way we speak of it today. But man needed to step out of the spiritual world and dwell alone with nature, isolated to a certain extent from the spiritual world. But then he needed an event which would enable him once again to forge links with the spiritual world. In the second post-Atlantean period the divine element appeared to him in the region of the archai; in the third, in the region of the archangeli; and, in the fourth, in the region of the angeli. In the fifth post-Atlantean period he had to recognize the divine as man. This was prepared in the middle of the fourth period when the divine appeared as Man — in the Christ. What this means is that Christ must come to be understood ever better and better; He must come to be understood in His connection with the human being. For Christ appeared as Man so that man might find the connection of mankind with the Christ. Such things we must make especially clear to ourselves in connection with the Christmas Mystery. Mankind's connection with the spiritual world must be found in the way that has become possible since man stepped down from this spiritual world in order to dwell within nature. This was prepared, as a fact, during the fourth post-Atlantean period. Now, in the fifth post-Atlantean period, it must be understood — really understood!

Human beings must find their way to an understanding of the fact of Christ, to an understanding of this in its connection with the whole of the spiritual world. There is so much today which is *not* understood about Christ, and so much which is *not* understood about Jesus. Yet these are the two constituent parts necessary for the understanding of Christ Jesus! Looking at the historical context we can see that the understanding for Christ disappeared when Gnosis was rooted out. Looking at the mysteries expressed in the Baldur myth we can understand how the feeling for Jesus was rooted out.

If we remain truthful we can see now, in the present, how external life corroborates what we find in history. For how many representatives of religion today believe in their hearts — not merely with their lips but in their hearts — how many believe in the true Resurrection, in the Mystery of Easter? They can only believe if they can comprehend it. How many priests do? Modern priests and pastors think themselves particularly enlightened when they succeed in disavowing the Easter Mystery, the Resurrection

Mystery, if they manage somehow to discuss it to bits, to make it disappear through sophistry. They are delighted every time they discover a new reason for not having to believe in it.

First of all, the Christ idea, which is inseparable from the Resurrection Mystery, was made into dogma. Then gradually it became a subject for discussion, and the tendency now is to drop the Resurrection Mystery altogether. But the Mystery of the Birth is also not understood. People no longer want to have dealings with it because they do not want to accept its validity in all its profound depths as a mystery. They want to see only the natural side; they do not want to be aware that something spiritual came down. In the third post-Atlantean period human beings still saw this spiritual element descending, but then their consciousness was at a different level. What is today called modern religion, modern Christianity, really has no desire to comprehend either the birth or the death of Christ Jesus. Some still want to maintain a dogmatic connection. But a comprehension of these things that goes beyond mere words is today only possible through spiritual science. For this to be possible, the horizon of comprehension must be widened. But people today flee from the truth; they literally flee from what could lead them to an understanding of these things.

Only anthroposophical spiritual science is in a position to create out of itself — not by warming up ancient history — certain concepts which will now exist for conscious rather than atavistic understanding. Long ago these concepts existed atavistically; today, people no longer have any real feeling for them. Let me remind you of something I mentioned yesterday. The kingship of the ancient European tribes was connected with all those social institutions I mentioned as emanating from the Mysteries of Jutland. The first child born in the holy night in the third year was destined to be king. He was prepared for this in the way I explained and he grew up to be the man who could be king for three years. He had reached the stage I described when I said that he grew beyond his national limits — he stepped out of the context of his tribe. An individual of the fifth degree — called 'Persian' by the Persians — bore in every tribe the name of that tribe; he still stood within the group. The one who was to be king for three years had to be filled with the mystery of the 'sun hero'. This was the sixth degree, and for this he had to have grown beyond his tribe or group and stand in the context of mankind as a whole. But he could only do this if his connections were not only earthly but also cosmic, if he was a 'sun hero', which meant that he lived in a realm governed not only by earthly laws but also by those laws with which the sun is interwoven. If man is to act on the

earth he has to have contact with the earthly realm, and contact with this realm brings about a certain process. This process must be recognized. For by recognizing this process we gain an understanding for certain transitions, for certain things into which we need insight if we are to gain insight into reality.

In ancient times a man belonging to the tribe of the Ingaevones was called an 'Ingaevoni'. But the one who ruled the tribe for three years as a 'sun hero' could not be called an Ingaevoni, because he had grown beyond his tribe. It would not have been truthful to call the 'sun hero' an Ingaevoni, because he had become something else. You see what an exact concept was attached to an earthly reality because the spiritual world was felt to be streaming in.

Nowadays, when we merely play with words instead of adhering strictly to concepts, who would take it into his head to say that it is untrue to call the Pope a Christian, since this is a paradox, just as it would have been paradoxical to call the king of the Ingaevones an Ingaevoni? If the Pope really wanted to be a 'pope', that is, if he really wanted to stand within the actual spiritual process, it would not be possible to take him for a Christian. We can only be Christians if the Pope is not a Christian. To say this would be to speak the truth.

Who would take it into his head today to want to think the truth about such important matters? And who would take it into his head to see in earthly things, which he recognizes as maya, the playing in of divine, of supernatural forces? This would be quite uncharacteristic of the present day. Only if we are forced do we recognize these things; only if forced do we bow to the laws of the cosmos. We are forced to recognize that the blade of wheat sprouts from the earth at a given season, develops ears which in turn produce new seeds; that there is a definite rotation so that what has come into being has to fade again in due season in accordance with the laws of nature. Even this we would not recognize if we were not forced to do so.

In ancient times it was recognized that the 'sun hero' called to be the leader of the Ingaevones would cease to be so after three years. These laws were felt, just as were those of the growing plants. It is important to endeavour to think of all these things resounding in unison, in harmony. Only by doing so can one come to the truth and widen one's horizons. For the truth is not a child's game to be arranged according to personal

interests. To adhere to the truth is a grave and holy act of worship. This must be felt and sensed. Yet the whole tendency today is none other than to make maya absolute and declare it to be the truth.

What is the historical criticism cultivated today in historical seminars? It is a neat paring down to the bare sense-perceptible facts, and this can only lead to error. For by striving to pare things down to the sense-perceptible facts we drift over into maya. But maya is illusion. So any science of history which endeavours to exclude every spiritual element and, instead, bring maya to the fore, must of necessity lead directly to maya. Just try, by using modern seminar methods applied in historical departments today, to pare things down to the truth by eliminating anything spiritual and accepting only what takes place on the physical plane, that is, only sense-perceptible facts, and you will find that you fall a victim to maya and never reach an understanding of history. Take a modern history book for which anything super-sensible is an absurdity and in which great care is taken to attach validity only to physical events, and you have in your hand the striving to bring maya to the fore. But maya is illusion. So you have to fall a victim to illusion; and this is exactly what you do. The moment you believe history as it is written today you become a victim of maya, of illusion.

But history has not always been written in this way. The way it was done in former times is scorned today. It is a terrible aspect of human karma that even in man's view of history the spiritual element is excluded. Let us look back to the time when the attitude of the fourth post-Atlantean period was dominant. History was told quite differently then. It was told in a way which makes today's professors turn up their noses and say: These fellows were totally uncritical; they let themselves be lumbered with all sorts of myths and sagas; they had no feeling for tidy criticism which would have shown them the facts as they really were. This is what historians say today, and of course also those who copy them. The people in those days were childish, they say. Of course they were childish when compared with today's notions! Let us listen to the old way of telling history, of telling what countless people with the attitude of mind of the fourth post-Atlantean period saw as history. Let us listen to this today and look at it as an example which we can use as a basis for what is to be said tomorrow:

Once upon a time there lived in Saxon lands an Emperor whom people called 'Red Emperor', the Emperor with the red beard: Otto of the Red Beard. This Emperor had a wife who came from England and whose heart's desire it was to endow a church. So Otto the Red decided to endow the archbishopric of Magdeburg. The archbishopric of Magdeburg was to have

a special mission in Central Europe. It was to link the West with the East in such a way that this very archbishopric would be the one to bring Christianity to the neighbouring Slavs. The archbishopric of Magdeburg made good progress, carrying out charitable works over a wide area, and Otto of the Red Beard saw what good effects his endowment was having in the district. He was very pleased at this. He said to himself: My deeds are sufficient as a blessing in the physical world. He always longed for God to reward him for his benevolent deeds towards the people. That was his aim: that God might reward him because, after all, everything he did was done from piety.

Once he knelt in church in prayer which rose up to become a meditation, beseeching the gods to reward him, when he died, for his endowment, in the same way as he had found his reward on the physical plane, in all the good that had come about in the environment of the archbishopric of Magdeburg. Then a spiritual being appeared to him and said: It is true, you have endowed much that is good, you have acted with much benevolence towards many people. But you have done all this with a view to receiving the blessing of the divine world after your death, just as you are now enjoying the blessing of the earthly world. This is bad and it spoils your endowment.

Now Otto of the Red Beard was very unhappy about this and he spoke with this being who was — was he not? — a being from the ranks of the angeloi. We may feel this in the attitude of mind of the fourth post-Atlantean period. He spoke with this being and this being said to him: Go to Cologne where Gerhard the Good lives. Ask where you can find Gerhard the Good. If you can make yourself more virtuous through what Gerhard the Good will say to you, then perhaps you can avoid what I have just said will happen to you. This, more or less, was the conversation of Otto of the Red Beard with the spiritual being.

With a speed which those around him could not understand, the Emperor Otto made ready to journey to Cologne. In Cologne he called a gathering of the Burgomaster and all 'wise and benign councillors'. One of those who came he recognized by his appearance as an unusual man, the one whom he had really come to see. He asked the Archbishop of Cologne, who had accompanied him, whether this was Gerhard the Good. And indeed it was. Then the Emperor said to the councillors: I wished to consult with you, but now I shall first speak apart with this man and then discuss with you what I have gleaned from him when I have spoken with him.

Perhaps this put the councillors' noses out of joint somewhat, but we shall not go into this. So the Emperor took aside the councillor known in Cologne as Gerhard the Good and asked: Why do people call you Gerhard the Good? He had to ask this question, for the angel had pointed out that it all depended on whether he could recognize why this man was called Gerhard the Good. For he was to be healed through him. Gerhard the Good answered: People call me Gerhard the Good because they are thoughtless. I have not done anything special. But what I have done, which is something quite insignificant and about which I shall not tell you, has become known to some extent and, because people always want to invent phrases, they call me Gerhard the Good. The Emperor said: Surely it cannot be as simple as all that, and it is extremely important for me and my whole reign that I discover why people call you Gerhard the Good. Gerhard the Good did not want to disclose anything, but the Emperor pressed him ever harder till Gerhard the Good said: Very well, I will tell you why they call me Gerhard the Good, but you must not tell anyone else, for truly I see nothing special in it:

I am a simple merchant, I have always been a simple merchant, and one day I prepared to set out on a journey. First I journeyed on land for a while, and then at sea. I travelled as far as the Orient where I purchased very many valuable materials and valuable objects for very little money. I planned to sell these things elsewhere for double, treble, or even four or five times the price, for this is the custom among merchants; this was my business, my trade. Then I continued my journey by ship. But we were blown off course by an unfavourable wind. We had no idea where we were. So I found myself off course in the wind on the open sea with a few companions and all my costly objects and materials. We came ashore and from this shore a cliff rose up. We sent out a scout to climb the cliff to see what was beyond it, for we had been stranded on the shore. The scout saw a great city beyond the cliff; it was obviously a great trading city. Caravans were approaching along roads from all sides and a river flowed past it. The scout returned and showed us the way to approach the city from a spot where we could make fast our ship.

Here we were, in a city totally strange to us. Soon it became obvious that we Christians were surrounded by heathens. We saw a busy market. I thought to myself that I would be able to sell all sorts of things in the market, for the bargaining was lively. But I did not know the customs of the country. Then I saw coming towards me along the street a man who looked trustworthy. To him I said: Could you help me to sell my wares here? The man evidently felt that I too looked trustworthy and said: Where

have you come from? I told him I was a Christian from Cologne. He said: Despite that, you seem quite respectable. Hitherto I have entertained the worst suspicions about Christians, but you do not seem to be a monster. I shall assist you and will find you lodgings. After that you may like to show me your wares.

When the merchant, Gerhard the Good, had settled in his lodgings, the heathen man he had met came one day, inspected his wares and found them exceptionally costly. He said: Though there are quite a few rich people in the town, none of them is rich enough to buy all this. I am the only one to possess anything equivalent to these wares. If you want to sell them to me, I can give you what they are worth, but I am the only one who could do this. The merchant from Cologne wanted to see for himself, so the heathen offered to show him that he did indeed possess wares of an equivalent value to those extremely costly pieces gathered from all over the world.

So Gerhard went to the home of the heathen, where he saw immediately that he was dealing with a most important citizen of the town. First the heathen led him to a chamber in which twelve youths lay chained. They were prisoners, starving and wretched. He said: See, these are twelve Christians whom we took prisoner on the high seas where they were drifting aimlessly. Now come and see the rest of the wares. He took him to another room and showed him the same number of miserable old men. Gerhard's heart bled more for the old men than it had for the youths. Then he showed him a number of women — fifteen, I believe — who had also been taken prisoner. And he said: If you give me the wares I will give you these prisoners. They are exceedingly valuable and you can have them.

Then Gerhard, the merchant from Cologne, discovered that one of the women was exceedingly valuable because she was a daughter of the King of Norway who had been shipwrecked with her women — only some of the fifteen, the others were from elsewhere — and taken prisoner by the heathen. The other women were from England, as were the youths and old men. They had set sail with William, the son of the King of England, to fetch his Norwegian bride. When he had collected his Norwegian bride from Norway they had met with misfortune and been washed out to sea. William, the King's son, had been separated from the others. They did not know what had befallen him. As far as they were concerned he was lost. But the others, the women and the King's daughter from Norway, the twelve noble youths, the twelve noble old men, and the English women who had accompanied William to collect his bride, had all been

shipwrecked and fallen into the hands of this heathen prince. He now wanted to sell them to Gerhard in exchange for his oriental wares. Gerhard wept bitter tears, not on account of the wares but, on the contrary, because he was to receive such valuable commodities in exchange for them. With his whole heart he agreed to the deal. The heathen prince was much moved and thought to himself: These Christians are not at all the monsters I thought them to be. He even equipped a fully provisioned ship so that Gerhard might take the youths and the old men, the King's daughter and the maidens across the sea with him. In parting from them all he was much moved and said: On account of you I shall henceforth be very just to all Christians who come into my care.

Now the merchant Gerhard from Cologne set off across the sea, and when they came to the point where the configuration of the land showed that the passages to London and to Utrecht must separate, he said to his travelling companions: Those who belong to England may sail that way. Those who belong to Norway, the King's daughter with her few women, may come with me to Cologne and I shall see whether the one whose bride she was to be has perhaps been found so that he may come and collect her.

In Cologne Gerhard kept the King's daughter in accordance with her standing. She was most lovingly cared for by his family. Only at first — Gerhard the Good permitted himself to remark — was his wife's nose put slightly out of joint when he arrived with the King's daughter. But soon she loved her like her own daughter. These things are quite understandable. She grew up like a daughter of the house and was cared for lovingly. Her only great sadness was that she never stopped weeping for her beloved William, for she naturally presumed that if he had been saved he would scour the world to find her. But he did not come. The family of Gerhard the Good loved her, and Gerhard had a son, so he thought to himself that this beautiful maiden might become a wife for his son. Of course, in accordance with opinions at that time, this could only happen if the son could be raised up to an equal standing. The archbishop of Cologne declared himself prepared to make the son a knight. Everything was done in a suitable way. Gerhard was very rich and everything went well. Tournaments were held and after waiting still another year in case William should turn up — the King's daughter had begged for this — preparations were made for the wedding.

During the wedding a pilgrim appeared, a man with a beard so long that it was plain to see that much time had passed since it had last seen a blade. And he was very sad. Gerhard the Good was filled with pity at the sight of the pilgrim and asked him what was the matter. It is impossible to say, said the pilgrim, for from now on he must carry his sorrow through the wide world; from today he knew that his sorrow would never cease. For the pilgrim was William who had lost all his companions, had found land at last, had wandered about and arrived at the very moment when his bride was almost married to Gerhard's son in Cologne. Then Gerhard said: Of course you shall have your rightful bride; I shall speak with my son. Since the bride loved her lost bridegroom, William, more than Gerhard's son, everything was arranged and, after her marriage to William had been celebrated in Cologne, Gerhard accompanied William, the heir to the throne of England, with his bride to England. There he left them. Since he was known in London as a merchant he walked about the town and heard that a great meeting was in progress. Everything was in turbulence and it was plain to see that a revolution might break out. He heard that this was because there was no heir to the throne. The heir had disappeared years ago. He had quite a number of supporters in the land, but all the others were in disagreement and the meeting was now to decide on a new heir.

Gerhard donned his best robe and went to the meeting. He was allowed in on account of his best robe — which was exceedingly splendid because he was such a rich merchant. There he found four-and-twenty men discussing who should replace the beloved heir, William. Gerhard saw that the four-and-twenty were the selfsame men he had rescued from the heathen prince and had sent to London at the point where the ways to London and Utrecht parted. They did not recognize him immediately. They told him that William had been lost — William, whom they loved above all others. But then they recognized each other. Now Gerhard explained that he would bring William to them. So the matter was settled. I need not describe to you the joy which now broke out all over England. At first, in the meeting, before they knew who Gerhard was about to bring to them, but having recognized him as the one who had saved them, they even wanted to declare Gerhard himself king. Now William became King of England. Then William wanted to confer on Gerhard the Duchy of Kent, but he did not accept this. Even from the new Queen, who had for so long been his foster daughter, he refused the gold treasures she wished to bestow on him, accepting only a ring and a few other trinkets to bring to his wife as keepsakes from their foster daughter. So he departed for home.

All this has now unfortunately become known here — said Gerhard the Good to Otto the Red — and that is why people call me Gerhard the Good. But it is not for people, or even myself, to judge whether what I did was good or not. Therefore it is nonsense for people to call me Gerhard the Good, for the words can have no meaning.

Otto the Red, the Emperor, listened attentively and realized that other attitudes than the one he had developed were possible and existed, even in the heart of a merchant of Cologne. This made a deep impression on him. He returned to the council meeting and said to the councillors: Gentlemen, you may go home, for I have learned all I needed to know from Gerhard the Good. This put the noses of the wise and benign councillors thoroughly out of joint, but the attitude of soul of Otto the Red was entirely transformed.

This is how a story — history — was told in those days. What is told here is criticized, obviously, by the historians of today, whose aim is to pare history down to the facts of the physical plane, facts which have their feet on the ground. Not only this event but many others also were told, when the feeling for history was still that of the fourth post-Atlantean period, with the inclusion of not only the physical facts but also with the meaning they had in relation to the spiritual world. There was an interweaving between what happened on the physical plane and what flowed through it, giving it meaning.

There is very deep meaning in the story of Otto the Red and Gerhard the Good.

I wanted to tell you this story, which was once seen as history, so that tomorrow we can use it, among other things, as a foundation for further discussions which will widen our horizons still further.



Lecture 11

Spiritual Knowledge in Recent History

26 December 1916, Dornach

Yesterday I told you the story of Gerhard the Good — which most of you probably know — so that today we can illustrate various points in our endeavour to increase our understanding of the matters we are discussing. But before I interpret parts of this story for you, in so far as this is necessary, we must also recall a number of other things we have touched on at various times during these lectures. From what has been said over the past few weeks you will have seen that the painful events of today are connected with impulses living in the more recent karma of mankind, namely, the karma of the whole fifth post-Atlantean period. For those who want to go more deeply into these matters it is necessary to link external events with what is happening more inwardly, which can only be understood against the background of human evolution as seen by spiritual science.

To begin with, take at face value certain facts which I have pointed out a number of times. I have frequently said that, in the middle of the nineteenth century, an endeavour was made to draw the attention of modern mankind to the fact that there exist in the universe not only those forces and powers recognized by natural science but also others of a spiritual kind. The endeavour was to show that just as we take in with our eyes — or, indeed, with all our senses — what is visible around us, so are there also spiritual impulses around us, which people who know about such things can bring to bear on social life — impulses which cannot be seen with the eye but are known to a more spiritual science.

We know what path this more spiritual science took, so I need not go over it again. Around the middle of the nineteenth century, then, it was the concern of a certain centre to draw people's attention to the existence, as it were, of a spiritual environment. This had been forgotten during the age of materialism. You also know that such things have to be tackled with caution because a certain degree of maturity is necessary in people who take in such knowledge. Of course, not all those can be mature who come across, or are affected by, this knowledge in accordance with the laws of

our time, which underlie public life. But part of what must be done at such a time can be the requirement to test whether the knowledge may yet be revealed publicly.

Now in the middle of the nineteenth century two paths were possible. One, even then, would have been what we could describe by mentioning our anthroposophical spiritual science, namely, to make comprehensible to human thinking what spiritual knowledge reveals about our spiritual environment. It is a fact that this could have been attempted at that time, in the middle of the nineteenth century, but this path was not chosen. The reason was, in part, that those who possessed this esoteric knowledge were prejudiced, because of traditions that have come down from ancient times, against making such things public. They felt that certain knowledge guarded by the secret brotherhoods — for it was still guarded at that time — should be kept within the circle of these brotherhoods. We have since seen that, so long as matters are conducted in the proper way, it is perfectly acceptable today to reveal certain things. Of course it is unavoidable that some malicious opponents should appear, and always will appear, in circles in which such knowledge is made known — people who are adherents for a time because it suits their passions and their egoism, but who then become opponents under all sorts of guises and make trouble. Also when spiritual knowledge is made known in a community, this can easily lead to arguments, quarrelling and disputes, of which, however, not too much notice can be taken, since otherwise no spiritual knowledge would ever be made known. But, apart from these things, no harm is done if the matter is handled in the right way.

But at that time this was not believed. So ancient prejudice won the day and it was agreed to take another path. But, as I have often said, this failed. It was decided to use the path of mediumistic revelation to make people recognize the spiritual world in the same way as they recognize the physical world. Suitable individuals were trained to be mediums. What they then revealed through their lowered consciousness was supposed to make people recognize the existence of certain spiritual impulses in their environment. This was a materialistic way of revealing the spiritual world to people. It corresponded to some extent to the conditions of the fifth post-Atlantean period, in so far as this is materialistic in character.

This way of handling things began, as you know, in America in the middle of the nineteenth century. But it soon became obvious that the whole thing was a mistake. It had been expected that the mediums would reveal the existence of certain elemental and nature spirits in the environment.

Instead, they all started to refer to revelations from the kingdom of the dead. So the goal which had been set was not reached. I have often explained that the living can only reach the dead with an attitude which does not depend on lowering the consciousness. You all know these things. At that time this was also known and that is why, when the mediums began to speak of revelations of the dead, it was realized that the whole thing was a mistake. This had not been expected. It had been hoped that the mediums would reveal how the nature spirits work, how one human being affects another, what forces are at play in the social organism, and so on. It had been hoped that people would start to recognize what forces might be used by those who understand such things, so that people would no longer be dependent solely on one another in the way they are when only their sense perceptions come into play, but would be able to work through the total human personality. This was one thing that went wrong.

The other was that, in keeping with man's materialistic inclinations, it soon became obvious what would have begun to happen if the mediumistic movement had spread in the way it threatened to do. Use would have been made of the mediums to accomplish aims which ought only to be accomplished under the influence of natural, sense-bound reasoning. For some individuals it would have been highly desirable to employ a medium who could impart the means of discovering the knowledge which such people covet. I have told you how many letters I get from people who write: I have a lottery ticket; or, I want to buy a lottery ticket; I need the money for an entirely selfless purpose; could you not tell me which number will be drawn? Obviously, if mediums had been fully trained in the techniques of mediumship, the resulting mischief with this kind of thing would have been infinite, quite apart from everything else. People would have started to go to mediums to find a suitable bride or bridegroom, and so on.

Thus it came about that, in the very quarter that had launched the movement in order to test whether people were ready to take in spiritual knowledge, efforts were now made to suppress the whole affair. What had been feared in bygone times, when the abilities of the fourth post-Atlantean period still worked in people, had indeed now come to pass. In those days witches were burnt, simply because those people called witches were really no more than mediums, and because their connections with the spiritual world — though of a materialistic nature — might cause knowledge to be revealed which would have been very awkward for certain people. Thus, for instance it might have been very awkward for certain brotherhoods if, before being burnt at the stake, a witch had revealed what

lay behind them. For it is true that when consciousness is lowered there can be a kind of telephone connection with the spiritual world, and that by this route all sorts of secrets can come out. Those who burnt the witches did so for a very good reason: It could have been very awkward for them if the witches had revealed anything to the world, whether in a good or a bad sense, but especially in a bad sense.

So the attempt to test the cultural maturity of mankind by means of mediums had gone awry. This was realized even by those who, led astray by the old rules of silence and by the materialistic tendencies of the nineteenth century, had set this attempt in train. You know, of course, that the activities of mediums have not been entirely curtailed, and that they still exist, even today. But the art of training mediums to a level at which their revelations could become significant has, so to speak, been withdrawn. By this withdrawal the capabilities of mediums have been made more or less harmless. In recent decades, as you know, the pronouncements of mediums have come to amount to not much more than sentimental twaddle. The only surprising thing is that people set so much store by them. But the door to the spiritual world had been opened to some degree and, moreover, this had been done in a manner which was untimely and a mistake.

In this period came the birth and work of Blavatsky. You might think that the birth of a person is insignificant, but this would be a judgement based on maya. Now the important thing is that this whole undertaking had to be discussed among the brotherhoods, so that much was said and brought into the open within the brotherhoods. But the nineteenth century was no longer like earlier centuries in which many methods had existed for keeping secret those things which had to be kept secret. Thus it happened that, at a certain moment, a member of one of the secret brotherhoods, who intended to make use in a one-sided way of what he learnt within these brotherhoods, approached Blavatsky. Apart from her other capacities Blavatsky was an extremely gifted medium, and this person induced her to act as a connecting link for machinations which were no longer as honest as the earlier ones. The first, as we have seen, were honest but mistaken. Up to this point the attempt to test people's receptivity had been perfectly honest, though mistaken. Now, however, came the treachery of a member of an American secret brotherhood. His purpose was to make one-sided use of what he knew, with the help of someone with psychic gifts, such as Blavatsky. Let us first look at what actually took place. When Blavatsky heard what the member of the brotherhood had to say, she, of course, reacted inwardly to his words because she was psychic. She understood a

great deal more about the matter than the one who was giving her the information. The ancient knowledge formulated in the traditional way lit up in her soul a significant understanding which she could hardly have achieved solely with her own resources. Inner experiences were stimulated in her soul by the ancient formulations which stemmed from the days of atavistic clairvoyance and which were preserved in the secret brotherhoods, often without much understanding for their meaning on the part of the members. These inner experiences led in her to the birth of a large body of knowledge. She knew, of course, that this knowledge must be significant for the present evolution of mankind, and also that by taking the appropriate path this knowledge could be utilized in a particular way.

But Blavatsky, being the person she was, could not be expected to make use of such lofty spiritual knowledge solely for the good of mankind as a whole. She hit upon the idea of pursuing certain aims which were within her understanding, having come to this point in the manner I have described. So now she demanded to be admitted to a certain occult brotherhood in Paris. Through this brotherhood she would start to work. Ordinarily she would have been accepted in the normal way, apart from the fact that it was not normal to admit a woman; but this rule would have been waived in this case because it was known that she was an important individuality. However, it would not have served her purpose to be admitted merely as an ordinary member, and so she laid down certain conditions. If these conditions had been accepted, many subsequent events would have been very different but, at the same time, this secret brotherhood would have pronounced its own death sentence — that is, it would have condemned itself to total ineffectiveness. So it refused to admit Blavatsky. She then turned to America, where she was indeed admitted to a secret brotherhood. In consequence, she of course acquired extremely significant insights into the intentions of such secret brotherhoods; not those which strive for the good of mankind as a whole, disregarding any conflicting wishes, but those whose purposes are one-sided and serve certain groups only. But it was not in Blavatsky's nature to work in the way these brotherhoods wished. So it came about that, under the influence of what was termed an attack on the Constitution of North America, she was excluded from this brotherhood.

So now she was excluded. But of course she was not a person who would be likely to take this lying down. Instead, she began to threaten the American brotherhood with the consequences of excluding her in this way, now that she knew so much. The American brotherhood now found itself sitting under the sword of Damocles, for if, as a result of having been a

member, Blavatsky had told the world what she knew, this would have spelt its death sentence. The consequence was that American and European occultists joined forces in order to inflict on Blavatsky a condition known as occult imprisonment. Through certain machinations a sphere of Imaginations is called forth in a soul which brings about a dimming of what that soul previously knew, thus making it virtually ineffective. It is a procedure which honest occultists never apply, and even dishonest ones only very rarely, but it was applied on that occasion in order to save the life — that is the effectiveness, of that secret brotherhood.

For years Blavatsky existed in this occult imprisonment, until certain Indian occultists started to take an interest in her because they wanted to work against that American brotherhood. As you see, we keep coming up against occult streams which want to work one-sidedly. Thus Blavatsky entered this Indian current, with which you are familiar. The Indian brotherhood was very interested indeed in proceeding against the American brotherhood, not because they saw that they were not serving mankind as a whole, but because they in turn had their own one-sided patriotically Indian viewpoint. By means of various machinations the Indian and the American occultists reached a kind of agreement. The Americans promised not to interfere in what the Indians wanted to do with Blavatsky, and the Indians engaged to remain silent on what had gone before.

You can see just how complicated these things really are when you add to all this the fact, which I have also told you about, that a hidden individual, a mahatma behind a mask, had been instituted in place of Blavatsky's original teacher and guide. This figure stood in the service of a European power and had the task of utilizing whatever Blavatsky could do in the service of this particular European power. One way of discovering what all this is really about might be to ask what would have happened if one or other of these projects had been realized.

Time is too short to tell you everything today, but let us pick out a few aspects. We can always come back to these things again soon.

Supposing Blavatsky had succeeded in gaining admission to the occult lodge in Paris. If this had happened, she would not have come under the influence of that individual who was honoured as a mahatma in the Theosophical Society — although he was no such thing — and the life of the occult lodge in Paris would have been extinguished. A great deal behind which this same Paris lodge may be seen to stand would not have happened, or perhaps it would have happened in the service of a different,

one-sided influence. Many things would have taken a different course. For there was also the intention of exterminating this Paris lodge with the help of the psychic personality of Blavatsky. If it had been exterminated, there would have been nothing behind all those people who have contributed to history, more or less like marionettes. People like Silvagni, Durante, Sergi, Cecconi, Lombroso and all his relations, and many others would have had no occult backers behind them. Many a door, many a kind of sliding door, would have remained locked.

You will understand that this is meant symbolically. In certain countries editorial offices — I mean this as a picture! — have a respectable door and a sliding door. Through the respectable door you enter the office and through the sliding door you enter some secret brotherhood or other working, as I have variously indicated over the last few days, to achieve results of the kind about which we have spoken. So the intention was to abolish something from the world which would have done away with, at least, one stream which we have seen working in our present time. Signor d'Annunzio would not have given the speech we quoted.

Perhaps another would have been given instead, pushing things in a different direction. But you see that the moment things are not fully under control, the moment people are pushed about through a dimming of their consciousness, and when occultism is being used, not for the general good of mankind — and above all, in our time, not with true knowledge — but for the purpose of achieving one-sided aims, then matters can come to look very grave indeed.

Anyway, the members of this lodge were, from the standpoint of the lodge, astute enough not to enter into a discussion of these things. Later on, certain matters were hushed up, obscured, by the fact that Blavatsky was prevented by her occult imprisonment from publicizing the impulses of that American lodge and giving them her own slant, which she would doubtless otherwise have done. Once all these things had run their course, the only one to benefit from Blavatsky was the Indian brotherhood. There is considerable significance for the present time in the fact that a certain sum of occult knowledge has entered the world one-sidedly, with an Indian colouring. This knowledge has entered the world; it now exists. But the world has remained more or less unconscious of it because of the paralysis I have described.

Those who reckon with such things always count on long stretches of time. They prepare things and leave them to develop. These are not individuals, but brotherhoods in which the successor takes over from the predecessor and carries on in a similar direction with what has been started.

On the basis of the two examples I have given you, of occult lodges, you can see that much depended on the actual impulses not being made public. I do not wish to be misunderstood and I therefore stated expressly that the first attempt I described to you was founded on a certain degree of honesty. But it is extremely difficult for people to be entirely objective as regards mankind as a whole. There is little inclination for this nowadays. People are so easily led astray by the group instinct that they are not objective as regards mankind as a whole but pay homage to one group or another, enjoying the feeling of 'belonging.' But this is something that is no longer really relevant to the point we have reached in human evolution. The requirement of the present moment is that we should, at least to some degree, feel ourselves to be individuals and extricate ourselves, at least inwardly, from group things, so that we belong to mankind as human individuals. Even though, at present, we are shown so grotesquely how impossible this is for some people, it is nevertheless a requirement of our time.

For example, let me refer to what I said here a few days ago. A nation as a whole is an individuality of a kind which cannot be compared with human individualities, who live here on the physical plane and then go through their development between death and a new birth. Nations are individualities of quite a different kind. As you can see from everything we find in our anthroposophical spiritual science, a folk spirit, a folk soul, is something different from the soul of an individual human being. It is nonsense to speak in a materialistic sense, as is done today, of the soul of a nation while at the back of one's mind thinking of something resembling the soul of an individual — even though one, of course, does not admit this to oneself. Thus you hear people speak of 'the French soul'; this has been repeatedly said in recent years. It is nonsense, plain nonsense, because it is an analogy taken from the individual human soul and applied to the folk soul. You can only speak of the folk soul if you take into account the complex totality described in the lecture cycle on the different folk spirits. But to speak in any other sense about the folk soul is utter nonsense, even though many, including journalists, do so — and they may be forgiven, for they do not know what they are talking about. It is mere verbosity to speak — as has been done — for instance of the 'Celtic soul and the Latin

spirit'. Maybe such a thing is just about acceptable as an analogy, but there is no reality in. We must be clear about the meaning of the Mystery of Golgotha. So often have we said that the Mystery of Golgotha was accomplished in such a way that what has been united with earth evolution ever since is there for all mankind, but that if an individual speaks of a mystical Christ within him, this is no more than idle talk. The Mystery of Golgotha is an objective reality, as you know from much that has been said here. It took place for mankind as a whole, which means for every individual human being. Christ died for all human beings, as a human being for human beings, not for any other kind of being. It is possible to speak about a Christian, about one whose attitude of mind is Christian, but it is complete nonsense to talk of a Christian nation. There is no reality in this. Christ did not die for nations, nations are not the individualities for whom He died. An individual who is close to the Being of the Mystery of Golgotha can be a Christian, but it is not possible to speak of a Christian nation. The true soul of a nation, its folk soul, belongs to planes on which the Mystery of Golgotha did *not* take place. So any dealings and actions between nations can never be interpreted or commented upon in a Christian sense.

I am pointing out these things simply because it is necessary that you in particular, my dear friends, should understand just how important it is today to arrive at clear-cut concepts. This can only be done by applying spiritual science, and yet mankind as a whole strives to fish in muddy waters with concepts that are utterly nonsensical and obscure. So the important thing is, above all, to arrive at clear-cut concepts, to see everything in relation to clear-cut concepts, and also to understand that in our time certain occult, spiritual impulses have been working, chiefly through human beings. This is fitting for the fifth post-Atlantean period.

Now if Blavatsky had been able to speak out at that time, certain secrets would have been revealed, secrets I have mentioned as belonging to certain secret brotherhoods and connected with the striving of a widespread network of groups. I said to you earlier that definite laws underlie the rise and evolution of peoples, of nations. These laws are usually unknown in the external, physical world. This is right and proper, for in the first place they ought to be recognized solely by those who desire to receive them with clean hands. What now underlies the terrible trials mankind is undergoing at present and will undergo in the future is the interference in a one-sided way, by certain modern brotherhoods, with the spiritual forces that pulse through human evolution in the region in which, for instance, nations, peoples, come into being. Evolution progresses in

accordance with definite laws; it is regular and comes about through certain forces. But human beings interfere, in some part unconsciously, though if they are members of secret brotherhoods, then they do so consciously.

To be able to judge these things you need what yesterday I called a wider horizon; you need the acquisition of a wider horizon. I showed you the forces of which Blavatsky became the plaything, in order to point out how such a plaything can be tossed about, from West to East, from America to India. This is because forces are at work which are being managed by human beings for certain ends, by means of utilizing the passions and feelings of nationality, which have, however, in their turn first been manufactured. This is most important. It is important to develop an eye for the way in which a person who, because of the type of passions in her — in her blood — can be put in a certain position and be brought under the sway of certain influences. Equally, those who do this must know that certain things can be achieved, depending on the position in which the person is placed. Many attempts fail. But account is taken of long periods of time and of many possibilities. Above all, account is taken of how little inclination people have to pay attention to the wider — the widest, contexts.

Let us stop here and turn to yesterday's story. It tells us about the time around the tenth century, when the constitution of souls was still that of the fourth post-Atlantean period. We saw how the spiritual world intervened in the life of Emperor Otto of the Red Beard. His whole life is transformed because the spiritual world makes him aware of Gerhard the Good. From Gerhard the Good he is to learn the fear of God, true piety, and that one must not expect — for largely egoistic reasons — a blessing from heaven for one's earthly deeds. So he is told by the spiritual world to seek out Gerhard the Good. This is the one side: what plays in from the spiritual world.

Those who know that age — not as it is described by external history, but as it really was — are aware that the spiritual world did indeed play in through real visions such as that described in connection with Emperor Otto the Red, and that spiritual impulses definitely played a meaningful part. The one who wrote down this story says expressly that in his youth he had also written many other stories, as had other contemporaries of his. The man who wrote down the story of Gerhard the Good was Rudolf von Ems, an approximate contemporary of Wolfram von Eschenbach. He said he had written other stories as well but that he had destroyed them

because they had been fairy tales. Yet he does not consider this story to be a fairy tale but strictly historical, even though externally it is not historical — that is it would not be included in today's history books which only take physical maya into account. In the way he tells it, it cannot be compared with external, purely physical history; and yet his telling is more true than purely physical history can be for, on the whole, that is only maya. He tells the story for the fourth post-Atlantean period.

You know, for I have repeatedly said this, that I am not taking sides in any way but simply reporting facts which are to provide a basis on which judgements may be formed. Only those who do not wish to be objective will maintain that what I shall attempt to say is not objective. Someone who does not wish to be objective cannot, of course, be expected to find objectivity in what is, in fact, objective. The fact that the spiritual world plays into human affairs is not the only important aspect of the story of Gerhard the Good. It is also significant that a leading personality receives from the spiritual world the impulse to turn to a member of the commercial world, the world of the merchant. It is indeed a historical fact that, in Central Europe, at that time the members of the ruling dynasty to which Otto the Red belonged did start to patronize the merchant classes in the towns. In Europe this was the time of the growth of commerce.

We should further take into account that at that time there were as yet no ocean routes between Orient and Occident. Trade routes were definitely still overland routes. Merchants such as Gerhard the Good who, as you know, lived in Cologne, carried their trade overland from Cologne to the Orient and back again. Any use of ships was quite insignificant. The trade routes were land routes. Shipping connections were not much more than attempts to achieve with the primitive ships of those days what was being done much more efficiently by land. So in the main the trade routes were overland, while shipping was only just beginning. That is what is characteristic of this time, for comprehensive shipping operations only came much later.

We have here a contrast arising out of the very nature of things. So long as Orient and Occident were connected by land routes, it was perfectly natural that the countries of Central Europe should take the lead. Life in these Central European countries was shaped accordingly. Much spiritual culture also travelled along these routes. It was quite different from what came later. As the centuries proceeded, the land routes were supplanted by ocean routes. As you know, England gradually took control of all the ocean connections which others had opened up. Spain, Holland and France were

all conquered as far as their sea-faring capacities were concerned, so that in the end everything was held under the mighty dominance which encompassed a quarter of the earth's dry land, and gradually also all the earth's oceans.

You can see how systematic is this conquering, this almost exterminating, of other seafaring powers when you remember how I told you some time ago that in the secret brotherhoods, especially those which grew so powerful from the time of James I onwards, it was taught as an obvious truth that the Anglo-Saxon race — as they put it — will have to be given dominance over the world in the fifth post-Atlantean period. You will see how systematic the historical process has been when you consider what I have also mentioned and what was also taught: that this fifth post-Atlantean race of the English-speaking peoples will have to overcome the peoples of the Latin race.

To start with, the main thing is the interrelation between the English-speaking peoples and those whose languages are Latin in origin. Recent history cannot be understood without the realization that the important aim — which is also what is being striven for — is for world affairs to be arranged in such a way that the English-speaking peoples are favoured, while the influence of any peoples whose language is based on Latin fades out. Under certain circumstances something can be made to fade out by treating it favourably for a while, thus gaining power over it. This can then make it easy to engulf it.

In those secret brotherhoods, about which I have spoken so often, little significance is attached to Central Europe, for they are clever enough to realize that Germany, for instance, owns only one thirty-third of the earth's land surface. This is very little indeed, compared with a whole quarter of the land surface plus dominance over the high seas. So not much importance is attached to Central Europe. A great deal of importance was attached, however — especially during the period when present events were being prepared — to the overcoming of all those impulses connected with the Latin races.

It is remarkable how short-sighted the modern historical view is and how little inclination there is to go more deeply into matters which are quite characteristic of situations. I have already pointed out that what has so long been practised as a pragmatic view of history is not important, reporting as it does on one event, followed by another, and another, and yet another. What is important is to recognize the facts characterized by

the many interrelationships in the events which follow one another. What matters is to point out what is characteristic about the facts, namely, what reveals the forces lying behind *maya*. Pragmatic history must today give way to a history of symptoms.

Those who see through things in this way will be in a position to form judgements about certain events which differ considerably from those of people who reel off the events of world history — this *fable convenue* — one after the other, as is done in historical science today. Consider some of the things you know well in connection with some others about which I shall tell you. First of all, a simple fact: In 1618 the Thirty Years War began because certain ideas of a reformative kind developed within the Czech Slav element. Then certain aristocrats belonging to these Slav circles took up the movement and rebelled against what might be called the Counter-Reformation, namely, the Catholicism from Spain which was favoured by the Habsburgs. The first thing usually told about the Thirty Years War is the story of the rebels going to the town hall in Prague and throwing the councillors Martinitz and Slavata and the secretary Fabrizius out of the window. Yet this is quite insignificant. The only interesting point is perhaps that the three gentlemen did not hurt themselves because they fell onto a dunghill. These are not things which can bring the Thirty Years' War to life for us or show us its real causes.

The reformative party elected Frederick, Elector Palatine of the Rhine, as counter-King of Bohemia in 1619. Then followed, as you know, the battle of the White Mountain. Up to the election of the Elector Palatine, all the events were caused by the passionate feelings of these people for a reform movement, by a rebellion against arbitrary acts of power such as the closure or destruction of Protestant churches at Braunau and Kloster Grab. There is not enough time for me to tell you the whole story. But now think: Frederick, Elector Palatine of the Rhine, is elected King. Up to this point the events are based on human passions, human enthusiasm, it is even justified to say human idealism — I am quite happy to concede this.

But why, of all people, was the Elector Palatine of the Rhine chosen as King of Bohemia? It was because he was the son-in-law of James I, who stands at the beginning of the renewal of the brotherhoods! Here, then, we may discern an important finger in the pie if we are trying to look at history symptomatically. Attempts were being made to steer events in a particular direction. They failed. But you see that there is a finger in the pie. The

most significant sign of what kind of impulses were to be brought to bear in this situation is that the son-in-law of one of the most important occultists, James I, was thrown into this position.

You see, the fact is that the whole of recent history has to do with the contrast between the ancient Roman-Latin element and that element, not of the English people — for they would get on perfectly happily with the world — but that element which, as I have described sufficiently, is to be made out of the English people if they fail to put up any resistance. It is the conflict between these two elements that is at work.

Meanwhile something else is manipulated, for a great deal can be achieved in one place by bringing about events in another.

Let us look at a later date. You might pick up a history book and read the history of the Seven Years War. Of course the history of this war is read just as thoughtlessly as any other. For to understand what is really going on and investigate what forces of history are playing a part, you have to look properly at the various links between the different circumstances. You have to consider, for instance, that at that time the southern part of Central Europe, namely Austria, was linked with every aspect of the Latin element and even had a proper alliance with France, whereas the northern part of Middle Europe — not at first, but later on — was drawn to what was to be made, by certain quarters, into the English-speaking, fifth post-Atlantean race.

When you look closely at the alliances and everything else that went on at that time — those things which were not maya, of course — you discover a war that is in reality being waged about North America and India between England and France. What went on in Europe was really only a weak mirror image of this. For if you compare everything that took place on the larger scale — do extend your horizons! — then you will see that the conflict was between England and France and that North America and India were already starting to have their effect. It was a matter of which of these two powers was cleverer and more able to direct events in such a way that dominion over North America or India could be snatched away from the other. At work in this were long-term future plans and the control of important impulses. It is true: The influence snatched by England from France in North America was won on the battle fields of Silesia during the Seven Years' War!

Watch how the alliances shift when the situation becomes a little awkward and difficult; watch the alliances from this point of view!

Now, another story. It is necessary to look at these things, and once one is not misunderstood, once it is assumed that one's genuine purpose is to gain a clear picture of what is going on in the world, once one strives to be objective, it will not be taken amiss when such stories are told; instead it will be understood that our concern is for comprehension and not for taking sides. In fact, it is precisely those people who feel they are affected by a particular matter who ought to be particularly glad to learn more about it. For then they are lifted above their blindness and given sight, and nothing is better for a person than real insight into how things work in the world. So let us now take an example which can show you a different side of how things work.

Through circumstances which you can look up in a history book, the kingdoms of Hanover and England were once linked. The laws of succession in the two countries were different — we need not go into this in detail — and as a result of this, when Victoria came to the throne of England, Hanover had to become separate. Another member of the English royal house had to take the throne of Hanover. The person elected, or rather the person jostled onto the throne of Hanover was Ernst August, Duke of Cumberland, who had previously been connected with the throne of England. So this Ernst August came to the throne of Hanover at the age of sixty-six. His character was such that, after his departure to become the king of Hanover, the English newspapers said: Thank goodness he's gone; let's hope he doesn't come back! He was considered a dreadful person because of the whole way he behaved. When you look at the impression he made on his contemporaries and those who had dealings with him, a certain type of character emerges which is striking for one who understands characters of this kind. The Hanoverians could not understand him. They found him coarse. He was indeed coarse, so coarse that the poet Thomas Moore said: He surely belonged to the dynasty of Beelzebub. But you know the saying: The German lies if he is polite. So they had a certain understanding for coarseness, but they did presuppose that someone who is coarse is at least honest. Ernst August, however, was always a liar as well as being coarse, and this the Hanoverians could not understand. He had other similar traits as well.

First, Ernst August repealed the Hanoverian constitution. Then he dismissed the famous 'seven professors' of Göttingen University. He had them sent straight out of the country, so that it was not until they reached

Witzenhausen, which lay beyond his majesty's borders, that their students were permitted to take leave of them. I need not tell you the whole story. But what is the explanation? Those who seek no further for an explanation of this extraordinary mask merely find Ernst August coarse and dishonest. He even cheated Metternich, which is saying much indeed, and so on. But there is something remarkably systematic in all this. And the systematic aspect is not changed by the fact that he lived most of his life up to the age of sixty-six in England, where he was an officer of the Dragoons.

An explanation may be found in the fact that in his whole manner he was manifesting the impulses one has when one is a member of the so-called 'Orange Lodge'. His whole manner was an expression of the impulses of the Orange Lodge, of which he was a member.

What we must do is learn to understand history symptomatically and widen our horizons. We need to develop a sense for what is important and what really gives insight. So I told you the tale of Gerhard the Good in order to demonstrate how, through such phenomena as the Orange Lodge, and so on, what had been Central Europe was quite systematically drawn over to the West. I am not uttering any reproach, for it was a historical necessity. But one ought to know it and not apply moral judgements to such things. What is essential is to develop the will to see things, to see how human beings are manipulated, to see where there might be impulses by which people are manipulated. This is the same as striving for the sense for truth. I have often stressed that this is not something that enables one to say: But I really believed it, it was my honest and sincere opinion! No indeed. One who possesses the sense for truth is one who unremittingly strives to find the truth of the matter, one who never ceases to seek the truth and who takes responsibility for himself even when he says something untrue out of ignorance. For, objectively, it is irrelevant whether something wrong is said knowingly or unknowingly. Similarly it is irrelevant whether you hold your finger in the candle flame through ignorance or on purpose; either way you burn it.

At this point we must understand what happened at the transition from the fourth post-Atlantean period—when commerce was still just under the influence of the spiritual world, as is indicated in the story of Gerhard the Good — to the fifth period, when everything commercial was drawn over into the occult sphere which is guided by the so-called 'Brothers of the Shadow'. These brotherhoods guard certain principles. From their point of view it would be extremely dangerous if these principles should be betrayed. That is why they were so careful to prevent Blavatsky from

making them public or causing them to pass over into other hands. They were, in fact, to be passed over from the West to the East; not to India but to the East of Russia.

Someone with a sense for what lies behind maya can understand that external institutions and external measures can have differing values, differing degrees of importance in the total context. Consider an incident in recent history. I have told you so many occult, spiritual things that I have, in a way, 'done my time' and am now free to go on and give you some indications out of more recent history. No one should say that I am taking this time away from that devoted to occult matters; these things are also important.

So let us take an example from more recent history. In 1909 a meeting was arranged between the King of Italy and the Tsar of Russia. So far there had not been much love lost between these two representatives, but from then on it was considered a good thing to manoeuvre them into each other's company. So the meeting at Racconigi took place. It was not easy to arrange. In the description of all the measures he had to take to prevent 'incidents of an assassinary nature' you can read how difficult it was for poor Giolitti, who was Prime Minister at the time.

Then there was the question of finding a suitable personage who would pay Rome's homage to the Tsar. This had to be a personage of a particular kind. Such things have to be prepared well in advance so that when the right moment arrives they can be set in train on the spot. For a really 'juicy' effect to be achieved, not just any personage would do for the purpose of paying Rome's homage to the Tsar — the homage of the Latin West to the self-styled Slav East. It would have to be a special personage, even one who might not easily be persuaded to undertake this task. Now 'by chance', as the materialists would say, but 'not by chance', as those who are not materialists would say, a certain Signor Nathan — what a very Italian name! — was at that time the mayor of Rome. For many reasons his attitude was rather democratic and not at all one that would make him inclined to pay homage to the Tsar, of all people. He had only taken Italian citizenship shortly before becoming mayor of Rome. Before that he had been an English citizen. The fact that he was of mixed blood should be taken into account; he was the son of a German mother and had assumed the name of Nathan because his father was the famous Italian revolutionary Mazzini. This is a fact.

So persuading him to pay homage to the Tsar made it possible to say: See how thoroughly democracy has been converted. Here was someone who was not an ordinary person but one who had been anointed with all the oils of democracy, but — also someone who had been well prepared. From that moment onwards certain things start to become embarrassing. Today it is known, for example, that from that moment onwards all the correspondence within the Triple Alliance was promptly reported to St Petersburg! Human passions also played some part in the matter, since a special role was carried out in this reporting by a lady who had found a 'sisterly' route between Rome and St Petersburg. Such things can obviously be ascribed to coincidence. But those who want to see beyond maya will not ascribe them to coincidence but will seek the deeper connections between them. Then, when one seeks these deeper connections, one is no longer capable of lying as much, is no longer capable of deceiving people in order to distract them from the truth, which is what matters.

For instance — I am saying this in order to describe the truth — it would obviously have been most embarrassing for the widest circles if people's attention had been drawn to the fact that the whole invasion of Belgium would not have taken place if that sentence I have already mentioned, which could have been spoken by Lord Grey — Sir Edward Grey has now become a lord — if that sentence had really been spoken. The whole invasion of Belgium would not have taken place. It would have been a non-event, it would not have happened. But instead of speaking about the real cause, in so far as this is the cause because it could have prevented the invasion, it was obviously more comfortable to waste people's time by telling them about the 'Belgian atrocities'. Yet these, too, would not have happened if Sir Edward Grey had taken this one, brief measure. In order to hide the simple truth something different is needed, something that arouses justified human passions and moral indignation. I am not saying anything against this. Something different is needed. It is a characteristic of our time, even today when it is particularly painful, to make every effort to obscure the truth, to blind people to the truth.

This, too, had to be prepared carefully. Any gap in the calculation would have made it impossible. The whole of the periphery, which had prudently been created for this very purpose, was needed.

But these things were very carefully prepared, both politically and culturally. Every possibility was reckoned with; and this was certainly necessary, since the most unbelievable carelessness sometimes prevailed,

even in places where such a thing would be least expected. Let me give you an example, an objective fact, which will allow us to study this carelessness.

At one time Bismarck had a connection with a certain Usedom in Florence and Turin. I have told you before: Modern Italy came into being by roundabout means and actually owes her existence to Germany; but this is connected with all sorts of other things. What I am saying has profound foundations, and in politics all sorts of threads interweave. Thus at one time threads were woven which were to win over the Italian republicans. In short, at a certain time one such link existed between Bismarck and Usedom in Florence and Turin. Usedom was a friend of Mazzini and of others who enjoyed a certain prominence in nationalistic circles. Usedom was a man who posed very much as a wise person. He employed as his personal secretary somebody who was supposed to be a follower of Mazzini. Later it turned out that this personal secretary, of whom it had been said that he was initiated into Mazzini's secret societies, was nothing but an ordinary spy. Bismarck tells this tale quite naively and then adds, as an excuse for having been so mistaken: But Usedom was a high-grade Freemason. Many things could be told in this way and often it would turn out that those involved are totally innocent because the ones who pull the strings remain in the background.

You cannot maintain that there is no point in asking why such things are permitted to happen by the wise guides of world evolution — why human beings are, to a large degree, abandoned to such machinations, by making the excuse that there is no way of getting to the bottom of these things. For, indeed, if one only seeks them honestly, there are many ways of finding out what is going on. But we see, even in our own Society, how much resistance is put up by individuals when there is a question of following the simple path of truth. We see how many things which should be taken objectively in pursuit of knowledge, when they would best serve the good of mankind, are instead taken subjectively and personally. There are — are there not? — within our Society groups who have studied very attentively an essay of, I believe, 287 pages which they have taken utterly seriously and about which they are still puzzling, as to whether the writer — who is well enough known to us — might be right. In short, within our own circles we may sometimes discover why it is so difficult to see through things. Yet it is, in fact, not at all difficult to see through things if only one strives honestly for the truth. For years so much has been said within our Society. If you were to bring together all that has been said since 1902 you would see that it contains much that could help us to see through a great

deal that is going on in the world. Yet our anthroposophical spiritual science has never been presented as belonging to a secret society. Indeed the most important things have always been dealt with in public lectures open to anybody. This is a contrast which should be noted.

I might as well say now: If certain streams within our Anthroposophical Society continue to exist and if, for the sake of human vanity, they continue to interpret to their own advantage certain things which have been said behind closed doors — for no more reason than one would exclude first-year students in a university from what is told to those in their second year — then, eventually there will be nothing esoteric left. If things are not taken perfectly naturally, if people continue to stand up and say: This is secret, that is very esoteric, this is occult, and I am not allowed to speak about this! — if this policy continues to be followed by certain streams in our Society, if they continually fail to understand that any degree of vanity must stop, then everything mankind must be told about today will have to be discussed in public. Whether it is *possible* to make known certain things, the needs of the moment will tell. But the Anthroposophical Society is only meaningful if it is a 'society', that is, if each individual is concerned to make a stand against vanity, against folly and vanity and everything else which clothes things in false veils of mysticism, serving only to puzzle other people and make them spiteful. The mysteriousness of certain secret brotherhoods has nothing to do with our Society, for we must be concerned solely with bringing about what is needed for the good of mankind. As I have often said, our enemies will become more and more numerous. Perhaps we shall discover what our enemies are made of by the manner in which they quarrel with us. So far we have had no honest opponents worth mentioning. They would, in effect, only be to our advantage! The kind of opposition we have met hitherto is perfectly obvious through their ways and means of operation. We might as well wait patiently to discover whether further opponents will be from within our circle, as is frequently the case, or from elsewhere! I have just had news of opposition from one quarter which will empty itself over us like a cold shower. A forthcoming book has been announced during some lectures. The author, a conceited fellow, has never belonged to our Society but has been entertaining the world with all sorts of double egos and such like. He has now used the opportunity of the various national hatreds and passions to mount an attack on our Anthroposophy of a kind which shows that his hands are not clean.

So we must not lose sight of these things and we must realize that it is up to us to hold fast to the direction which will lead to truth and knowledge. Even when we speak about current issues it must only be in pursuit of knowledge and truth. We must look things straight in the eye and then each individual may take up his own position in accordance with his feelings. Every position will be understandable, but it must be based on a foundation of truth.

This is a word which must occupy a special place in our soul today. So much has taken place in our time which has puzzled people and which should have shown them that it is necessary to strive for a healthy judgement based on the truth. We have experienced how the yearning for peace only had to make itself felt in the world for it to be shouted down. And we still see how people actually get angry if peace is mentioned in one quarter or another. They are angry, not only if one of the combatants mentions peace, but even if it is mentioned in a neutral quarter.

It remains to be seen whether the world will be capable of sufficient astonishment about these things. Experience so far has been telling, to say the least. In April and May 1915 a large territory was to have been voluntarily ceded, but the offer was rejected so that war could be waged. Since world opinion failed to form an even partially adequate judgement about this event, there seems to be really nothing for it but to expect the worst. We might as well expect the worst, because people seem bent on telling, not the truth, but what suits their purposes. Their thinking is strange and peculiar to a degree. Yet to tackle things properly the right points have to be found.

Let me read you a short passage written by an Italian before the outbreak of the present war, at a time when the Italians were jubilant about the Tripoli conflict — which I am not criticizing. I shall never say anything against the annexation of Tripoli by Italy, for these things are judged differently by those who know what is necessary and possible in the relationships between states and nations. They do not form judgements based on lies and express opinions steeped in all kinds of moralistic virtues. But here we have a man, Prezzolini, who writes about an Italy which pleases him, which has evolved out of an Italy which did not please him. He starts by describing what this Italy had come to, how it had gone down in the world, and he then continues — directly under the impression of the Tripoli conflict:

'And yet, totally unaware of this economic risorgimento, Italy underwent at the same time the period of depression described above. Foreigners were the first to notice the reawakening. Some Italians had also expressed it, but they were windbags carrying on about the famous and infamous "primacy of Italy". The book by Fischer, a German, was written in 1899, and that by Bolton-King, an Englishman, in 1901. To date no Italian has published a work comparable to these, even to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of "unification". The exceptional good sense of these foreigners is notable for, truly, outsiders have neither wanted, nor do they now want, to know anything about modern Italy. Then, as now, people's judgement, or rather prejudgement of Italy amounted to saying: Italy is a land of the past, not the present; she should "rest on her past glory" and not enter into the present. They long for an Italy of archives, museums, hotels for honeymooners and for the amusement of spleen and lung patients — an Italy of organ-grinders, serenades, gondolas — full of ciceroni, shoe-shiners, polyglots and pulcinelli. Though they are delighted to travel nowadays in sleeping cars instead of diligences, they nevertheless regret a little the absence of Calabrese highwaymen with pistol and pointed velvet hat. Oh, the glorious Italian sky, defaced by factory chimneys. Oh, la bella Napoli, defamed by steamships and the unloading thereof; Rome filled with Italian soldiers; such regret for the wonderful days of Papal, Bourbon and Leopoldine Rome! These philanthropic feelings still provide the basis for every Anglo-Saxon and German opinion about us. To show how deeply they run, remember that they are expressed by people of high standing in other directions, such as Gregorovius and Bourget. The Italy who reformed herself and grew fat, the Italy who is seen to carry large banknotes in her purse — this is the Italy who has at last gained a proper self-confidence. We should forgive and understand her if she now reacts by going a little further than she ought in her enthusiasm. Ten years have hardly sufficed for the idea of the future and strength of Italy to pass from those who first saw it, to the populace at large who are now filled and convinced by it. It would have been in vain had our great thinkers piled up

volumes of journals, statistical papers, philosophical works and books of modern art.'

This is the attitude, my dear friends! 'It would have been in vain had our great thinkers piled up volumes of journals, statistical papers, philosophical works and books of modern art.' All this would be worthless, he thinks, to raise up a people. This modern man has no faith in the worth and working of culture and spiritual values!

'It would have been in vain had our great thinkers piled up volumes of journals, statistical papers, philosophical works and books of modern art; neither the people nor the foreigners would ever have been convinced, at least not before the passage of very many years.'

So this man has no confidence in creating spiritual culture in this way.

'A great and brutal force was needed to smash the illusion and give every last and miserable village square a sense of national solidarity and upward progress.'

To what does he attribute the capacity to achieve what no spiritual culture could produce? He says:

'It is the war which has served to do this.'

There you have it! This is what people believed. Tripoli was there and it had to be there. Moreover, they also said: War is needed to bring the nation to a point which it was not found necessary to reach by means of spiritual culture.

Indeed, my dear friends, such things speak to us when we place them side by side with another voice which says: We did not want this war; we are innocent lambs who have been taken by surprise. Even from this side comes the cry: To save freedom, to save the small nations, we are forced to go to war. This man continues:

'We young people born around the year 1880 entered life in the world with the new century. Our land had lost courage. Its intellectual life was at a low ebb.'

These were the people born around the year 1880.

'Philosophy: positivism. History: sociology. Criticism: historical method, if not even psychiatry.'

This may indeed be said in the land of Lombroso!

'Hot on the heels of Italy's deliverers came Italy's parasites; not only their sons, our fathers, but also their grandsons, our elder brothers. The heroic tradition of risorgimento was lost; there was no idea to fire the new generation. Among the best, religion had sunk in estimation but had left a vacuum. For the rest it was a habit. Art was reeling in a sensuous and aesthetic frenzy and lacked any basis or faith. From Carducci, whom papa read to the accompaniment of a glass of Tuscan wine and a cheap cigar, they turned to d'Annunzio, the bible of our elder brothers, dressed according to the latest fashion, his pockets full of sweets, a ladies' man and vain braggart.'

Yet this marionette — of whom it is said here that he was 'dressed according to the latest fashion, his pockets full of sweets, a ladies' man and vain braggart' — this marionette had made clear to the people at Whitsuntide in 1915 that they needed what no work of the spirit could give them!

When times are grave it is most necessary to make the effort to look straight at the truth, to join forces with the truth. If we do not want to recognize the truth we deviate from what may be good for mankind. Therefore it is necessary to understand that precisely in these times serious words need to be spoken. For we are in a position today in which even one who is seven-eighths blind should see what is happening when the call for peace is shouted down. Someone who believes that you can fight for permanent peace while shouting down the call for peace might, conceivably, hold worthwhile opinions in some other fields; but he cannot be taken seriously with regard to what is going on. If, now that we are faced with this, we cannot commit ourselves to truth, then the prospects for the world are very, very bad indeed.

It is for me truly not a pleasant task to draw attention to much that is going on at present. But when you hear what is said on all sides, you realize the necessity. We must not lose courage, so long as the worst has not yet happened. But the spark of hope is tiny. Much will depend on this tiny spark of hope over the next few days. Much also depends on whether there are still people willing to cry out to the world the utter absurdity of such goings on — as has been done just now, even in the great cities of the world.

The world needs peace and will suffer great privation if peace is not achieved. And it will suffer great privation if credence continues to be given to those who say: We are forced to fight for permanent peace; and if these same people continue to meet every possibility for peace with scorn, however disguised in clever words. But we have reached a point, my dear friends, when even a Lloyd George can be taken for a great man by the widest circles! We may well say: Things have come a very long way indeed!

Yet these things are also only trials to test mankind. They would even be trials if what I permitted myself to express at the end of the Christmas lecture were to happen, namely, if it were to be recorded for all time that, in the Christmas season of the nineteen hundred and sixteenth year after the Mystery of Golgotha, the call for 'peace on earth among men and women who are of good will' was shouted down on the most empty pretexts. If the pretexts are not entirely empty, then they are indeed more sinister still. If this is the case, then it will be necessary to recognize what is really at work in this shouting down of every thought of peace: that it is

not even a question of what is said in the periphery, but of quite other things. Then it will be understood that it is justified to say that what happens now is crucial for the fortune or misfortune of Europe.

I cannot go further tonight because of the lateness of the hour. But I did want to impress these words on your heart!



Lecture 12

These are not Political Observations and There is no Taking of Sides

30 December 1916, Dornach

Our recent considerations have, on the one hand, referred to human evolution as a whole, in so far as this has been affected by the Mystery of Golgotha. We have concerned ourselves to some degree with the loftiest, the most significant aspects of universal and human evolution. On the other hand, it is surely understandable that we have gone into the events of the moment. It was especially necessary to do this because a large proportion of our friends had expressed the wish to hear something about these current events. We have to admit that the gravity of the times encourages us to link the concrete experiences of the day with the nerve centre, the inmost impulse, of our spiritual-scientific striving. For after much investigation we can surely say that the reasons for the catastrophe we now see all around us in human evolution are buried very deeply indeed, and that it is superficial to look at current events solely by taking account of only the most external ramifications.

Looking only at these we would never reach a fruitful view of present events. A fruitful view would be one which would give us the possibility of finding thoughts on how to extricate ourselves from the catastrophe in which the world now finds itself. So let us look at some more details. I then intend tomorrow to show an important connection revealed by spiritual science, a connection which will touch our souls in a way which will enable us to gain an active and understanding grasp of these things. So let us now prepare for this with some more details.

First, let me stress once again that nothing is further from my intention than to put forward political considerations. This is most certainly not our task. It is our task to use our considerations to gain knowledge, knowledge of how things are linked together. For this we have to look at the details. And for this very reason our considerations are very far removed from any form of taking sides. Especially in this respect I beg you not to misunderstand me. Whatever point of view one or other of us might have in relation to national aspirations must not be allowed to interfere in any

way with the deeper foundations of our spiritual-scientific striving. My intention is solely to make suggestions on which a judgement might be based. In no way do I want to influence anyone's opinion.

Misunderstandings can easily arise in this field, and it seems to me that some of the things I have said recently have indeed been open to misunderstanding. Let me therefore say immediately — since anyone can be misunderstood in this way — that, for instance, when I have spoken about the question of Belgian neutrality and events connected with it, I have had absolutely no intention of defending or attacking anything but merely wanted to state facts. Indeed, the first time I mentioned this I was simply quoting Georg Brandes who, so it seems to me, has expressed a truly neutral judgement.

It has not been my concern to criticize politically one measure or another taken by one side or another. My intention has been to stress the importance of the principle of truth in the world, to stress that the karma which has fulfilled itself in mankind has often come about because the attention paid to facts, the attention paid to historical and other connections of life in our materialistic age, is not permeated with the truth. When truth is not at work, when that extraordinary opposite of truth, namely, the lack of inclination to seek the truth, is at work, when there is little yearning for truth — all this is connected with the karma of our time. This is what we must study.

When we see what is being said during these years in which mankind is living, through what is today called war, we cannot object that such things are said only by the newspapers. What matters is the effect. These things have powerful effects. When we pay attention to what is said and to how these things are said, we find that it is just in this 'how' that something works which truly does not run concurrently with the truth. Do not believe that thoughts and statements are not objective forces in their own right! They are objective, actual forces! It is inevitable that they are followed by consequences, even if these are not translated into external deeds. What people think is far more important for the future than what they do. Thoughts become deeds in the course of time. We live today on the thoughts of past times; these are fulfilled in the deeds committed today. And our thoughts which flood through the world today will flow into the deeds of the future.

I am now coming to something which has easily led to misunderstandings, so let me say in advance: I am using the following as a model for the manner in which one may seek the truth. I said some days ago that peace would have been preserved if Sir Edward Grey had replied in the affirmative to the question from the German ambassador in London as to whether England would remain neutral if Germany respected Belgian neutrality. This statement may be disputed. I maintain, however, that it cannot be denied that things would certainly have taken a different course if Sir Edward Grey had answered in the affirmative; for then the violation of Belgium's neutrality would not have taken place.

If you recall everything I have said — and please consider that what matters here are the nuances — you will see that with not a single word have I anywhere defended the violation of Belgian neutrality. I certainly have not done this. But neither do I need to brand it as a violation of the law. To do so would be to carry coals to Newcastle, as the saying goes. Right at the beginning of the war the German Chancellor himself admitted that it was a violation of the law. It cannot be my task to add anything to this or to excuse anything about it. It has been admitted by those competent to judge that it was a violation of the law.

The fact remains — and I beg that we should understand one another properly today, my dear friends — the fact remains that on 1 August the English Foreign Minister was asked: Would England remain neutral if Germany refrained from violating Belgian neutrality? And he gave an evasive answer! The way the question was framed leaves no doubt that, if the answer had been affirmative, Belgium's neutrality would not have been violated.

You could say that the neutrality of Belgium had been guaranteed since 1839, and that as matters stood there was no need to ask, since Germany was obliged to respect the neutrality of Belgium. Therefore Germany had no right to demand that England should remain neutral if Germany were to respect the law, since it was her duty to do so. The respecting of Belgium's neutrality ought not to have been made dependent on England's neutrality. You could say that the German ambassador merely asked: Will England remain neutral if Germany keeps her promise?

So if someone maintains that it was formally correct of Sir Edward Grey to answer evasively, he is absolutely right. He is so right that it is pointless to go into it any more. But legally formal judgements are never what matters in world evolution. Such judgements never conform to reality!

World history proceeds in ways which cannot be encompassed by formal judgements. A formal judgement is foreign to reality. But someone who makes a formal judgement will, if only he shouts loudly enough, always be in the right because, of course, sensible people do not object to the rightness of formal judgements. Formal judgements are also very easily understood; but they do not encompass the realities.

May I remind you that in my recent book *Vom Menschenrätsel* ('The Riddle of Man') I stressed that it is not only the formal correctness of a judgement that matters but also the degree in which it conforms to reality. The important thing is that judgements must encompass reality. Nobody can have any objection to the formal correctness of Sir Edward Grey's answer. There is nothing to discuss, for it is perfectly obvious. But it is the facts we must look at, although the way we look at the facts must be such as to show how we ought to judge external matters if we want to prepare ourselves to win correct perceptions about spiritual matters also. Spiritual matters must be comprehended in all their reality; and for this, formal judgements are insufficient. So we must accustom ourselves to keep the facts together as well as we possibly can in external matters also.

I could argue for a long time on this, for we could speak for days solely about this question. First of all, if it were a matter of establishing a legal basis — for if neutrality is to be violated, it must first exist — we should have to discover whether Belgium's neutrality did, in fact, exist at the time when it was supposed to have been violated. I am not referring here to documents which have been found during the war. There is no point in discussing these since they are questionable and various opinions are possible. But if the matter were being discussed, and if everything relevant were being scrutinized and assessed in the way other things are also judged in ordinary life, then this point would have to be raised too: Surely the old neutrality formalized in 1839 lost its validity when Belgium occupied the Congo. If a state creates new circumstances by entering into international relations at a level where it could give away or sell territories as extensive as those of the Congo — or do anything else with them in relation to other states — then, surely its neutrality must be suspect.

I know that in 1885 the Congo was declared neutral as well; but it would be a matter of deciding whether or not this was contestable. But I do not want to decide anything. I merely want to draw your attention to the difficulties which exist and to the fact that it is not so easy to form a truly objective judgement about such things. A number of other things of equal calibre could be brought into the argument, so this is where the difficulties

begin. Neither shall we discuss how far the old agreement of 1839 could still be valid, since Germany was not founded until 1871. All these things would have to be considered. For into the objective progress of events there flow not only fantastic ideas which we formalize, but also actual facts, without any contribution from human beings; actual facts also play their part.

Now, is it really true that the German ambassador formulated a question about something that should have been a matter of course? The question he asked was: Would Great Britain remain neutral if Germany kept the promise of 1839, even though Germany did not exist at that time! Earlier on, Belgian neutrality was not taken as a matter of course either. When, in 1870, war broke out between Prussia — together with the German principalities allied with her — and France, an agreement was reached between Great Britain under Foreign Minister Gladstone and Germany on the one hand, and between Great Britain and France on the other hand. In each case it was agreed that Great Britain would remain neutral if the other two respected the neutrality of Belgium.

So, in the year 1870, Great Britain was in exactly the same situation. Yet she did not take the attitude that the old agreement of 1839 was definitely valid. Instead, in case anything should happen, she balanced the neutrality of Belgium against her own. If a prejudgement such as this occurs, it cannot afterwards be said that similar steps should not be taken at a later date. So let us refer once more to something I have stressed several times: There is continuity in the life that runs through history; things are linked together. Just as an individual cannot do something to undo what has once been done, so it is with nations. You cannot take something for granted if it has not previously been taken for granted.

So this, too, must be taken into consideration. Even if the matter had been so simple that it could have been said: The agreement of 1839 was obviously valid, and so there was no need to request Great Britain for an additional commitment — even if this could have been said — then the counter argument is: that in 1870 Great Britain herself took the initiative. It was Great Britain who asked France, on the one hand, and Germany, on the other, whether they would respect the neutrality of Belgium. So at that time discussions took place about neutrality. And when discussions take place, others can follow from them at a later date.

The following can also be said. You know that it is not my task to defend the violation of neutrality, but I can say: If an affirmative answer from Great Britain had led to non-violation of Belgium's neutrality, then everything in the West would have taken a different course. But this was not my final word, for I added expressly: In addition, Germany offered to respect France and her colonies if England were to remain neutral. When no positive answer was forthcoming to this question either, the further question was asked: Under what conditions would England remain neutral? England was actually invited to name the conditions under which she would remain neutral. This was all over and done with on 2 August, for it happened on 1 August. England declined. Great Britain did not want to give any answer to questions on this subject. So you can really say: If Great Britain had given any kind of an answer, everything would have taken a different course in the West; even the external course of history shows this.

But I did not stop here either, for I said to you that I knew from other circumstances that even the whole war with France could have been avoided if Great Britain had given a suitable answer. The fact that there were other, more profound, reasons why this did not happen is something that weighs down the scales on the other side. But everything must be carefully considered if we want to form a judgement about the opinion that has been buzzing around the world for the last two and a half years. For there are still many people who believe that England entered the war because of the violation of Belgian neutrality, when in fact this very thing could have been avoided if she had not entered the war!

Now you might say: The whole war situation in the West would have been different if Germany had not violated the neutrality of Belgium. But then you are not distinguishing between what is formally and legally correct and all that is connected with the tragedy of world history. It is very important to distinguish between what is tragic and what is formally correct. Of course, things would have been different. What would have been different? Without, I beg you, bringing moral aspects into the discussion, let us now see what would have been different.

Let us assume that Belgium's neutrality had been respected despite Great Britain's refusal to make a commitment, which meant that at any minute she could be expected to enter the war. As things stood, the attitude of Great Britain made it absolutely inevitable that war would break out in the West. This must be obvious to anyone who really studies the matter, not only the Blue Paper but all the other documents as well. Whether it could

have been avoided with the mood in France being as it was at that time is another question — hardly, perhaps! But let us assume that war broke out in the West because of Great Britain's attitude. What would have happened if Belgium's neutrality had nevertheless been respected? As I have said, I am not leading up to a moral judgement in any direction.

The following would have happened: By far the greatest part of the German army, which has been accused of so much, would have been entangled in France's defences and used up on the western side. Despite all the talk of Prussian militarism, the French army is hardly less powerful than the German — the figures are virtually identical — and this was the case before the war as well. Therefore, obviously the German army would have been used up in the West, and the invasion from the East which began in August and September, would have commenced with a vengeance. For the experts said that it would have been impossible to wage war in the West without engaging almost the whole of the German army all the time. Germany would have been totally exposed to the invasion from the East.

This was the situation. It might have been said that this was a wrong strategic judgement. This was arguable during the early months of the war, but not any longer. For since the failed attempt at Verdun, those who said that the whole German army would be used up if it was deployed solely in the West have been proved to be right.

So there was a choice between passing the death sentence on Germany or taking the tragic step of breaking in through Belgium, which was the only alternative if war in the West could not be avoided; for in the East it certainly could not be avoided! Anyone who says today that it could have been avoided must have the effrontery to say Yes and No at the same time. People today are hardly capable of considering what might be true and what false, but given that some might have the effrontery to say Yes and No at the same time, this is what they would maintain: We have been attacked by the Central Powers; we are not to blame for the commencement of the war; but we shall not end the war until we have attained our war goal, namely, to conquer this one or that one!

There you have Yes and No in the same breath! We are not the ones who want anything, it is the others who want something; they want to conquer, that is why they have attacked us; we, however, shall not end this war till we have achieved our long-standing aim of this or that conquest! It is really unbelievable that people exist who have the effrontery to say Yes

and No in the same breath. Perhaps in the next few days you will discover that there is indeed a person who is capable of saying Yes and No in the same breath. Here is probably the most appalling document ever to have been published in recent times, for it depicts a logic riven beyond all meaning. This is indeed something that belongs to the karma of our time.

So what we have to do is distinguish between what is logical and formally legal and what is purely tragic. We must not succumb to the peculiar misconception that it could be possible in maya — that is, in the world of the physical plane — for real events to take place solely in accordance with what is merely formal and logical. But let us look further: We did not set out to defend or attack anything. Our intention was to show that it is not justifiable — especially while those accused are not in a position to defend themselves — to trumpet abroad that this war is being fought by one of the sides because of the violation of Belgian neutrality, without also proclaiming that one possessed the possibility of preventing this violation. The only possibility of escaping the tragedy would have been the neutrality of England. For no statesman may proclaim in advance the death sentence on his own country.

Of course it is reasonable if all those who are satisfied with reasonable judgements say: Agreements must be kept. My dear friends, if you were to see a list of all the agreements in public and private life which are not kept, and if you were then to be shown what the breaking of these agreements has brought about in the world, you would begin to realize just what forces in maya are the really effective ones.

But was there really such a good conscience on the side which failed to answer in the affirmative? The facts seem to speak against the possibility. For when, at a later date, the question of this discussion between the German ambassador and Sir Edward Grey was once again placed on the agenda, and when it was said that England could have saved the neutrality of Belgium, the English government defended itself. It did so not by invoking the argument of mere formal and legal correctness — for this there were too many excellent statesmen in the the English government at that time. Although I do not withdraw the judgement of Sir Edward Grey — formed not by me but by his English colleagues — he was, nevertheless, too good a statesman to fall back on the pose of maintaining that since an agreement had been formulated in 1839, Germany was obliged to abide by it even if England had given an evasive answer. Instead of doing this the English statesmen excused themselves in a different manner. Grey said that Lichnowsky had indeed asked this question but that he had done so in a

private capacity and not on the instruction of the German government. Had he done so on the instruction of the German government, this would have been different. Though Lichnowsky had acted from the best intentions of maintaining peace in the West, he had not had the German government behind him!

Do you not think that in any private situation this would be called a lame excuse, a perfectly ordinary lame excuse! For the whole world knows that when the ambassador of a country speaks with a Foreign Minister he must do so with the full power of his country behind him, and that his country cannot but ratify what her ambassador says, unless she wants to appear quite impossible in the eyes of the world. So this was a perfectly ordinary lame excuse, grasped at because no one wanted to withdraw to a position which would have to be defended by saying, simply: What we did was correct. They certainly felt the weight of the fact that England could have prevented the violation of neutrality, quite apart from whether the violation was justified from the point of view of the other side. If an avalanche is threatening to fall and the one at the top of the mountain refrains from holding it back because, for some reason — which may or may not be justified and may certainly be unjustified — he is forced to let it go, and then if someone further down also fails to hold it back, with the justification that the one at the top should have done it — no, you cannot argue in this way! But to form judgements about these things always entails weighing them up. So the following would also have to be taken into consideration:

When did it happen? We have now arrived at 2 August. On 2 August the King of Belgium requested the intervention of England, that is, he requested England to intervene with Germany. The Belgian King saw it as a matter of course that England should negotiate with Germany about the neutrality of Belgium. Initially, England did nothing. She waited a whole day while Sir Edward Grey spoke to his Parliament in London. In doing so he concealed the conversation he had had with the German ambassador. Not a word did he breathe about it. If he had mentioned it, the whole session in Parliament would have taken a different course!

So after the discussion with the German ambassador had taken place, and after the King of Belgium had requested the intervention of England, everything paused in England, nothing was done. What was everybody waiting for? They were waiting for the violation of Belgium's neutrality to be accomplished! As long as it remained unaccomplished, matters could still have taken a course along which it would not happen. Powerful forces

were working against it happening and it was hanging by a silken thread. If the request of the Belgian King had been fulfilled quickly enough, if England had intervened, it is questionable whether the violation of neutrality would have taken place. But when did Grey intervene? On the fourth, when the German armies had already set foot on Belgian soil! Why did he wait, even after the request of the King of Belgium? These are questions which have to be asked.

Much could be added to all this if the documents were to be studied both forwards and backwards. But this is not necessary, for I believe I have made it clear to you that these things were very well prepared years in advance. So there is no need to be surprised that events took the course they did in recent years. Of course, if you study the documents forwards only, you will only come up with formal answers.

It has been my intention not to take sides one way or the other, but only to show what is necessary to come to a judgement on these things. For in accordance with the nerve centre of spiritual science, where we strive for a lofty viewpoint, I would rather refrain from light-heartedly making derogatory judgements about what happens in world history when states collide head-on; for do not forget: Not nations, not peoples, wage war; states wage war!

In this field we tend to consider too little that, in addition to the forces of growth and becoming, world events also need the forces of destruction and decay. Is it any different with the individual human being? As we develop our capacities during the course of our lifetime, we cause our body to decay and be destroyed. Tomorrow I shall show you what profound connection exists between our soul life and belladonna, jimson weed, and other poisons found outside in the world. These are truths which delve deeply down into things. One must have the courage to give these truths a validity in world history. Therefore it is much better to understand, rather than to judge in accordance with some so-called norm or other. Any condemnation of states or nations usually stands on insecure foundations. If we are at last to ascend towards the spiritual world and be able to understand anything there, we must accustom ourselves to simply looking at facts, without any criticism — which belongs to quite another realm. Only then shall we understand what forces are at work in world evolution.

From this point of view let us now look at certain events — without anger, but by studying them carefully — certain events which I have hitherto observed have so far been considered solely from a moral point of view.

Such a point of view must, of course, be applied to the actions of individuals, although it is absurd to apply it to the lives of states. One or other of you might even find it strange that I should look at these events without judging them morally; yet they can certainly be considered without any moral undertones.

One of the chief elements in the mighty British Empire is its dominion over India. This dominion over India has undergone a number of earlier stages. It took its departure from the East India Company, a trading organization which, to begin with, enjoyed the privilege of being the sole company permitted to trade with India on England's behalf. Then, as time went on, there developed, inexorably and appropriately, out of the various privileges enjoyed by the East India Company, the dominion of England over India — indeed, the English Empire of India. From this, indeed also through the East India Company, there also developed England's trade with China. From the end of the eighteenth century there was a lively trading relationship between India and China, and the English East India Company was already involved at that time. You know that England then gradually grew to be the foremost merchant of the world.

Then, as the element of trade became established in the Orient, something else was brought to bear on it; it came into contact with something else. From the seventeenth century onwards the habit of smoking opium had become widespread in China. Probably it was the Arabs who taught the Chinese how to smoke opium, since before the seventeenth century they had not done so. For those who do it, smoking opium provides a questionable but powerful pleasure. The opium smoker creates for himself the most varied fantasies out of the astral world. In these he lives. It is truly another world, but reached by a purely material path.

When the people who conducted England's trade with China, in the manner described, noticed that the habit, the passion of opium smoking was spreading rapidly among the Chinese, they established vast poppy plantations in Bengal for the production of opium. Those who are familiar with the laws of commerce know that not only does demand stimulate supply, but supply also stimulates demand. Any economist will tell you that if a large amount of some article is put on offer there will soon be a great demand for it. The East India Company was granted the monopoly by England for the export of opium from India to China. And the more opium

arrived in China, the more the evil habit spread. From 1772 onwards several thousand chests were imported annually, each to the value of about 4,800 marks.

I have chosen this example for it has a very profound cultural and historical background, if all factors are taken into account. Only consider that, by introducing opium, which works on the soul, you are interfering with the spiritual life of a whole nation or, at least, of those to whom you are supplying it. I can use this example because I have no intention of condemning anyone who wants to trade. Trade is something that must move freely in the world. This is a perfectly justifiable principle. I have no intention of condemning anyone who might grow poppies in Bengal in order to manufacture opium for China and take gold in exchange.

But the Chinese saw their pathetically wasted opium smokers. Opium smokers gradually deteriorate, and after a while it was noticed that the habit was causing the degeneration of wide sections of the Chinese population. When the Chinese noticed this they outlawed the smoking of opium in 1794. They wanted to prevent any more opium from entering the country.

But as is the way with such things, prohibitions do not necessarily prevent trade with the forbidden article. Ways and means are found to carry on trading. So it turned out that despite the formal prohibition, despite the law which forbade the import of opium, the opium trade flourished. There are all sorts of ways, of which bribery is only one. In short, the opium trade flourished and increased from a few thousand chests in 1773 to thirty thousand chests in 1837: that is, over only a few decades. The profits, about thirty million francs a year, flowed into British India.

Once things had got out of hand to this extent, the Chinese could think of no other measure than the confiscation of the opium consignments as they arrived. To Canton, which was the usual destination of the consignments, they sent a capable Chinese — an energetic man, Lin by name, who confiscated the chests as they arrived. The English also had a capable man in their consulate, Captain Elliot, who was very energetic and even succeeded on one occasion in breaking through the Chinese blockade with a warship.

Now there arose the question of how to get out of this fix. Mountains of chests filled with opium were waiting to be dealt with, but the Chinese would not relent. The situation was most awkward. So Elliot, who was in a position to do this, had 20,283 chests signed over to himself personally and then handed them to the Chinese Government. This was the way out for the moment.

However, this did not remove the opium trade from the face of the earth, for in some quarters there was no desire to rid the world of the opium trade. So the Chinese found there was nothing for it but to make new laws once again, very strict laws indeed. Lin decreed that anyone caught trading with opium would be condemned to death by the Chinese courts and that from now on all ships were to be confiscated. Thus the Chinese were now faced with the prospect of the death penalty if they traded with opium.

But the British would not consider the abolition of the opium trade, just because a few people might lose their heads. Instead they said — and I quote — 'With this demand, the Chinese Government has finally destroyed any sense of security.' Then they ordered all British nationals living in China to leave, while armed assistance was requested from India. They, so to say, occupied the whole area. The Chinese meanwhile stood quite bravely by their decision to behead anyone caught trading in opium. So it appeared that the opium trade had ceased. Since the Chinese intended to confiscate any British ships carrying opium, there appeared to be no more British ships. What happened was that the opium was loaded in India on to American ships instead! So, just as much — indeed more and more — opium continued to arrive in China on American ships.

Elliot, the civil servant, said: The question underlying our conflict is quite simple. Does China wish to conduct honest and increasing trade with us, or does she want to accept responsibility for allowing her coastal waters to fall victim to open piracy and freebooting? The harbour at Canton was blockaded with help from India. In the skirmishing this involved, a Chinese was killed by an English sailor. Of course the Chinese Government demanded the extradition of the sailor. Every so often the Chinese tired of the whole affair, sometimes wanting to prove they were in the right and yet not wanting to prove the English wrong either. It is quite possible to do this! One day an English sailor drowned by accident. So Elliot, a very clever man, agreed with Lin, the representative of the Chinese Government, that they would confirm the drowned sailor to be the one who had killed the

Chinese. The drowned sailor was handed over and the matter thus settled for the moment. But all these things led in the end, in 1840, to the war between England and China.

So the whole course of events was inexorable and could not have gone any other way. An incisive influence was exercised in a material way on the soul life of a people. Something took place which is connected with the whole process of world evolution. In England people 'knew' what it was all about! What did they know? In England people 'knew' that England had been 'surprised' by China — that is how they put it — and the reason given was that China could not tolerate England's cultivation of opium in India because the Chinese wanted to build up their own cultivation. This is what was said. Everybody 'knew' all about this, and another thing they knew was that the Chinese were barbarians! That is what people in England knew at that time. Lord Palmerston said: The protection of poppy cultivation in India must gain ground; it is a matter of protecting poppy cultivation in India; furthermore, the economists in China do not want to allow out of their country the money which should by rights be paid to India. All these were things well 'known' and understood in Europe!

War raged; and in war, inevitably, atrocities occur. Atrocities were committed, both by the Chinese and by the English. Whole villages were found in which the women lay in pools of blood in their houses; the Chinese men, having fought bravely, saw that they would have to kill themselves or surrender, so first they killed their wives and children. This war of 1840 was a sad war. Strange rumours began to circulate about Elliot, who had observed it throughout and who actually had it on his conscience. The rumours — perhaps they were true — said that he was inclined to initiate peace negotiations with the Chinese. So he was overthrown. Then — no, not Lloyd George! — a certain Pottinger was given the position of Elliot who had wanted to initiate peace negotiations. The war was to be fought to its bitter end, that is, until the island of Chusan and the cities of Ningpo and Amoy had been taken, until the English had advanced as far as Nanking and until, in 1842, China had become totally demoralized. Hong Kong was made over to England, five ports in China were opened for unlimited opium trade, and British consuls established. In addition to the earlier twenty-five million extorted — I do not quite mean extorted, there is another word which I can't find for the moment — in addition to the earlier twenty-five million extorted from the Chinese, a further demand was now made for ninety-seven and a half million war damages.

As I have said before, I would not dream of interpreting this process as anything other than a historical necessity. I would not dream of accusing anybody. Those who understand necessities of this kind, those who understand how things take place on the physical plane, know that such things are perfectly possible in the normal physical way of world evolution. The profits made from opium are now absorbed into the English national economy, and the English national economy includes a good part of English culture. Just as it would be nonsense to underestimate English culture, so is it also nonsense to doubt the necessity of such events, though perhaps the trifling satirical epilogue to the whole affair might be excluded from that necessity:

When the first instalment of the ninety-seven and a half million war damages was received, certain people came forward claiming they had been the first to have chests of opium confiscated and that the compensation they had received had been minimal. Now, they said, we have seen that our country regards the opium trade with China as legitimate, so we demand full compensation, since we were merely doing something over which our country has since been waging war. The minister whose task it was to decide the matter drew from his pocket a note he had given Captain Elliot at the time, stating that so long as Chinese law forbade the opium trade, the English Government would never agree to pay compensation to anyone who might suffer losses as a result of carrying on this trade. Since this Chinese law was in force at the time, he said, your demand has no foundation because you were contravening this law which was only later nullified by the war.

We need not decide whether this epilogue was also one of the historical necessities. But what is a necessity is that we should look at the facts. When this Anglo-Chinese war started in 1840, mankind stood at the beginning of a time about which we have often spoken. I have mentioned this very year to you as that in which materialism attained its zenith. It is good to understand how such things develop. As I said, just as it would be nonsense to underestimate English culture or English life — English civilization — so would it be nonsense to believe that something of this nature could have been avoided in the overall context of English evolution. It belongs to it. So it is entirely wrong to form any kind of moral judgement about it. If we did, we would be making the mistake of judging whole nations, whole groups in the manner which is only appropriate when we judge individuals. This is the very thing which it is impossible to do.

Yet again and again it is maintained that such a thing is possible. I have just received another pamphlet — there are so many peacemaking pamphlets to be had at the moment — which says: States have their own thinking, feeling and willing, just as do human individuals. Of course this is utter nonsense because you cannot, by analogy, transfer something which has reality on a higher plane to the level of the human being who has his thinking, feeling and willing in the physical sphere. Of course the folk spirits, the folk souls, also have their characteristics, but these are as I have described them in the lecture cycle I mentioned the other day. But to speak of the thinking, feeling and willing of nations is simply nonsense.

My dear friends, today I have introduced you to certain matters, for the simple reason that it was necessary to add some striking examples to our basic material. Tomorrow we shall continue to link this to more far-reaching viewpoints.



Lecture 13

Poisons in the Social Sphere

31 December 1916, Dornach

You will understand that for one who follows with sympathy the destiny of mankind it will be difficult to speak today, on New Year's Eve. I expect it will be understandable if what I have to say today cannot be rounded off in the way we have come to expect, for that 'New Year's Eve gift' received by mankind will hardly allow the free unfolding of what is in my soul.

Yesterday I endeavoured to describe to you a historical event and to show that on no account may such an event be judged in a moral sense, for events founded on historical necessity may not be assessed morally. We have to be quite clear that just as the Mystery of Golgotha has nothing to do with peoples or groups of people — for its light falls only on the individual human being — so, by analogy, is it also impossible to transfer to groups the way in which we morally judge the thinking, feeling and willing of the individual.

There are other cases, also, to which moral yardsticks may not be applied. For instance, it would not occur to anyone to apply a moral yardstick to the building of a house; no one would find one roof less moral than another because of its shape. It is just that this example is more extreme, so it is more obvious that people would not apply moral judgements to such things; in such an extreme case they would be unlikely to let themselves be led astray by moral judgements. In contrast, however, those who want to work on people's souls, which are ever open to such things, choose just this method of decking out with moral reasons things to which, in truth, moral judgements do not apply and which cannot be judged morally, except by hypocrites. That is why I put before you an event which had the capacity of throwing light on certain motives which are at work in human evolution on the physical plane.

It is not permissible to make moral judgements, either positive or negative, about events such as the Opium War I described to you yesterday. Where would a moral judgement lead, even if it were one which might make people consult their consciences? Suppose someone were to say: That was indeed an immoral venture, but now we have put it behind

us. This would be one of those judgements intended to lull us to sleep! For thanks to the millions which flowed from Asia to Europe at that time, there exists today, in all its glory, that kingdom which ought to consult its conscience.

To be logical it would then also be necessary, from the same standpoint of conscience, to condemn the present intrigues just as firmly and sharply as one condemns the Opium War! If one did not do so it would be like taking into account, in the case of a house, only the first, second and third floors and the attic, while leaving out what cannot be left out — namely, the ground floor. What was won at that time belongs now to the whole configuration of the British Empire. Perhaps you have heard the example of how much a penny or a centime invested at the time of the birth of Christ at compound interest would have increased by now. This shows you what increase of riches is possible over the years. So if you want to judge the yield of the Opium War you must look at it as a whole. Then you will see that what has grown out of those millions — after all, this has been going on for a century — is something which is preparing to rule the world, to overrun the world; this is what may be found in what was won at that time!

You see, it would be an offence against all truth to consider in isolation a single event which is part of an ongoing evolution. What you can say is that what has since developed is one of the consequences of the Opium War. You can say this quite objectively, without taking up a positive or negative moral stance. It is not permissible to paint over the facts with shades of morality. If we do this today, we are preventing the possibility of any subsequent insight into what is going on now. On karmic and moral grounds we have to presume that, looking back on today's events in the decades or centuries to come, people will condemn with an equal degree of certainty and conviction what is today defended with noble moral patriotism. In the centuries to come, today's events will look very similar.

It behoves us to look more deeply into such things as they occur on the physical plane, especially at a moment like this when, on the one hand, the turn of the year should awaken a festive mood in our souls, while on the other hand the bitterness of events must move us deeply — unless we are utterly superficial. Regardless of any side we might support, none of us can fail to realize that on the words we have read today could depend the most terrible destiny for the whole of mankind.

I said: It behoves those of us who stand for spiritual knowledge to look more deeply into things. So today, since I do not know how much longer it will be possible to speak about such spiritual matters in Europe, I want to draw your attention to something which may serve as an example to help us look more deeply into conditions which are manifested outwardly in what we see on the physical plane. You see, even more than is the case in the sciences which apply to the physical plane, it is necessary to be clear that in spiritual science the facts and the way they relate to one another are not simple at all, but very complicated indeed. I have often stressed the complicated nature of these facts and have begged you to understand that although the general formulae, ideas and laws about the relationships between the different aspects of life which we receive from spiritual science are absolutely correct, nevertheless they are naturally extraordinarily complex in their application to actual cases.

We have often spoken about the time between death and a new birth and of how the human being descends again to the physical world in order to incarnate his soul-and-spirit being into a physical body. So we can realize that whenever we raise our spiritual eye to the spiritual world we always find souls who, with the forces they have gathered between death and their new birth, are preparing to descend into physical bodies. In other words, here down below the possibilities await the creation of those physical bodies, while up above there are the forces in the souls which guide them to these physical bodies.

Now you must consider a number of other things together with what I have just said. You know that one of the objections to the concept of repeated earthly lives is: The human population is increasing all the time, so where do all the souls come from?

I have often replied that this is a superficial objection, for the simple reason that people forget to take into account that this so-called increase in the population of the world has only been observed in very recent centuries. For instance, those scientists who are so very proud of the exactitude of their calculations would be highly embarrassed if one were to question them about the population statistics of the year 1348 when America had not yet been discovered. The objections often mentioned are indeed staggeringly superficial. It is a fact that in some parts of the world the birth rate diminishes while it rises elsewhere, so that the population density varies in different places. This brings about a certain amount of disharmony. It can happen that, in accordance with the conditions prevailing in relation to the incarnation of souls who are living between

death and a new birth, there are certain souls who, as a result of previous incarnations, are inclined to descend to a certain part of the world but that there are too few bodies available there. This can indeed happen. Furthermore, there is something else that can happen as well, which I would like you to consider in connection with what we have been saying.

Some time ago — and you will see from this that the lectures I have given here in recent weeks have not been without a wider context — I mentioned that John Stuart Mill, and the Russian philosopher and politician Herzen, have both pointed out that in many ways a kind of 'Chineseness' is beginning to manifest in Europe, as though Europe were becoming 'chinesified'. This was no idle remark on my part. If John Stuart Mill, who was a keen observer, considered that many people in his vicinity were beginning to show noticeable Chinese traits, then in certain respects he was quite right.

Consider the following: Souls exist who, as a result of their former lives, are inclined to incarnate in Chinese bodies during the nineteenth century or at the beginning of the twentieth. Now since the Chinese population is nowhere near as great as it was in former times, it is, in any case, not possible for all these Chinese souls to incarnate there. In Europe, on the other hand, the physical population has increased considerably in recent times, and so many souls can be accommodated here who were really destined for incarnation in Chinese bodies. This is one reason why keen observers are beginning to notice that Europe is becoming 'chinesified'.

But this alone would not have sufficed to prepare Europe for that European karma which was to come about. A helping hand was needed to assist a certain aspect of the great laws of existence. Now if over a long period something is brought about of the kind I mentioned yesterday, namely, that very many bodies in a whole population are caused to become emaciated, then a situation will arise in which souls who were inclined towards that area will not, after all, incarnate in those bodies. By bringing about the 'opiumising' of Chinese bodies and causing generations to come into being under the influence of opium's forces, it was possible to condemn the Chinese to take in, to a certain extent, some very immature, sub-standard souls, whose qualities I shall not discuss. But those souls who had themselves decided to incarnate in Chinese bodies were thereby prevented from approaching these 'opiumised' bodies. They were diverted to Europe where they brought about among the European population those traits which have, meanwhile, been noted by those keen observers I mentioned.

So you see that an event on the physical plane such as the Opium War has a quite definite spiritual background. In the first instance, its purpose is not to help certain people make millions and grow rich but to prevent certain souls who would have come from the spiritual world round about now, to strengthen the cultural forces of Europe, from incarnating yet, and instead to surreptitiously fill European bodies with Chinese souls. This is really so, however paradoxical it may seem. This momentous event has truly become fact. In a great many European people a disharmony between soul and body has been brought about in the way I have just described. Such disharmony between soul and body always has the consequence of making it impossible to use the tools of the body properly. This makes it possible, instead, for others to busy themselves with errors and untruths. It would not be so easy to work by means of errors and untruths, if those who see through these errors and untruths were not condemned, by the conventions of their day, to preach in the wilderness.

You see, therefore, that I certainly did not mention what I told you yesterday merely in order to link it in an insulting manner with a particular nation. I mentioned it as an example of how actions by human beings here on the physical plane can bring about far-reaching changes in the spiritual evolution of mankind as a whole. Furthermore, please do not imagine that I told you what I did about the hotbeds of deception, and the manner in which they bring about errors and illusions, simply for my own amusement. Here, too, my intention was to show you much that goes on in our materialistic age. And today I have sought to demonstrate the kind of result one discovers when one observes not only the physical events but also the spiritual background of what human beings bring about. Seen in this way, that Opium War meant the switching of a soul element from a part of the earth to which it belonged — and where it might have been of use, because it would have been united with bodies into which it would have fitted — to another part of the earth where it could become a tool for forces whose designs are by no means necessarily beneficial for mankind.

We must realize, of course, that an ordinary historian will only notice some degree of degeneration in certain strata of the Chinese population resulting from the Opium War. But one who, in addition, observes the spiritual aspects of cultural history will have to look more deeply in order to see what is brought about by this degeneration for the whole of mankind. For only in this fifth post-Atlantean period, which is entirely permeated by materialism, is it possible to observe things in a manner so deeply ahrimanic — a manner which pervades all thinking and all ideas — that if something good or something bad is done to a part of mankind, people

really can believe that this will not affect mankind as a whole. Whatever is done in connection with, or by, a part of mankind, will always affect the whole of human evolution because of the way the forces behind the scenes of physical existence arrange things.

Not until the sixth post-Atlantean period will a sense of responsibility become general among mankind so that each individual feels responsible for what he does, not only towards himself but towards mankind as a whole. Today we are surrounded by such a mood of catastrophe because the very opposite of this is the general trend, and from the attitudes prevalent today mankind will prepare to crystallize out the opposite as the right view.

So this is an example which can show you that what takes place on the physical plane really does affect even the spiritual world, and is therefore not only significant for the physical plane but is also echoed in the events of the spiritual world and thus of the whole universe. This is expressed quite deliberately in the mystery drama not for the poetic effect but, for once, in order to give embodiment to a truth which needs to be placed into our present time equally as much as everything else that is contained in the Mysteries.

Man has as yet not progressed very far along the road towards the achievement of wider horizons in his view of the world. Somehow he does not really want wider horizons in his view of the world. At the same time, science today is intent on restricting the horizon more and more. For science is secretly afraid of what the truth really is. Fear of the truth is taking hold of mankind increasingly, both in everyday matters and in wider contexts. Indeed, if this were not the case in the wider contexts, neither could it come about in everyday situations. For instance, people would no longer continue to draw out the war merely because they are afraid that if an understanding were to be reached by means of proper discussion, certain matters would then be revealed of which they are — well, of which they are afraid.

Some of you will remember the lecture cycle I gave in Vienna in the spring of 1914 when I summarized much of what I have said over the years about the tendencies and inclinations of our time. I said there that it is possible to speak about a social carcinoma. I must admit to being somewhat astonished by the way such remarks — which throw a profound

light on certain existing things — are very frequently taken simply as remarks which satisfy curiosity to some extent, just like any other remark that might be made.

I was trying to point out — at the beginning of 1914 — that in our life today certain impulses are active comparable with the impulse in the physical human organism underlying the formation of a carcinoma, the disease of cancer. I said that just as one studies the sick physical organism, it would more and more become a task for mankind to study the social organism. Although poisons causing the disease are not present in the same way as they are in a physical organism, nevertheless they are no less poisons which create the disease. But to do this, a sense for what is spiritual is needed. And you cannot have a sense for the spiritual if you deny its existence. Of course the social organism is not infiltrated with bacterial poison as though it were a physical organism. The poison in the social organism can only be found if you have a sense for the spiritual as it interweaves with physical existence. But if there is a possibility of doing more than merely making analogies — which are inadmissible anyway — if there is a possibility of following events on the different planes, then it will be possible to form an idea of what is behind these things.

It might be asked how it can be possible at all in the social life of the globe to move, in the way I have described, a whole company of souls from one part to another, just as though an illness were being artificially cultivated in a human body. But if these things are understood, if they are, to begin with, studied independently of what comes to meet us in human life, much may be noticed. Consider that plant life, animal life and, of course, also the minerals, are all capable of secreting poisons. As you know, these poisons have two different characteristics. On the one hand they are 'poisons', they destroy higher forms of life; they destroy and slay, for instance, the human organism. But on the other hand, suitably prepared and taken in suitable doses, they are medicaments.

This arises from profound interconnections in the whole realm of nature. We ought gradually to acquire certain ideas about this, not based on hypotheses or, even worse, on fantasies, but on spiritual science. We know, for instance, the truth about the evolution of man and, connected with this, of way the world has passed through the Saturn, Sun and Moon existences and has now reached Earth existence. We know that before the present Earth existence there was the Moon existence. I have described this to some extent, though hitherto more physically, depicting the substantiality, the substances of Moon existence. From my descriptions you can see that

this Moon existence was quite physical, that it was — at least in certain stages — just as physical as Earth existence is today. Even though the mineral kingdom did not exist, Moon existence was physical. The physical structures were held by different conditions, but they were physical. So the question arises: How can the substantiality of ancient Moon be compared with the substantiality of Earth, with what flows and pulsates in the substances of our Earth?

Spiritual investigation reveals that the substances existing on Earth today have really only come about during the course of Earth existence. They are such that the human body, which needs them for its nourishment, can unite itself with them. They passed through earlier stages but only reached their present stage during Earth existence. You could not speak of 'wheat' or 'barley' during Moon existence.

So what substances now present on Earth were there during Moon existence? Every mineral, plant and animal poison, every poison that flows through these kingdoms, everything we today call poison and which today works as poison — these were the normal substances of Moon! You need only recall something I have pointed out quite often, namely, that prussic acid was present as something quite normal on ancient Moon. I have mentioned this a number of times since the year 1906, when I spoke about it for the first time, in Paris. All these things are connected with prussic acid.

On ancient Moon the substances which are today poisonous played the same role as do the plant juices on Earth, those juices which agree with man. But why are the poisons still present today? For the same reason that Ahriman is present. They are what has remained behind, something that has remained behind in physical forms. So we now have what agrees with man, that is, whatever has progressed in the normal way, and certain other substances which have remained behind at the Moon stage, which is now the stage of poisons.

There is also another aspect to this matter. We know that today's spirituality only developed as a possibility during the transition from ancient Moon to Earth existence. Our normal development was also paralleled in the substances of the lower kingdoms. Only the poisons remained behind. But there is a link, not in the spiritual but in the physical sense, between the substances on which our higher man is founded — that is, the higher organs which make us human, those organs which only developed during Earth existence — and the poisonous substances of Moon existence. To a

certain degree we bear within ourselves the further stage of development of the poisons. The substances we today regard as poisonous are something which has remained behind at an earlier stage. Those substances from the lower kingdoms which man cannot tolerate have developed in a retrograde direction. But those substances that have developed in a forward direction, those substances that live in us in such a way that they can transform themselves to become the bearer of our ego, these are the transformed poisonous substances of ancient Moon.

It is only because we bear within us these transformed poisonous substances of ancient Moon that we have to some extent the capacity to be ego-conscious beings. I have mentioned this, even in public lectures, by saying that, in order to live, man needs not only constructive but also destructive forces. Without the latter, ego intelligence would be impossible. From birth onwards, breaking-down, growing-old and death are necessary, for it is in the processes of breaking-down — not those of building-up — that the possibility for our spiritual development lives. The building-up process lulls us to sleep. The building-up process is like rank, abundant growth which sends us to sleep. It dampens down consciousness. Consciousness can only live by using up spiritual forces. Those structures within us, together with their substances, which use up spiritual forces — these are the transformed poisonous substances of ancient Moon; they are transformed in such a way that they no longer work in the way they did on ancient Moon.

It is difficult to imagine this in connection with certain poisonous substances. But what we have to imagine about the development of these poisons is that their intensity has been reduced by one seventh, or two sevenths, or three sevenths. Poisonous substances in plants are as they are today because they have remained behind from Moon existence. But other poisonous substances have had their poisonous potential reduced many times, and these have been inoculated into us during the course of evolution. Because of this we are capable of growing old during our lifetime. Also because of this we are capable of using these poisonous effects — for they are poisonous effects — which are connected with the way the male element works on the female element in human procreation. The effect of the poison is expressed in the fact that, without it, the female alone would tend to bring forth only an etheric being. For this etheric being to find a physical form, the rank growth of etheric life has to be poisoned. I hinted at this in my lecture on physiology some time ago in Prague. The

act of fertilization provides this poisoning, just as in plant life the effect of etheric material on the pistil — which is the fertilization act of the plant — provides a poisoning by light.

Here you have something which has come into existence for man since the beginning of Earth existence: procreation. It is a kind of distilled poisonous effect, a poisonous effect which existed on ancient Moon in an intensity equalling that of the poisons which have now remained behind in the lower kingdoms. You can now understand a sentence which I simply want to place before you for the moment: Ordinary poisons, which are ahrimanic substances left over from ancient Moon, are the opponents of progressive evolution; distilled, in a way diluted, they provide the physical substance which is the bearer of our spiritual life.

What happens when a diseased form comes into being, when a form falls ill? Medical science will have to concern itself more and more with such things, so that it can widen its view through spiritual science. When a diseased form comes into being, this means that evolution is advancing faster, and with it our physical organism. If some form — and this need not only be a growth, it could be something fluid or not even fluid in the organism — if such a form comes into being, this means that a part of the physical organism is growing faster than normal. A carcinoma, for instance, comes about when a part of the organism excludes itself and starts to evolve more quickly than the rest of the human organism. In physical life, the life of substances, this is something luciferic. I do not mean luciferic in the moral sense; it is simply objectively luciferic. And it is balanced out by poison, because poison is ahrimanic — and that is the opposite. If you can find the proper polar opposite then the luciferic growth will be balanced by the poison, which is ahrimanic. These two can balance each other out if they work in the right way.

From this you see that the concepts of what is luciferic and what is ahrimanic may be pursued right down into the realms of natural life. They may also be pursued upwards into human life, human social life. If we wanted to be cleverer than the gods, we might ask why they did not make the world without all these poisons. We would have to be as clever as that King of Spain, who first asked this in relation to a particular case. Now, just as these poisons work as actual substances in the human organism, so do they also work spiritually in social life. And in social life it is possible to guide and lead them. What is grey magic really? Grey magic is nothing other than the guiding of poisonous effects in such a way that they cause damage and bring about sickness in the social sense.

This is, in the first place, something which must be taken into account by those who seriously wish to learn about life. So as not to go on for too long about one subject, we shall continue — probably tomorrow — to talk further about poison, sickness and health.

Meanwhile, we might find in our soul the question: What is the consequence of all this? If you meditate on it you will not fail to see the connection. The consequence is that, having evolved beyond the former atavistic knowledge of these things, mankind now has the task of striving for truth with the new consciousness which has been achieved. Without this, nothing is possible. The links with the old atavistic knowledge have been severed, precisely because mankind is to become free to develop ego-consciousness ever further. So there is a fading away of what was still quite clear to the old atavistic consciousness and which is expressed in certain myths. I have demonstrated to you the connection between a myth such as the Baldur myth and great all-encompassing manifestations of human evolution.

Our scientific simpletons who conduct research into myths and legends can go no further than to maintain that they are an expression of creative folk imagination. In reality, however, they encompass deeply significant truths which are revealed particularly through the fact that they are truly worked out down to the last detail. As an example, the Baldur myth, among many other things, gives us a very good idea of the gradation of poisons. That a parasitic plant exudes a certain degree of poison is expressed wonderfully in the way Baldur is slain by the mistletoe. This shows that there existed a knowledge of the gradation of poisons in the world, for instance, that mistletoe is poisonous to a degree which cannot be tolerated by man. Everything is differentiated by degrees, everything is graded.

When certain things are said to be 'poison', what is meant is that they are stronger poison which has remained behind at the Moon stage — they have not continued to evolve. But everything is to some small extent poison, in everything there is a little poison; the only difference is in the degree. Although I cannot back a certain doctor and professor who stood up in favour of alcohol and maintained he could prove that many more people had died of the poison 'water' than of the poison 'alcohol', nevertheless the point he makes is important: In all poisons there are degrees, and it is true that more people have been killed by water than by alcohol. It is a fact that something can be true but at the same time it may,

without becoming untrue, be inapplicable to a certain case. I have often said it is not enough for something to be true. What matters is whether it can be incorporated into reality, whether it belongs to actual reality.

The ancient truths have, to a great extent, faded away. That is why significant indications about the truth of ancient myths still given, for instance, by the so-called 'unknown philosopher' Saint-Martin, remained totally incomprehensible to those who followed him. Saint-Martin, who considered himself to be a pupil of Jakob Böhme, was still just able to point to the true core of the myths. That was in the eighteenth century. By the nineteenth century the most total and utter nonsense was being put forward by way of interpretation of the myths. All this is connected with the way our time lacks a strong, intense urge for the truth. If this urge for truth had been sufficiently strong, it would have sufficed to lead mankind far more extensively towards spiritual life than has actually been the case. It is the weakness of the urge for truth which has brought it about that so few people experience a longing to deepen their spiritual life.

This shows itself in the external, concrete world as well. The sad and painful events of today show that the sense for truth does not flow through the world like the blood of the soul, and this is not always the fault of human beings. The sense for truth must be properly awakened. That is why, during the past weeks, it has been necessary to point to concrete, sense-perceptible affairs in so far as they are the expression of spiritual impulses and spiritual events. It is because of the striving for truth — or rather the lack of striving for truth today — that current affairs are handled and things are said which are believed in the widest circles, although they are in fact nothing but absolute inversions of the truth. In an age when it is possible to make the truth, conform to any kind of antipathy, passion or instinct, a great deal of effort will be needed in this age to awaken a strong sense for the truth which can then lead to a spiritual life. The details show that this is so.

Only consider all the things that have been said in the two-and-a-half years since this event called the war started to rage. Consider further all the things that have been believed. As I said yesterday, the striving for truth, the search for truth, has been the only standpoint for everything I have said; there has been no intention of taking sides in any way at all. It is necessary, however, when making an assertion — even if only in your own soul, for that is just as much a reality — to have the will to take into account that in a particular case the truth might not be entirely available to

you and that it is therefore a matter of holding back and searching for ways which can then make it possible to come to a judgement of something.

Let us look at a particular case. Think of all that was disseminated in America in connection with European life during the build-up to this war! Much that has echoed back to Europe reveals what is believed in America. Why are these things believed? They are believed because people over in America have, of course, just as little possibility of understanding European life as did the English with regard to life in China after the Opium War. Pangs of conscience might inspire someone today to admit that the Opium War was a *faux pas*. I should like to remind such a person that among those in the British Parliament who sang the praises of the outcome of the Opium War as 'an achievement of British culture' was old Wellington himself — not one of the worst.

Some time ago an American wrote an essay for his countrymen which they obviously failed to note. To conclude this evening I shall read some passages to you so that you can see the judgement of a man who genuinely endeavours to understand things. Do not rejoin that after seeing what has happened in recent weeks a different judgement could be reached. Of course a more profound background might be found. But to form a judgement such things are not needed. To form a judgement it is enough to have a true sense of objectivity about the external events which are taking place. This sense of objectivity has been little in evidence.

This is what George Stuart Fullerton, a professor at New York University, writes about Germany. Allow me to read to you from this document, which provides such a contrast to that New Year's Eve document which is now circulating in the world. Fullerton writes:

'I am an American without a drop of German blood in my veins, so that I can not be suspected of having the natural partiality for Germany which characterizes the German-American. Moreover, I can claim the right to be as truly an American as any one, since my family has been American as long as there has been an American Nation. I love my country, and pray that it may have before it a great future, and a prosperity founded upon right and justice. Nevertheless, no man has the right to be only an American, but must remember

that he is also a man, and that, as a man, it is a matter of concern to him that justice should prevail in other continents than his own. We Americans are neutrals, but we have a right to know the facts about the great war, and it is our duty to aim at intelligent comprehension of the situation.'

He is a man who applies only his common sense to what he sees; he is not an occultist.

'For thirty years I have known Germany, and have been interested in her science, her literature, and her political and economic development. At first, I saw the land through the eyes of a mere visitor, but of late years I have had the opportunity to know it much more intimately. I have seen a people, formerly comparatively poor, not very strong, not very closely welded into a unit, become rich, powerful, united, and so advanced in its social development that its internal organization compels the admiration of the economist and of the humanitarian. The land has prospered exceedingly in the intelligent pursuit of the arts of peace. Austria I have visited in past years, and last winter I spent in that Empire in the capacity of first American Exchange Professor to the Austrian Universities, lecturing at Vienna, Graz, Innsbruck, Cracow and Lemberg. I met many persons in public and in private life and had an opportunity to feel the pulse of public opinion.

I say without hesitation that no class, either in Germany or in Austria, desired to precipitate this terrible war. Peace was desired, and earnestly desired, for economic reasons. But war was forced upon both nations. That war came just when it did may be regarded as an accident, for the war was sure to come in any case.

As many of my fellow-countrymen are imperfectly acquainted with the conditions which prevail in Europe; as they themselves live under conditions so different that it is difficult for them to realize the significance even of facts which are truly brought before them; and as they have, moreover, been systematically misinformed by certain of the parties interested,

who have had the opportunity to cut the German cables, it is not surprising that there should be, in America, much misunderstanding of the situation. I think it my duty to make a brief contribution towards the clearing up of this misunderstanding.

Americans have heard a great deal lately of German militarism, and many of them have a vague notion that it is a menace to European civilization. Of what the word really stands for they have no intelligent notion. In America we have brief attacks of militarism — as at the time of the Spanish-American war, or when there is common talk of a possible war with Mexico — but militarism, as a permanent condition of things, does not exist. And if it is not to be met with in the Great Republic, why should it exist in Germany? The American who is not acquainted with Germany and with the position in which she finds herself can find no satisfactory answer to this question. An answer is, however, not far to seek.

The Germans are a peace-loving people. We Americans know that there is no element in our own population more orderly, industrious, and law-abiding, than the German element. The German in Germany has the same characteristics. The land is an orderly land, and the population is enlightened, disciplined, and educated to respect the law. The rights of even the humblest are jealously guarded. The courts are just. The successes of the Germans are attained as the result of careful preparation and unremitting industry. Even competition in business is carefully regulated by law, and the laws against what the community regards as 'unfair competition' are rigorously enforced. No one who lives among the Germans and learns to know them can feel that he has to do with an aggressive and predatory people. And those who spent in Germany, as I did, the month of August 1914, mingling freely in the crowds on the streets during the two weeks of the mobilization, when the public excitement was the greatest, can only wonder that a people so peaceable and self-restrained should be capable of the daring courage which has since stormed fortresses, and has gathered laurels on land and sea in a way which compels the admiration of all who have not been kept in ignorance of the facts.

Yet this orderly and peace-loving people, a people which has not only loved peace, but has for more than forty years kept the peace, while other nations carried on wars, a people that has, in the pursuit of the arts of peace, grown exceedingly rich and prosperous — this people has all the while trained the mass of its male population to be prepared for war in case of emergency, and has built up a formidable fleet. Finally, it has gone to war against what seemed, at first, to be overwhelming odds, and the rising has not been that of a class, but of a nation. Neither the Emperor, nor the Government, nor the officers in the army and the navy are responsible for the public sentiment which makes this movement in Germany a national uprising. Even the Social-Democrats and those of a kindred way of thinking, men who have never been accused of servility to the Emperor or the Government, nor suspected of a weakness for army and navy, have stood by their country to a man, and are now fighting bravely and dying without a complaint at the front. In the past three months I have not met with a German of any class, from the highest to the lowest, who has not been heart and soul for the war. I have heard no laments from those who have sent their sons; I have heard no criticism of their country from those who have been bereaved, and I know many such.

A strange phenomenon to be observed among a peaceable and industrious race, a race as devoted to the cultivation of the sciences and arts as it is to industrial pursuits; a civilized race, not one living in a state of barbarism and to which war is welcome, a diversion rather than a calamity. To the American who cannot put himself in the place of the German, an inexplicable phenomenon. What has possessed the Germans to prepare for war on a great scale? What drives them to fight even against a world in arms, and to stake their all in the gigantic contest?

Let me help the American to put himself in the place of the German. We Americans inhabit a land more than four-fifths the size of all Europe including Russia. It is fifteen times the size of the German Empire, and has only ninety-eight millions of inhabitants, so that we are in the position of a family occupied in growing up to fill a large and well furnished house. It does not cross our mind that our neighbors, either near or

remote, can seriously frighten us. Who could invade us with any hope of success? Who could threaten our national existence, or subject us to anything approaching a state of bondage?

To the north of us is Canada — an empty house, a country with only seven million inhabitants, which could not hurt us even if it wishes to do so. To the south is Mexico, which can make trouble within her own borders and can cause some Americans to regret their investments there, but which is no more formidable to the United States than an unruly class in a school. To the west and to the east we have the broad sea. Japan might quarrel with us, and might be a detriment to some of our foreign trade.'

He is rather optimistic here! But never mind; at the time this judgement was appropriate.

'But Japan is far from us,'— she will draw nearer in the future! — 'and we know very well that she is too poor, and will long be too poor, to carry on a long-continued war. At the most, Japan can only annoy us. That European states should, singly or combined, crush us, is a contingency too remote to fall within our horizon. As much of an army and as much of a fleet as we think necessary to our purposes we freely call into being, nor does it occur to us to ask the permission of any other power before increasing either. Why should Mr. Carnegie fill his house with bread, as a provision against a possible famine in the State of New York? Why should Mr. Rockefeller store gold and silver coins in a stocking and hide them in his mattress? The occupant of a Nebraska farm who should build a sea-worthy boat, in order to be ready for all emergencies, we should regard as out of his mind. We Americans do what seems to us prudent and practical under the conditions which prevail in America, and we have no more need for the German army than has a Philadelphia Quaker, at his Yearly Meeting, for a revolver. What we think we really need, however, we set about with much energy to obtain.

But suppose that our territory were not too large to be invaded. Suppose that to the north of us, we had a great land with a vast population of more than one hundred millions, under an autocratic government, boasting, even in time of peace, an immense army. Suppose that this land had for many decades shown a restless activity in extending its borders at the expense of its neighbors, where it had found them too weak to resist aggression. Suppose that its population was upon a plane of civilization far less advanced than our own; so little advanced, indeed, that the overwhelming majority were compelled to live in what civilized men must regard as a condition of distressing misery, ignorant, dumb, passive, a tool in the hands of a bureaucratic class which would not be the first to suffer from the added miseries entailed by a state of war. Suppose that we had information that this neighbor of ours had for some time been massing its troops upon its borders in a way that could only be interpreted as a menace.

Again, let us suppose that we had to the south of us, not Mexico, but a rich, resourceful, and highly civilized nation of forty million inhabitants, with a large army, formidable, well-drilled, and well equipped with all that is necessary to carry on successfully modern warfare. Suppose that this nation had for forty years made no secret of the fact that it was animated by a bitter sentiment of resentment against us, and hoped some day to have its revenge. Suppose that it stood in relations with the power above described, and also with a third power to be mentioned below, such that we had reason to fear that they might act in concert to our detriment.

Now let us extend our suppositions, too, over the case of this third power. Suppose that we did not have the broad sea upon our borders to east and west, with the trade routes of the world open to us, but that there existed a third power so fortunately situated as to be inaccessible by land and yet in direct control of our only available outlets to the sea. Suppose that our foreign commerce was far more important to our prosperity than it actually is; that our prosperity was in large measure based upon our export trade. Suppose that the third power in question was rich enough to maintain a navy equal to our own combined with that of any other great power with which we might contract an alliance, and openly avowed its

intention to retain control of the sea by maintaining this proportion. Suppose that its control of the sea even made it possible for this power to cut international cables, and only let through to the world so much regarding what we did or what others did to us as seemed to it in accordance with its policy. Suppose that this power had an "understanding" with the two described above, and we had, reason to fear that it might join them should they attack us.

How could we Americans accept such a situation? I know my Americans. I have lived through the Spanish war, and have seen a University emptied of professors and students eager to fight under the flag of their country. Yet the Spanish war was, to America, a very small and unimportant affair. Spain could no more crush the United States and reduce our country to virtual subjection than it could stay the moon in its revolutions. Were our land really in danger, or did we believe our land to be in danger, what would happen in the United States? Would we be peaceable and patient, anxious to make concessions, willing to give up territory, eager to limit, under compulsion, our army and navy? Would we humbly declare our readiness to step out of the race for industrial success, or to ask permission of another power for access to the trade routes of the world? I know my Americans, and such questions strike me as broadly humorous.

In this paper I have no other aim than to set the American in the place of the German. Whether it is or is not desirable that Germany or Austria, or parts of them, should be reduced to the condition of Finland or Poland; whether France should be allowed to take Alsace and Lorraine; whether England should be freed from a business rival so intelligent and industrious as to be formidable in time of peace, and should be left in control of the sea routes to America, Asia, Africa and Oceanica; — with all this I am in no way concerned. I wish only to make clear that, under like circumstances, Americans would do what the Germans have done. The Germans have, not without reason, feared Russian and French aggression, and have made preparations for many years to forestall it. German science and industry have led to an enormous expansion in German trade, and the Germans have not been willing to trust their trade to the mercies of Great Britain. Under this regime

Germany has prospered exceedingly. Militarism, which the German regards as only a somewhat offensive name for his necessary preparation to repel very real dangers, a legitimate measure of self-defence, has not hampered Germany a tithe as much as she was hampered in the past, when she was not in a position to defend herself. Militarism is undoubtedly a burden, but it has not prevented Germany from cultivating successfully the sciences and arts, to the great benefit of humanity; from initiating and carrying out social reforms which insure to all classes of her population an unusual measure of well-being; from developing her internal resources and building up her foreign commerce in a way that has made her a rich nation. Militarism may be a crushing burden, abstractly considered, but it has not crushed Germany, and, to the German, that is a consideration which deserves to be weighed.

We are all influenced by the constant repetition of a catchword. Americans have heard so much of German militarism, largely from certain foreign sources, that it would be surprising if some of them were not deluded into believing that Germany is the only European nation with a large army. Yet Russia has a larger army, and has for years been using it for aggression. France, with a much smaller population than Germany, has an army of approximately the same size, and, hence, may, with much greater justice than Germany, be accused of militarism.

And Great Britain has the exact equivalent of an immense army — she has a colossal fleet, which she keeps up at an enormous expense to herself, and which she increases from time to time, with the avowed purpose of allowing no nation to dispute with her the control of the sea, that great common highway of the world, over which all may pass, but which no nation may possess. How formidable this equivalent for a great army may be to other nations has been made clear in the present crisis. There is no nation in Europe that can, without asking England's permission, sail into the Atlantic, pass the Straits of Gibraltar, make use of the Mediterranean, or reach Asia by way of the Suez Canal. The public highway has by a single nation been fenced in and made private property.

It is a pity that the word "Navalism" is not good English, for that which it exactly describes has been peculiarly English for a century. "Navalism" can be a more serious menace than militarism, for the latter threatens chiefly one's more immediate neighbors. "Navalism" holds a threat over every nation on the face of the globe.

I repeat that, in this paper, I am not urging that it would be a good thing for the world for any one nation rather than another to emerge from this great contest victorious. One's opinions upon such matters are not dictated wholly by pure reason.'

This man speaks very good sense!

'I wish only to make the real issue clear, and to avoid the fallacy of catchwords and phrases. I make no reference to the neutrality of Belgium, nor do I think it worthwhile to touch upon the question who first formally declared war on this side or on that. In the light of what the world now knows, these have become wholly trivial matters. The explanation of the attitude of the German people is to be sought at a much deeper level. And I maintain without hesitation that we Americans, under the same circumstances, would have done just what the Germans have done. Would it have been right? Would it have been wrong? I leave it to Americans to decide.

Some Americans — not many — are by their nature inclined to the acceptance of the status quo, that somewhat ambiguous expression so often found in the mouth of the man who thinks it to his purpose to urge the continued existence of a state of things which long has been or which has recently come to be. Had Austria accepted the status quo, she would not have resented the revolutionary activities of the Servians within her borders; she would not have resented the murder of her Crown Prince; she would not have opposed resistance to Russia. Had Germany accepted the status quo, she would not have prepared for defence, have reacted to Russian mobilization on her frontier, or have endeavored to prevent the

dismemberment of Austria-Hungary. She would have offered her cheek to the French; she would have left Britain to rule the waves according to her pleasure, and in accordance with an old tradition. What would have happened to Austria and to Germany had the status quo been thus respected? It would undoubtedly have been something very disagreeable to Germans. On this point they are all agreed, and it is this that has led Prince and Peasant, Catholic and Protestant, Conservative and Social-Democrat, to drop all other causes and to go wholeheartedly to war.

Shall we urge upon Germany, rather than upon other nations, the acceptance of the status quo and a tender regard for the "balance of power"? As for the "balance of power", any nation that is intelligent and industrious, and that, preserving the peace for nearly half a century, is enabled to develop its industries and become thereby rich and powerful, unavoidably disturbs it. Nations less civilized, or less industrious, or more quarrelsome, are put at a disadvantage. As for the status quo, has it been accepted by Servia, by Russia, by France, by England, by Japan? And what, on the whole, has been the attitude of the American towards it?

Did we accept the status quo when we dispossessed the Indians? Did we bow down before the principle when we published our Declaration of Independence in 1776? Did we show our respect for it when we rebelled against the search of American ships and the impressment of American seamen by Great Britain in the years preceding 1812? Did we think of the status quo in 1861, when we refused to recognize the Confederacy, and insisted upon the integrity of the Union? Did we treat it with deference at the time of our war with Spain?

The status quo is a catch-word. The balance of power is something which, in the normal course of human events, is always being upset and set up again upon a new basis. We Americans are not, I think, a quarrelsome people, but we have long ago recognized that the times change and that we change with them. To new conditions we make new adjustments, and we guard jealously enough what we consider our legitimate interests, whether they be new or old. Were it necessary, we should not hesitate to guard them by a

prompt display of force. And among our legitimate interests we should certainly place in the front rank our national self-defence and the enjoyment of such advantages as we have, by intelligence and industry, and in the pursuit of the arts of peace, obtained.

We are neutrals, but we have a right to know the truth even about Central Europe. It is not right that we should be kept in ignorance, or led, through misrepresentations, to condemn in haste nations with which we stand in friendly relations. When we see a great nation of some seventy millions, a nation highly civilized, wealthy and cultivated, a nation well aware that it can prosper as few others, if it be allowed to exercise its industries in peace — when we see such a nation go to war against powerful odds, risking its very existence in the struggle, we must be shallow, indeed, if we suppose that its whole population, a naturally peaceable and orderly population, has either gone mad or lapsed into barbarism. We must stand before an unsolved problem until we attain to information and comprehension.

Let the American forget the conditions under which he himself lives. Let him think himself into the situation of the German. Then let him ask himself what, under the circumstances, he would do.'

These are the words of one who had the will to see things as they really are, and not to listen to what is said in the newspapers and journals of the periphery. Are these the only people who spoke like this? Such people are equipped with a genuine sense for the truth. This is how they spoke.

Yesterday — this is very relevant — I had a look at the *Basler Nachrichten*. It quoted some words which were actually spoken. It is a good thing that they have been quoted. They were spoken in 1908 by an Englishman in front of other Englishmen in order to point out that Germany had every reason to adopt a militaristic attitude, and that it would have been unwise for Germany not to have adopted this 'militarism', which has since become a slogan to be slandered. The words this Englishman spoke to other Englishmen were:

'Look at the position of Germany ... Suppose we had here a possible combination (of enemies) which would lay us open to invasion, suppose Germany, and France, or Germany and Russia, or Germany and Austria, had fleets which, in combination, would be stronger than ours, would we not be frightened? Would we not arm? Of course we should!'

Lloyd George spoke these words in 1908 with as much conviction as he now thunders his tirades into the world! These words were spoken by Lloyd George in 1908!

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Lecture 14

The Karma of Untruthfulness

1 January 1917, Dornach

What was said yesterday about so-called poisonous substances indicated strongly how all the impulses of life are graded in relation to one another. For instance, some substance is said to be poisonous, and yet the higher nature of the human being is intimately related to this poison; indeed, the higher nature of man cannot exist without the effects of poisons. We are touching here on a most important area of knowledge, one with many ramifications and without which it is impossible to understand a good many secrets of life and existence.

Looking at the human physical body, we have to admit that if it were not filled with those higher components of existence, the etheric body, the astral body and the ego, it could not be the physical body as we know it. The moment man steps through the portal of death, leaving behind his physical body — that is, the moment the higher components withdraw from the physical body — it begins to obey laws other than those which governed it while those components were present there. The physical body disintegrates; after death it obeys the physical and chemical forces and laws of the earth.

The physical body of man as we know it cannot be constructed in accordance with earthly laws, for it is these very laws which destroy it. The body can only be what it is because there work within it those parts of man that are not of the earth: his higher components of soul and spirit. There is nothing in the whole realm of physical and chemical laws which could justify the presence of such a thing as the human physical body on the earth.

Measured by the physical laws of the earth, the human body is an impossible creation. It is prevented from disintegrating by the higher components of man's being. It follows, therefore, that the moment these higher components — the ego, the astral body and the etheric body — desert the human body, it becomes a corpse.

You know from many earlier lectures that the diagram of the human being we have often given is quite correct as such, but that in reality it is not as simple as some would like. To begin with, we divide the human being into physical body, etheric body, astral body and ego. I have pointed out on other occasions that this in itself implies a further complication. The physical body, of course, is what it is — the physical body. But the etheric body, as such, is something super-sensible, invisible, something that cannot be perceived by the senses. It lives in the human being as something that cannot be perceived by the senses. But it has, in a sense, its physical counterpart because it imprints itself on the physical body. The physical body contains not only the physical body itself, but also an imprint of the etheric body. The etheric body projects itself onto the physical body; so we can speak of an etheric projection onto the physical body.

It is the same in the case of the astral body. We can speak of the astral projection onto the physical body. You know some of the details already. You know that the ego projection onto the physical body may be sought in certain features of the blood circulation, where the ego projects itself onto the blood. In a similar way the other higher components project themselves onto the physical body. So the physical body in its physical aspect is in itself a complicated system, for it is fourfold. And just as the most important aspect cannot exist in the physical body if the ego and the astral body are not in it — for it then becomes a corpse — so is it also in the case of these projections, for they are all present in the physical substance. Without the ego there can be no human blood, without the astral body there can be no human nervous system as a whole. These things exist in us as a counterpart of man's higher components.

When the ego has been, shall we say, 'lifted out' of the physical body, when it has passed through the portal of death, the physical body has no real life any longer, but becomes a corpse. In a similar way, under certain conditions, these projections cannot live in a proper way either.

			Ego
		Astral Body	
	Etheric Body		
Physical Body	<i>etheric</i>	<i>astral</i>	<i>ego</i>

	<i>projections onto the physical body</i>
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For instance the ego projection — that is, a certain quality of the blood — cannot be present in a proper way in the human organism if the ego is not properly fostered. To turn the physical body into a corpse it is, of course, necessary for the ego to depart entirely from the physical body. But the blood can go a quarter of the way towards becoming a corpse if you prevent it from being permeated with what ought to live in the ego, so that it can work in the right manner of soul and spirit on the blood. You will gather from this that it is possible to bring disorder into man's soul in such a way that the right influences cannot be brought to bear on the blood nature, the blood substance. That is then the point when the blood can change into a poisonous substance — not entirely, for in that case the person would die, but in part. The human physical body is abandoned to destruction if the ego departs from it, and in a similar way the blood is brought into a state of ill health — even if this is not necessarily noticeable — if the ego is not fostered and interwoven with the right care.

So when is the ego not fostered and interwoven with the right care? This is the case under certain quite definite circumstances. Let us look for the moment at the post-Atlantean period. We see that as human evolution proceeds, certain definite capacities, certain definite impulses are developed in each succeeding cultural epoch. It is impossible to imagine people living in the ancient Indian period having a condition of soul development similar to ours. From epoch to epoch, as human beings pass through succeeding incarnations on earth, different impulses are needed for the human soul.



Let me draw you a diagram. Imagine this to be the main, the actual physical body, the one that has to be filled with all the higher components of human nature in order to be a physical body at all.

Of all these higher components, I shall deal solely with the ego, though I could deal with all three. The shading here indicates that the physical body is permeated by the ego. So, in a certain way, the other projections also have to be permeated. Here let me indicate the projection of the etheric body, which is for the most part anchored in the human being's glandular system; for this, too, has to be permeated and interwoven. Thirdly, let me indicate what is anchored chiefly in the nervous system. This, again, in a certain way, must be interwoven with the workings of the ego. And the ego body itself — this, too, has to be interwoven in the proper way.

As I said just now, as man passes through succeeding periods of evolution he has to step into different developmental impulses with each period. He has to absorb whatever the contemporary age requires him to take in. In the first post-Atlantean period, ancient India, impulses of soul and spirit had to be absorbed which enabled the etheric body to be developed; in the next period, ancient Persia, the astral body was developed; in the period of Egypt and Chaldea it was the turn of the sentient soul; in the Greco-Latin period, the intellectual or mind soul; and today, the consciousness soul.

Whether the human being absorbs in the right way whatever is suitable for the age in which he is living will depend on whether he has properly entered into all these bodily principles — just as the physical body is permeated by the higher components of his being — so that they absorb what the age requires. Suppose an individual during the fifth post-Atlantean period were to resist absorbing anything of what ought to be absorbed during this period; suppose he were to reject everything which could cultivate his soul in the manner required by the fifth post-Atlantean period. What would be the consequence?

His bodily nature cannot revert to an earlier state if he belongs to that part of mankind which is called upon at present to absorb the impulses of the fifth post-Atlantean period. Not everyone is called upon at the same time, but at present all the white races are called upon to absorb the culture of the fifth post-Atlantean period. Now suppose an individual were to resist this. A certain member of his bodily nature — above all, the blood — would remain void of all that could be taken in, were he not to put up this resistance. This member of his bodily nature would then lack what ought to permeate its substance and its forces. This substance and the forces living in it — though not to a degree comparable to bodily death brought about by the departure of the ego — would then become sick in its life forces, which become degraded so that man bears them as a poison within him. Thus to remain behind in evolution means that man impregnates his being with a kind of formative phantom which is poisonous. On the other hand, if he were to absorb what his cultural impulses require him to absorb, the state of his soul would be such that he could dissolve this poisonous phantom he bears within him. By failing to do so, he allows this phantom to coagulate and become a part of his body.

This is the source of all the sicknesses of civilization, the cultural decadence, all the emptiness of soul, the states of hypochondria, the eccentricities, the dissatisfactions, the crankinesses and so on, and also of all those instincts which attack culture, which are aggressive and antagonistic towards cultural impulses. Either the individual accepts the culture of his age, and fits in with it, or he develops the corresponding poison which deposits itself within him and can only be dissolved if he does accept the culture. But if the poison is allowed to become deposited, it leads to the development of instincts which are opposed to the culture of the age. The working of a poison is also always an aggressive instinct. In the languages of Central Europe this can be felt quite clearly: many dialects do not say that a person is angry but that he is poisonous. This expresses a deep sense for something that is indeed the case. Someone

who is irascible is described in Austria, for instance, as '*gachgiftig*' which means that he is quick to grow poisonous, quick to anger. Human beings acquire poison, sometimes in a very concentrated form, if they refuse to accept what could dissolve such poison. Nowadays, untold people refuse to accept spiritual life in the form fitting for today, which we have been endeavouring to describe for such a long time, more recently even in public.

In such people, the lotus flower here [on the forehead] reveals very clearly what occurs in these cases, for the effects reach right into the realm of warmth, and such people leap up like flames against anything in the world around them which happens to reveal something that could bring healing to our times. Certainly, Mephistopheles — that is, the devil — is abroad amongst us; but the development of even a small beginning — tiny flames stirring — starts when we refuse to accept something that is fitting for our time, so that we do not dissolve the poison but make it into a partial corpse and allow it to coagulate in our organism as a phantom of formative forces.

If you think this through properly, you will discover the cause of many dissatisfactions in life. For those who bear such a poisonous phantom within them are unhappy indeed. We would call these people nervous, or neurasthenic; but it can also make them cruel, quarrelsome, monists, materialists, for these characteristics are the result, more often than we might think, of physiological causes brought about by the poison being deposited in the human organism instead of being assimilated.

You will see from all this that there belongs to the overall balance of the world in which we are embedded a kind of unstable equilibrium between what is good and right on the one hand, and its opposite, the effects of poisons, on the other. If it is to be possible for what is good and right to come about, then it must also be possible to err from what is right, for poisons to have their effect.

If we now apply this to the wider situation, we see that it must be possible today for people to attain to some degree of spiritual life, to develop within themselves impulses for a free, inner spiritual life. To make it possible for the individual to attain to a life of the spirit, the opposite must also exist, namely a corresponding possibility to err along the path of grey or black magic. Without the one, the other is not possible. Just as you, as a human being, cannot maintain yourself without the firm foundation of the earth beneath your feet, so it is not possible for the

illumination of spiritual life to be pursued without the resistance which must be permitted to exist and which is inevitable for the higher realms of life.

We have already mentioned the highly contradictory and yet no less important fact that the question: To whom do we owe the Mystery of Golgotha? could elicit the reply: To Judas. For it could be argued that if Judas had not betrayed Christ Jesus, the Mystery of Golgotha would not have taken place, so therefore we ought to be grateful to Judas, since Christianity — that is, the Mystery of Golgotha — stems from him. However, to be grateful to Judas and perhaps recognize him as the founder of Christianity is going too far! Wherever we strive to enter higher realms we have to reckon with living, not dead truth, and the living truth bears within it its own counter-image, just as in physical existence life bears death within it.

This is something I wanted to place in your soul today, for on this basis much can be understood. There has to exist the possibility for what is spiritual, but also for the deposition of the poison which is its polar opposite. And if it can be deposited then it can also be used — it can be utilized in every realm.

Many questions could be asked about this, but today we shall deal with only one: How can we find our way through the maze? Is there not a very great danger that anything we approach in the world might contain the polar opposite, namely the poison, or at least that somebody or other might seek to make something poisonous out of it? Of course there is always this possibility. Everything that is potentially very good can also be perverted and become the opposite. This must be the case in order that human evolution can take its course in freedom in accordance with the present cultural age. Indeed, the very best evolutionary impulses in our age are those most likely to be turned into their opposite.

This is valid for social life as well as for the human organism. In lectures given here last year, we saw that in the present age, to start with only germinally, the capacity is beginning to develop which will enable us to create a life of Imaginations — to develop thoughts which rise up freely — though so far this possibility is denied by materialists. However, it lies in the very nature of our present age that a life of Imagination must develop little by little. What is the counter-image of a life of Imagination? The counter-image of Imaginative life is fabrication, the creation of fabrications about reality and a corresponding thoughtlessness in alleging this or that. I

have often described it in these lectures as an inattentiveness to truth, to what is actual and real. The most wonderful thing with which mankind is presented in the fifth post-Atlantean period is the gradual ascent from mere one-sided intellectual life into Imaginative life, which is the first step into the spiritual world. This can err and become untruthfulness, the fabrication of untruths in relation to reality. I am not, of course, referring to poetry, which is entirely justified, but to fabrication with regard to what is real.

Another element which must come into being during the present age — we have discussed this here, too — is a form of thinking that is particularly conscientious and aware of its responsibility. When you see what anthroposophical spiritual science has to offer, you cannot but admit that, to understand what is said, sharply delineated thoughts are needed, thoughts which are imbued with the will to pursue reality in an objective way. Clear thinking is certainly necessary if our teachings — if I may call them that — are to be understood. Above all, what is needed are not fleeting thoughts, but a certain quietness of thought. We must work towards achieving this kind of thinking. We must strive unremittingly to force ourselves to think thoughts with clear contours and not wallow in sympathies and antipathies when alleging something to ourselves and others. We must seek for the foundation, the basis, of what we maintain — otherwise we shall never penetrate in the right way into the realm of spiritual science. We must demand this of ourselves. We shall fulfil our task if we demand this of ourselves. If we are asked what we can do in these difficult times, our answer must be based on what I have just said. We must be fully aware of the fact that at the present time every human being who longs for the evolution of the earth to proceed in a healthy way must seek conscientiously and honestly for objectivity of thinking, in the manner described. This is the task of the human soul today.

It is just because this is so that the corresponding poison can develop, which is a state of being utterly devoid of clarity of thought, devoid of thought that unites with reality and fabricates nothing, but seeks to depict solely what is. During the course of the nineteenth century the yearning for objectivity deserted us increasingly. And the absence of conscience in what we have been describing here as the truth has reached a certain climax in the twentieth century in comparison to all that went before. The effect is at its worst when people entirely fail to notice it; yet, in this very aspect, it is characteristic of our time.

Let me give you a few examples to show you what I mean. Let me place these examples before you sine ira — without sympathies or antipathies. Here is a man whom I know very well, someone who could be called a truly kind and nice person. He holds a position in public life and would certainly not allow himself to stray, even minutely, from the upright attitudes expected of those in public positions. Yet a short time ago this man found it possible to say something quite typical. At the end of an essay he wrote: 'Finally we cannot avoid at least a brief discussion of ...' [Gap in report]

It is understandable that such things should be said today, and I have quoted it precisely because the person who said it was such a serious man with truly upright attitudes. Yet when you look more closely, you discover that it is as utterly dishonest as anything can possibly be; for how can you say anything more dishonest than: 'I shall join in singing "Now thank we all our God" and "A safe stronghold our God is still" ' and so on, in a mood that makes these hymns into prayers, if you hold opinions such as those expressed by this man. Frankly, he is eulogizing untruthfulness. You may find such eulogies to untruthfulness wherever you look these days, yet they are given, I am bound to say, in good faith. They are the poison that corresponds to what must develop as a spiritual life of Imagination. The best among us, especially, are prone, more or less unconsciously, to harbouring the effects of this poison. Of course, once you realize that something of this kind pulsating through society is no different from a drop of poison administered to the human organism, then you are in a position to judge all these things correctly. And once you do realize it, you cannot but feel bound to strive for something in life which I have now described a number of times. You will feel bound to be alert to the facts, you will want your observation of life to be sound, for without this there is no way forward today. The karma that is being fulfilled at the moment, the karma about which I have spoken before, is not the karma of a single nation; it is the karma of the whole of European and American humanity in the nineteenth century; it is the karma of untruthfulness, the insidious poison of untruthfulness.

This untruthfulness may be experienced particularly strongly in movements of a more elevated variety. During the course of my life I have come across a great deal of untruthfulness, but I must say I have never met lies as grandiose as those promulgated among certain people who proclaim the principle: There is no religion higher than Truth. I could say that such intense mendacity is only found where there is at the same time a profound consciousness of striving for only the truth and nothing but the

truth! The greatest watchfulness is needed when striving for the ultimate. For we must realize that, while in earlier cultural epochs the possibilities of erring were different, today the greatest danger is an aberration into untruthfulness brought about by a failure to take reality into account in a living way — a failure to take reality into account! The man I mentioned, who wrote such lies, would rather have his tongue cut out than consciously speak an untruth. Yet it is through such upright people that these things work, seeping into the social organism and turning into social poison. Obviously, since they must needs exist amongst us, they can also err in the opposite direction. Other human beings can take them into their awareness and use them for all kinds of mischief — to put it mildly.

Some of you might remember how strange it seemed to people when I first made some fairly radical statements about these things a few years ago, in a public lecture in Munich. I said at that time: During the course of human evolution, impulses for both good and evil develop on the physical plane. What causes these impulses to develop? They come into being when certain forces, which actually belong to the higher, spiritual world, are misused down here in the physical world. If thieves were to use their thieving instincts, and murderers their murderous instincts, and liars their lying instincts to develop higher forces, instead of enjoying them here on the physical plane, they would develop quite considerable higher forces. Their mistake is only that they develop their powers on the wrong plane. Evil, I said, is good that has been transposed down from another plane. Of course, if we know this it does not make a thief or a murderer or a liar any better. But we must understand these things, otherwise we cannot fathom what is going on, falling unconscious victim to these dangers.

It is not surprising that many people today simply do not realize that it is becoming mankind's task to be concerned with spiritual matters. Therefore they fail to take up this task, abandoning themselves instead to materialistic instincts. In doing so, they develop within themselves those poisons which ought to be dissolved by the spiritual element. What is the consequence? In those who deny the spirit, the poisons develop into forces which cause them to become veritable liars; whether conscious or unconscious is merely a question of degree. Yet these very forces could be used to achieve a reasonable comprehension of spiritual knowledge.

Consider how important it is for us to understand this and how, in understanding it, we can come to comprehend one of the central aspects of the karma of our time, if we add to it what I said yesterday: that a single instance cannot be detached from mankind as a whole, for mankind

is a totality. As a counter-image of spiritual endeavour it is essential for a violent evil to exist. And one of man's tasks today is to recognize the true nature of this evil, in order to be able properly to recognize and oppose it when he comes upon it in life.

In speaking about these things we come to realize the relationship between the greater aspects of the karma of our time and something that is living in our time which is everywhere in the world bringing about very, very much that is terrible. Superficially, we see how falsehood throbs through the world in mighty waves which devour much more than one might think. For falsehood is monstrously vigorous. But as we have seen today, falsehood is nothing other than the corresponding counter-image for spiritual endeavour which ought to exist but does not. The divine, spiritual wisdom of the universe has given to the human being the possibility of spiritual endeavour. We have within us the poison which we can dissolve. Indeed, we must dissolve it, for otherwise it will become a kind of partial corpse within us.

Let me give you examples of such things from daily life. These will at the same time serve the pursuit of our aim to better understand certain things which meet us at every turn today and which are connected with life and with all the evil and suffering of the present time. For one of the things we are striving for in these talks, in so far as we have been permitted to give them, is an understanding of the painful events of today. I bring these things forward in order to show you in a structured way how these impulses work. The examples I give are intended to characterize the facts, not any particular person or persons.

Hanging around here in Switzerland is a man who many years ago was a lawyer in Berlin, a pettifogger who was forced to seek his fortune abroad because of all the mischief he had concocted. He has been hanging around abroad for years, and now that war has broken out has written a book, *J'accuse*, which has caused a furore throughout the countries of the periphery. This whole *J'accuse* affair can be said to be one of the saddest symptoms of our time, because it is so very characteristic. *J'accuse* is a fat book, and certain people who ought to know maintain that there is not a log cabin in distant Norway that does not house a copy. It is, in other words, one of the most widely disseminated books. In Berlin last spring I read an article about it written by quite a well-known person. He says *J'accuse* was recommended to him by someone whom he greatly admires. From the way he describes his friend, we gather who he must mean, namely, someone who counts for a good deal in Holland. Yet this person

was quite unable to assess even the gutter-press style of the book. It is possible to be thought a great man and yet be incompetent to form a judgement in such matters.

Now quite recently the author — known, and yet unknown — of *J'accuse* has gone into print once more in *L'Humanité* with the following thoughts. As I have said, I am not concerned with the person himself, but want to characterize something that is typical of our time:

In the Reichstag in Berlin a social democrat gives a speech in which he unfolds his views about various happenings in the period leading up to the outbreak of war. It does not matter whether we agree with him or not; what I am concerned with is the form such things take. In his speech, this member of the Reichstag refers to a remark made by Sir Edward Grey on 30 July 1914 to the effect that if the Austrians would content themselves with marching as far as Belgrade, occupying the city and awaiting the outcome of a possible European congress on the relationship between Austria and Serbia, then it might still be possible to preserve peace. This remark by Sir Edward Grey is well-documented, for he made it to the German ambassador and also wrote it to the English ambassador in St Petersburg. The matter is so well-documented that there can be no doubt that Sir Edward Grey did make this remark. Nevertheless, by bringing it up again in the Reichstag, this member has aroused the anger of the author of *J'accuse*. So what does the author of *J'accuse* do? He writes an utterly slanderous article in *L'Humanité* in which he accuses the member of the Reichstag of mendaciousness, false citation, and so on. Yet the matter is very well-documented, and the member of the Reichstag did not say anything which is not vouched for in books, or in the letter sent by Sir Edward Grey to the English ambassador in St Petersburg. So how can the author of *J'accuse* make the claim of mendaciousness? He did it by saying: What the member of the Reichstag was saying cannot refer to a remark made by Sir Edward Grey on 30 July; it must refer to one made by Sasonov on 31 December. But Sasonov's remark, not Grey's, was as I shall now quote. In other words, the member of the Reichstag quoted Sasonov wrongly, for Sasonov's remark went as follows, and in addition he claims that Sasonov's remark was made by Sir Edward Grey.

The fact is that the member of the Reichstag refers to a remark by Grey. The author of *J'accuse* wants to counter him and says: What he is saying refers not to a remark by Grey but to one by Sasonov, which he misquotes; Sasonov said the following ...; in other words what he said in the Reichstag

in Berlin is doubly false, for firstly the quotation is false, and secondly he claims that the remark was made in London, when in fact it was made in St Petersburg. Ergo, the member of the Reichstag is a liar.

The whole of *J'accuse* is of this calibre; all the argumentation is like this. You see how narrow, how confused and how unscrupulous must be the thinking of a person who is capable of writing such things. And what does he achieve? The countless people who read *L'Humanité* and what the author — known, and yet unknown — of *J'accuse* has to say, will, of course, not check the facts for themselves. They believe what they see before their eyes. So by this means he proves not only that the member of the Reichstag has lied, but also — and the author of *J'accuse* is indeed capable of allowing this to be seen as proof — that the Central Powers never replied to the proposals made by the periphery. The author of *J'accuse* states that the member of the Reichstag is saying that the Central Powers did react to the proposals made by the periphery. And yet, he says, look what Sasonov said, for it is Sasonov whom he is quoting! The Central Powers never replied, so you see how they managed the affair; they did not even reply to these important proposals.

Now what the member of the Reichstag said did indeed refer to a proposal made by Grey and telegraphed by him to his ambassador, who then passed it on to Sasonov. Sasonov turned Grey's whole proposal, which was not at all bad, upside down. The author of *J'accuse* demands that this proposal, turned into its opposite by Sasonov, should have been taken into account, even though Sasonov did not take it into account. However, it can be proved that Grey sent a telegram to his ambassador in St Petersburg and that this was presented to Sasonov, who took no account of it. At the same time Grey sent his proposal to Berlin and from Berlin it was sent on to Vienna. It can indeed be proved that negotiations were carried on between Vienna and Berlin in order to persuade Austria to make a halt in Belgrade and await European negotiations. This is documented in a letter telegraphed by the King of England to Prince Heinrich. In other words, the Central Powers did indeed consider Grey's proposals. But Sasonov did not consider them! Even so, the author of *J'accuse* concludes that the Central Powers did not reply and have thus made themselves guilty of these terrible events.

This whole matter is not insignificant, for in yesterday's lamentable document the same sentence may be seen. Here we have an extraordinary — let me say — kinship, family relationship, between a terrible document of world history and an individual who has been hanging around for years

because his own homeland became too hot to hold him and who now writes all kinds of rubbish under the bombastic title *J'accuse. By a German* — rubbish that is protected by such further excesses as the latest achievement of *L'Humanité*.

It is not surprising if people then defend themselves in the way the German member of the Reichstag has done, having been accused by the author of *J'accuse* of being a slanderer, a hypocrite and a liar. He drew the following comparison: You send your maid on an errand to Mr Miller at Number 35, Long Lane. When she returns after having taken much longer than the expected two hours she says: I couldn't find Mr Miller. I went to No 85, Short Street. Mr Miller the carpenter doesn't live there, but Mrs Smith the washerwoman does. This, said the member of the Reichstag, is just about the level of connection between what the author of *J'accuse* says and what really happened.

The author of *J'accuse* is, of course, a particularly nasty example. It is this manner of treating reality which is today the obverse, the corresponding counter-image of spiritual endeavour, flowing as it does through the veins of society in place of what we should all be striving for: spiritual knowledge, spiritual knowledge with which to fill our being. We can find such things everywhere, in manifold variations. I have given you just one example — dishonesty, as it appears in an individual whom I know very well. Everywhere we shall see how such things appear as the counter-image of what is necessary in our time. Spiritual knowing is necessary for those who want to recognize anything worthwhile today; all other knowing lags behind what should be evolving. Therefore, if an attitude of mind disposed towards peace is to come about among the nations of Europe, feelings about these nations will have to develop which are imbued with the spirit, feelings which can come into being if nations are seen in the way they are shown in the lecture cycle about the folk spirits which I gave long before the war in Christiania. We must resolve to approach the spirit of a nation in this way. Only then can our human spirit become active in a manner which will enable us to form a valid judgement which encompasses a whole group, such as a nation. Just think how judgements could be formed about nations if sufficient spiritual preparation had been undertaken first of all! Yet all that we have seen going astray so drastically in one direction or another lives not only in the worst; it also lives in the best of us. In describing this it is not my intention to apportion blame. I am simply describing a lack which exists because there is no will to create the

spiritual foundation on which judgements could be formed about the interrelationships of nations. Judgements are formed on the basis of sympathies and antipathies rather than true insights.

A typical example of this may be found in a famous novel written quite recently. A perfectly honest attempt is made in this context to describe a certain nation — in this case the German nation — through the various characters who represent it. Yet the way it is done is defective because a lack of spirituality prevents the author from achieving a judgement based on reality. There would be no reason for me to mention a genuine novel here, for in a true work of art such a question would not arise. But a novel that is tendentious in its descriptions can certainly be quoted in this connection. Let me clarify further what I mean: In a really good novel you will never hear the voice of the author himself, for the characters will express what is typical for their nation, their standing, their class and so on. Thus if John Smith or Adrian Swallowtail says something about the Germans, or the French, or the English, there is no cause to object. But this is not the case in the novel in question. Here, the author keeps stepping out in front of the curtain and giving his opinion, so that when he describes a person he gives his own opinion about the Germans, or whatever. You can see this straightaway in the description of a relative of the hero:

'He was a fine talker, well, though a little heavily, built, and was of the type which passes in Germany for classic beauty; he had a large brow that expressed nothing, large regular features, and a curled beard — a Jupiter of the banks of the Rhine.'

You will agree that this is not likely to lead to an objective judgement, even if it could be true in isolated cases. A German chamber orchestra is described as follows:

'They played neither very accurately nor in good time, but they never went off the rails, and followed faithfully the marked changes of tone. They had that musical facility which

is easily satisfied, that mediocre perfection which is so plentiful in the race which is said to be the most musical in the world.'

Now the hero's uncle is described:

'He was a partner in a great commercial house which did business in Africa and the Far East. He was the exact type of one of those Germans of the new style, whose affectation it is scoffingly to repudiate the old idealism of the race, and, intoxicated by conquest, to maintain a cult of strength and success which shows that they are not accustomed to seeing them on their side. But it is as difficult at once to change the age-old nature of a people, the despised idealism springs up again in him at every turn in language, manners, and moral habits, and the quotations from Goethe to fit the smallest incidents of domestic life, and he was a singular compound of conscience and self-interest. There was in him a curious effort to reconcile the honest principles of the old German bourgeoisie with the cynicism of these new commercial condottieri — a compound which for ever gave out a repulsive flavour of hypocrisy, for ever striving to make of German strength, avarice, and self-interest the symbols of all right, justice and truth.'

Of the hero it is said:

'... he lacked that easy Germanic idealism, which does not wish to see, and does not see, what would be displeasing to its sight, for fear of disturbing the very proper tranquility of its judgment and the pleasantness of its existence.'

Here is another example of the author peeping out through the curtains and giving his own opinion:

'Especially since the German victories they had been striving to make a compromise, a revolting intrigue between their new power and their old principles. The old idealism had not been renounced. There should have been a new effort of freedom of which they were incapable. They were content with a forgery, with making it subservient to German interests. Like the serene and subtle Schwabian, Hegel, who had waited until after Leipzig and Waterloo to assimilate the cause of his philosophy with the Prussian State ...'

This gentleman has a strange view of the history of philosophy. Those of us with a real understanding of what went on know that the principles of Hegel's philosophy on the phenomenology of consciousness were written down in Jena in 1806 to the thundering of canon as Napoleon approached. Yet in the novel it is said with a certain 'sense for the truth' that Hegel waited for the Battle of Leipzig in order to adapt to the Prussian State.

'... their interests having changed, their principles had changed, too. When they were defeated, they said that Germany's ideal was humanity. Now that they had defeated others, they said that Germany was the ideal of humanity.'

What a fine sentence!

'When other countries were more powerful, they said, with Lessing, that "patriotism is a heroic weakness which it is well to be without," and they called themselves "citizens of the world". Now that they were in the ascendant, they could not enough despise the Utopias "à la Française". Universal peace, fraternity, pacific progress, the rights of man, natural equality: they said that the strongest people had absolute rights against the others, and that the others, being weaker, had no rights against themselves.'

As you can see, once the war had started, these sentences could have formed the basis for many a leading article in the countries of the periphery. Yet they were written long before the war.

'It was the living God and the Incarnate Idea, the progress of which is accomplished by war, violence, and oppression. Force had become holy now that it was on their side. Force had become the only idealism and the only intelligence.'

Now there is a sentence missing in my notes. You know it is not easy to bring things across the border just now, and I have the book in Berlin.

Let me quote a few more passages in which the author peeps through the curtains:

'The Germans are very mildly indulgent to physical imperfections: they cannot see them; they are even able to embellish them, by virtue of an easy imagination which finds unexpected qualities in the face of their desire to make them like the most illustrious examples of human beauty. Old Euler would not have needed much urging to make him declare that his granddaughter had the nose of the Ludovisi Juno.'

It should be added that this nose and face are described as being especially ugly.

About Schumann it is said:

'But that was just it: his example made Christopher understand that the worst falsity in German art came into it not when the artists tried to express something which they had not felt, but rather when they tried to express the feelings which they did in fact feel — feelings which were false.'

Then we are reminded with a certain amount of pleasure of something said by Madame de Staël:

' "They have submitted doughtily. They find philosophic reasons for explaining the least philosophic theory in the world: respect for power and the chastening emotion of fear which changes that respect into admiration." '

The author of the novel adds that his hero 'found that feeling', namely that they have submitted doughtily, that they have respect and fear:

'... everywhere in Germany, from the highest to the lowest — from the William Tell of Schiller, that limited little bourgeois with muscles like a porter, who, as the free Jew Borne says, "to reconcile honour and fear passes before the pillar of dear Herr Gessler, with his eyes down, so as to be able to say that he did not see the hat; did not disobey" — to the aged and respectable Professor Weisse, a man of seventy, and one of the most honoured men of learning in the town, who, when he saw a Herr Lieutenant coming, would make haste to give him the path, and would step down into the road. Christopher's blood boiled whenever he saw one of these small acts of daily servility. They hurt him as much as though he had demeaned himself. The arrogant manners of the officers whom he met in the street, their haughty insolence, made him speechless with anger. He never would make way for them. Whenever he passed them he returned their arrogant stare. More than once he was very near causing a scene. He seemed to be looking for trouble. However, he was the first to understand the futility of such bravado; but he had moments of aberration; the perpetual constraint which he imposed on himself, and the accumulation of force in him that had no outlet, made him furious. Then he was ready to go any length, and he had a feeling that if he stayed a year longer in the place he would be lost. He loathed the brutal militarism which he felt weighing down upon him, the sabres clanking on the pavement, the

piles of arms, the guns placed outside the barracks, their muzzles gaping down on the town, ready to fire.'

All this is interesting for a number of reasons. You know that I am not mentioning these things for personal reasons or in order to characterize somebody. Once the novel had been written and had caused a considerable sensation there were, of course, individuals who praised it as the greatest work of art of all time. This always happens. The opinion expressed by an esteemed Austrian critic is rather nice — I mean 'esteemed' in inverted commas: 'This novel is the most important event since 1871, which could bring France and Germany closer together again.'

You see how much truth lies hidden in these things! Yet we are dealing here with a man who is highly praised today, and I have no intention of raising even the slightest objection to his outward activities during wartime. However, what is said in this 'world famous' novel provides plenty of material for slogans and leading articles in the periphery. What I have read aloud to you today may indeed be admired — with all due respect to the hacks of the periphery — at any time in those leading articles. These things were written long before the war, as that Austrian critic said 'to bring France and Germany closer together', and may be found in Romain Rolland's novel *John Christopher*.

Here you have an example of somebody who excludes the spirit, who does not want the spirit, and therefore fails to see what is essential in the events and situations of the present time. What can someone who writes such things possibly really know about the German character? We have a right to speak in this way because the subjective judgements of the author are here dressed up in the guise of an inferior novel. It is my personal opinion that this novel is one of the worst. As you have seen from the opinion of the critic from Vienna, it is held to be one of the best. Internationally, too, the critics have hailed it as one of the best. If we did not hold the opinion — which is not all that unjustified nowadays — that anything the critics praise must of necessity be rubbish, we might even have a certain respect for something they tell us is the foremost and greatest achievement of our time. From the viewpoint of cultural history, however, this is a good example for us of how impossible it is for people today to draw near to the task set for mankind by the fifth post-Atlantean period. For this reason alone, karma will have to fulfil itself. It is our task, however, to think about these things impartially. Above all we should not

accept or parrot without criticism what is said out there in the materialistic world, but should strive instead to form our own judgement about these things.

What I have read aloud to you today was written many years ago, but now it provides marvellous slogans for the leading articles perpetrated by the journalists of the Entente. Its tenor is terribly anti-German, but that is not the point, for any point of view has its validity. It is, however, a strange distortion of the truth to praise a book as something new when it was in fact written years ago, even though the final volumes have only recently been published. Other strange things happen in this way, for instance in connection with quotations which keep appearing and are said to stem from Nietzsche or Treitschke and others. In the case of Treitschke you can search his works in vain for the passages, and in Nietzsche's case the passages have the opposite meaning to that claimed today by the journalists of the Entente.

I used to be acquainted with Nietzsche's publisher and discussed a number of matters with him. At that time the man who translated the whole of Nietzsche into French wrote to that publisher every few days from Paris. Nietzsche was a god to him. Today he abuses him mightily. You can have the strangest experiences in such connections. You will search the works of Treitschke and Nietzsche in vain for anything that could have been said in that book, for when they are quoted the texts are taken out of context, and furthermore they are also mutilated; the beginning of a sentence is quoted, the middle is torn out, and then the end is quoted. Only by doing this can they quote these writers.

But they can quote Romain Rolland unabridged. I have read to you only a few short passages from his novel. There is no need for you to judge it by these passages, though they could be augmented by countless others. You could, however, judge it on the basis of the ending, which shows that the whole novel is riddled with the attitudes revealed in the quoted passages. None of this is intended as a condemnation of the person himself. However, it is essential to illuminate clearly the poison seeping into our lives today.

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Lecture 15

Nationalism, Imperialism, Spiritual Life

6 January 1917, Dornach

In order to arrive at a view of the world fitting for today, we need wider horizons than those available to mankind in this materialistic age. This applies especially in connection with spiritual science, and I have already referred to this necessity repeatedly in the preceding lectures. By wider horizons I mean that to comprehend today's world, and in particular human events, we shall have to have recourse to concepts which originate in spiritual science. The fact that the greater part of humanity has so far rejected such wider conceptual horizons in relation to all fields of life and knowledge is connected with the karma of the present time.

With these wider concepts in the background we can characterize one aspect of our life by saying that, objectively, evolution has outdistanced mankind in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Today's events most thoroughly demonstrate this situation. One of the most prominent events of the age of materialism is material progress, that is, progress involving all the things that can be accomplished in the world by material means. This material progress is served by the sciences of the age of materialism. And it is especially typical of these sciences that they are growing ever less and less interested in the spiritual world; they strive more and more to become a mere summation of concepts and ideas which can be applied to external material phenomena.

The course of this development finds its strongest expression in the most external of all material matters: mechanical procedures. Factories, industry, machines, these things have attained the highest degree of perfection during this age of materialism. And it is in the very nature of these things that progress in these fields has been non-national — you could say, international; it is world progress. For whether a railway or something similar is built in England, Russia, China or Japan, the laws which have to be taken into account, the knowledge needed, are the same everywhere, since everything is accomplished in accordance with mechanical requirements which are detached from man. In these fields an international principle has indeed taken hold in the widest possible manner.

Over the years, during our lectures on spiritual science, we have often said, in connection with one aspect or another, that there is a body on the earth, a body which is spread over the whole earth. This body needs a soul, and this soul should be equally international. Spiritual science was claimed to be this soul, for it comprises knowledge which is not bound up with any particular individual or group on the earth but can be understood by every single person, wherever he may be, just as physical things in external, material culture — such as a railway or a locomotive — can be understood. We have often stressed that a blessing and salvation for human evolution can only come about if the development in the bodily realm is accompanied by a development in the realm of soul and spirit. For this to take place it would be necessary for people to make just as much effort to understand spiritual matters as external circumstances force them to make — they would far rather be forced than use their freedom — to understand the demands of material progress. So far this has not happened, but it will obviously have to come about as human evolution proceeds. However long it is delayed, it must happen in the end. However much disastrous karma is conjured up because human beings do not want to make the effort, it will happen in the end, for what is to happen will indeed happen.

It is because material progress has run ahead of the good will for spiritual knowledge that mankind has been outdistanced by this material progress and everything it contains by way of passions and urges in human souls. Externally this shows most emphatically in the fact that it is not ideas which strive towards harmonious co-existence of human beings on earth — in other words, not Christian ideas — which are uppermost, but those which, in utmost excess, divide mankind and lead back to cultural periods which one might suppose to have been long overcome. The monstrous anomaly lies in the way nationalism was so forcefully able to take hold of the nations as they lived side by side in the nineteenth century. This shows that in their soul development human beings have not kept pace with material progress.

When people at last come to accept spiritual science on a wider scale, not only in theory but as a fulfilment of their total soul need, then they will, of necessity, have to arrive at different concepts. And such different concepts will help them to comprehend things which cannot possibly be comprehended by materialistic thinking as it is at present. Some matters can only be understood on the basis of corresponding ideas. But, like anything else, ideas must live in order to grow, which means they need soil in which they can flourish. And the soil in which ideas can flourish is

nothing other than an attitude of soul prepared by spiritual science. Were materialistic progress to continue its development along the lines of the nineteenth century, people would grow ever poorer in ideas. Put simply: No ideas suitable for comprehending the world would occur to people. Any thoughts they might have about the world could only be stimulated by means of experiments, or by what they could see with their own eyes. The modern insistence on experimentation is nothing other than a paucity of ideas. If the present trend were to continue, mankind would grow ever poorer in ideas. But since a certain intensity of spiritual life is necessary, since human beings must develop some degree of intensity in certain impulses, they will have to discover these impulses in other sources if they cannot find them in the substance of ideas.

When was there an age brimming over with ideas, an age when genuine ideas flourished? You could say that a particularly characteristic and fruitful age was the period extending from Lessing to German Romanticism, to Novalis, or even to the philosophical idealists, among whom we can count Schopenhauer in addition to Hegel and Schelling, as well as those I have quoted in my book *Vom Menschenrätsel* ('The Riddle of Man') as being the philosophers who sounded a universal resonance which has since died away during the age of materialism. Ideas were truly abundant then. Hence the contempt in which that time is held today! Look at it, so rich and pregnant with ideas, ideas seeking to fathom nature and the evolution of mankind throughout history! Today we gather ideas from the spiritual world about human evolution, about the various post-Atlantean periods and the impulses belonging to them, knowledge which has only become fitting in the present age. Yet just look how close this is to that fertile idea brought forward by Schelling, Hegel, Novalis, Franz von Baader — though it originated with Jakob Böhme. They said that human evolution passed through a period of history — this was as much as they could see without the help of spiritual science — a first period of history in which the principle of God the Father ruled. This was the period characterized in the Bible by the Old Testament and the heathen religions. They called it the Age of the Father. This was followed by the Age of the Son, during which the idea of the Mystery of Golgotha was to become embedded in mankind. Finally, as an ideal for the future, they saw the Age of the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, which they also called the Age of John, for they believed that not until then would the great impulses of the John Gospel be realized.

How infinitely meaningful is such an idea, compared with the desolate, unfruitful talk of human evolution, which is nothing but an abstract idea, in which what follows after is added to what came before as if it were just

another link in a chain. How profound by comparison is Schelling's 'theosophy' which he developed on from Jakob Böhme! This 'theosophy' of Schelling attains such lofty heights that, by comparison, the later thoughts of theologians represent a steep decline. Schelling fights his way through to the realization that what matters in Christianity is not so much its doctrine. This doctrine is seized upon by modern progressive theology as if Christ Jesus were no more than a teacher. What matters for Schelling is not the doctrine, but the fact of the Mystery of Golgotha. We must look up to the fact of the Mystery of Golgotha, the fact of the life, the death, and the resurrection of Christ Jesus.

In similar vein we could quote a great many superior, far-reaching ideas originating at that time. With what is the existence of such far-reaching ideas connected? Those who were inspired by such ideas have something in common: They are not narrow-mindedly nationalistic. Their standpoint is that of someone whom they would have called a 'citizen of the world'. I do not know whether this can be understood today, when so many expressions have become empty phrases. How far removed from anything narrow-mindedly nationalistic is, for instance, a spirit such as Goethe! How far removed from anything narrow-mindedly nationalistic is such a work as Goethe's *Faust*! Never mind what its origins were. Of course *Faust* can only stem from the culture of Central Europe. But in the form it has achieved as a poetical work at the hands of Goethe it would be absurd to ask *Faust* to show you his birth certificate. Yet this absurdity has become a reality, a fact, in our time. Everything that is happening today is, fundamentally, simply a denial of the heights once reached by mankind in such a work as Goethe's *Faust*. Yet such a work shows us that mankind could have progressed further than is the case today, or indeed than will be the case in the near future.

I have told you, however, that the human soul needs a certain degree of intensity in its impulses. If it cannot reach up to ideas, it will take this intensity from elsewhere, from obscure, unconscious soul forces, from forces that rush up from the spirit of the blood. Fundamentally, nationalism is nothing other than a consequence of the lack of ideas. Mankind's primary need now is the will to rise up to ideas. But it has to be said: if this is to succeed, something else will be needed, too: namely, an understanding for the element of grace which can come from the spiritual world. For it is not possible to win through to the spiritual world from a starting-point of a limited sum of preconceived opinions. The spiritual world

can only be reached by keeping the soul open for whatever wants to enter in, by desiring not merely to judge, but also day by day to enrich one's ability to judge.

So to begin with it is above all necessary that insight should take hold of human beings. We live in the age which is to grasp hold of the consciousness soul. So this age must strive for insight. But insight can only come about in ideas that span the world; for insight to come about, reality must be filled with ideas. Yet, especially with regard to the most recent events, our age is thoroughly disinclined to accept ideas. An abstract concept, however logical, however convincing, is not an idea. An idea must be born of living reality. Nowadays we see hardly any ideas come into being. Instead we are surrounded by an insistence on abstract concepts. Ideas can, however, become slogans — though if they do, not much damage can be done, because human souls cannot work in slogans that are related to ideas; their absurdity becomes too obvious. But abstract concepts are different. Abstract concepts can become slogans in a very intense way, and their meaning is so obvious because they refer basically to things that are close at hand. So human beings, who are so wary of taking in anything far-reaching, seize on them greedily. But abstract concepts do not have a basis in reality. There are great numbers of them all around us today, but those who can see beyond what is immediately obvious know that their powerlessness is all the greater.

One of the many abstract ideas ruling us today is that of eternal peace. In the way this is handled it is an entirely abstract concept which does not spring from a living understanding of reality, and yet it appears to those who do not desire to widen their horizons as something entirely convincing. These people say: The various states — and they do not wonder whether this expression 'the various states' has any reality — ought to create an inter-state organization, something that stretches across the entire world and is constructed after the pattern of a single state. Furthermore, something called 'inter-state law' is to be established. The idea is beautiful and so everybody finds it convincing. The various states are to commit themselves to keep the peace and they must also create legal norms which can contain their various mutual interests. All very nice! It would be equally nice if, to heat a room, all we needed was the abstract concept of warmth instead of having to light the stove. It is irrelevant whether an idea is nice, or convincing. For what could be more convincing than the thought that our need for stoves and the like really means that nature is a terrible despot!

It is irrelevant whether an idea corresponds to the feeling that it is nice or, perhaps, humane. What matters is whether an idea grows out of reality. But to aim for ideas which grow out of reality it is first of all necessary to study reality. Any narrow-minded brain — excuse the expression — can come up with nice programmes for states to follow in order to achieve peace. But such a brain cannot attain to ideas which correspond to reality and are born out of reality. It does not even feel that the spiritual world is a reality with its own laws, though this is considered a matter of course as far as the material world is concerned. People think the world can be set to rights by means of a few sentences. They have no feeling for the fact that the world is a reality in which all kinds of real impulses work in contrast to one another. And by becoming intoxicated with programmes made up of abstract ideas, they prevent the world from entering into the realities.

Sometimes a fruitful, genuine idea is expressed in the same words as a living idea; what matters is that we should be moved by the way it lives. Today, however, something that is alive appears to people as something utterly paradoxical. Thus, over the course of the nineteenth century, and also in the twentieth century, in various parts of the world the idea of disarmament was born, the idea of limiting militarism. This is a nice idea, but it must not remain abstract if it is to become fruitful! It must take account of reality. For this to happen, reality must be studied. It is all very well to meet somewhere and say: All countries must disarm. This is quite easy, especially as the idea is convincing. But either none of them will actually do so, or some of them will not do so. And even if they all did so, they would very soon start to rearm again if the initial impulse is not truly alive. But if you try to point out only those impulses which are truly fruitful, you are in danger of being considered by most people to be utterly foolish, for these days what is most sensible is considered to be most foolish. When I say 'sensible' in this connection I mean that which is most in tune with reality.

As I said, the idea of disarmament, the idea that all militarism should gradually be dismantled, is a good idea. But it will never be possible to realize it by reaching a formal conclusion about it in some committee of representatives from all states. It can only become reality if a corresponding reality takes hold of it. What do I mean? How can disarmament be achieved? Yes, it is necessary to be very concrete in one's expressions. It is indeed a fact that at a number of points during the nineteenth century it could have been possible to draw closer to the thought of disarmament and transform it into a real idea. How, for example?

Supposing someone had had the idea before the year 1870? How could it have been realized? Before 1870 a step could have been taken towards the idea of disarmament, a step which would have been very fruitful for mankind. But now I have to say something that today would be regarded as utterly foolish: No approach to the idea of disarmament could have been made by means of some kind of treaty between the various states! This is totally fruitless, however nice it may sound. It would, however, have been fruitful if a particular state, one that was in a position to do so, had begun to disarm, had made disarmament a reality for itself. To do this, people would have had to be capable of reckoning with realities.

Let us now look at a few states in Europe in order to point to what is a reality. Can Russia disarm? Certainly not just like that, for beyond Russia lies Asia, and if Russia were to disarm she would have no defences against the invading peoples of Asia, who would most certainly not disarm. So for Russia disarmament is out of the question. There was no German Reich before the year 1870, but how about the entity that did exist at that time? Could it have disarmed? On the eastern border there would have been a state that was not in a position to disarm, so it follows that here, too, disarmament would have been impossible. But there is one state which could have disarmed, thus setting a wonderful example and at the same time bringing into reality in modern times what it is always trumpeting forth with words — and that is France. Before 1870, France was in a very good position to disarm, and in consequence the war of 1870 would never have taken place. Even since then, as regards Europe — not the colonies — France would still have been in a position to proceed with disarmament at any time. This would have been a beginning, and attention could then have been turned to the East.

Obviously, those whose thinking is abstract will object: Ought France to have exposed herself to the danger of attack by Germany? There would have been no such danger, because if a country becomes involved in a war, the cause is invariably the fact that it is capable of war, that is, that it practises militarism. It can be forced to practise militarism. But no country which does not practise militarism would be attacked if its neighbours had no interest in attacking it. Switzerland, of course, has never been in a position to do without militarism. You cannot apply the conditions of one situation to those of another. Equally you may not say in the abstract that Germany would in any case have coveted Alsace-Lorraine. This is nonsense. Why should she have coveted Alsace-Lorraine under any circumstances? Bismarck said that to annex Alsace-Lorraine merely because some of the population were German was an impossible and crazy

academic theory! The only reason there has ever been is one of military security. For so long as France is a military power in possession of Alsace, you can reach Stuttgart more quickly from France than you can from Berlin. The only reason there has ever been for attaching Alsace to the German Reich is that of achieving military protection on the western frontier. This may seem to be a paradoxical idea at first, but for our abstract thinking, which is the twin brother of materialism, realities do indeed appear to be paradoxes.

If you picture to yourselves that France started to disarm before 1870, you will begin to realize just how much could have been set aside, if only thinking at that time had been based on reality. By considering such ideas, a thinking based on reality could be greatly expanded. Naturally, ideas based on reality do not always come to fruition, for the simple reason that other impulses might be stronger. But this says nothing against reality. A flower will grow entirely in accordance with its own real laws. But if a cartwheel flattens it, it cannot develop. Our thinking must be true, and if an idea fails to come to fruition at some point, this is of itself no proof that it was not based on reality.

This is what I wanted to say about saturating ideas with reality. It is as pointless to have a wonderful idea about some machine, if you lack the mechanical knowledge with which to construct it, as it is to have all sorts of ideas about states and the like if you are incapable of gaining insight into the real impulses, which in this case could be attained through an understanding of the spiritual realm, the spiritual world. This, then, is one of the points to be made: the saturation of ideas with reality.

The other concerns the extent of the horizon, the will to extend one's view to wider horizons. In the last lecture I read to you some of the judgements on the nature of the German people expressed by someone who is, after all, an important personality, judgements which he expressed in a long novel about recent times, which caused a very considerable stir. But all these judgements derive from a narrow horizon, an attitude of not wanting to look further than a few inches beyond the end of one's nose. Living with such narrow horizons brings about disharmony in the world. You can have the most beautiful ideas about the peaceful co-operation of the nations, but if your horizons are narrow, then those beautiful ideas will stand for nothing, or at most will work destructively. For what you really think, has the opposite effect of what you are saying with your beautiful ideas. The important thing is to make for reality. One reality which faces us at the moment is what — in our idle way of expressing ourselves — we call

the present war. In reality it is no longer a war, though in some ways it can still be compared with events which in the past were described as wars. This war came about, of course, as a result of the most varied impulses, but to gain insight into them we simply have to form ideas which are based on reality.

The time which should be used for working on ideas based on reality is used today instead to show that the world in most recent times has forgotten everything that took place during human history up to the time when today's tragic events commenced. Of course it is reasonable to talk in connection with such events of all sorts of horrors and atrocities. But these ought to be taken for granted if you consider the experiences of mankind throughout history. Such things really ought not to be used to deafen us in relation to more profound matters with which we are faced and the recognition of which could alone bring people to a point of view that is fruitful.

Let us today turn to something which can easily be recognized by anyone who grasps matters externally, on the physical plane, but which is illuminated more clearly if it is considered in conjunction with ideas put forward in the lecture cycle on the folk souls. Among the various causes which have led to today's tragic events, there are a number which could become increasingly clear – to those also who consider the external world by itself – if only people would be willing to extend their horizons. The British Empire possesses one quarter of the entire land surface of the globe. The British Empire and France and Russia together possess one half. A coalition between Russia, France, the British Empire and America would account for approximately three quarters of the earth's land surface. So there would be one quarter left over. This figure ought of itself to speak volumes to those who work with reality. Let us, however, look at that quarter which is contained in the British Empire.

Here we have, to start with, the quite small territory covered by England, Scotland and Ireland. England, Scotland and Ireland by themselves in no way constitute the British Empire. To speak of these three territories is to speak of a region of the world which gave birth to that great man Shakespeare and also to incomparable thinkers and, in earlier times, great statesmen. Only good aspects are to be found. All that we find here is supremely suited to play a great role in the fifth post-Atlantean period. What we do not find is the British Empire: namely, those three island regions attached to Europe, together with all that can be called their colonies in the widest sense. Especially in recent decades the impetus for

the whole development of this British Empire comes from the relationship of the motherland to the colonies. You can discover what endeavours are being made thus to shape the relationship between the motherland and the colonies.

What the British Empire is striving for is a close-knit relationship between the motherland and the colonies. I have told you about the application of occult forces, and it is these forces that are being used to achieve this goal. If these forces were allowed to work in their own region, no possible harm could come of them. But if the goal is something egoistic, whether for an individual or a group, then their effects cannot but be harmful. It is not at all easy to achieve this relationship between motherland and colonies. Those who imagine that world peace can be achieved by means of programmes and an interstate organization obviously have no idea what forces have to be used in reality to achieve a welding of the British motherland to her colonies in a way that will create the kind of totality which suits the British Empire. At the basis of this endeavour is what they there call imperialism. This is what has always been striven for in recent times, though out of entirely materialistic impulses — but this is what has been striven for. Every means that might serve this idea has been found acceptable from a certain point of view. It was necessary for the British Empire to achieve closer links with its colonies. To make this possible an impulse was needed that would steal into people's hearts and turn their minds towards something they would not otherwise have found acceptable. It is with this that the war in Europe is connected, for out of the mood of this war certain impulses will arise which the British Empire needs in order to create a uniformity between the motherland and her colonies. For those who study the processes of the physical plane it is not only interesting but extremely important to note how all those who think along abstract lines have been mistaken with regard to what I am saying.

Read what these 'clever' people wrote while this war was approaching — I mean clever in the sense in which I frequently use this word. They all reckoned with a defection here and a revolt there and another there, if war were to break out. But nothing of the kind has happened — indeed, the exact opposite has come about. If people's thoughts had been based on reality they would have said: If the British Empire wants to draw its colonies closer together, if it wants to generate impulses there which will tend towards going along with the motherland, then it needs a war, and this war is the means to that higher, so-called end desired by the state. And wherever such thoughts are thought, the end sanctifies the means.

Now is the moment when this fact should become particularly obvious to people. Speaking at present about the evolution of the British Empire, we should always take two significant streams into consideration. The one is the more or less puritanical stream — this word only describes one element of it, though probably correctly — which comes into its own in all that is excellent in the British nation. This puritanical stream was to a great extent dominant in British politics right up to the nineties of the nineteenth century. But during the nineties a change came about, when the imperialistic stream became stronger and more important than the puritanical stream.

Certain people had a good feel for the approach of imperialism — indeed, it is remarkable how good this instinct was. Let me draw your attention to a curious incident which shows rather clearly how these things are linked. While we were in London, shortly before the founding of the German Section of the Theosophical Society, Mrs Besant was then by no means the person she later became. As you know, she always had the tendency to be whoever she had to be, depending on which influences had a hold over her. She was extremely popular in the circle of those who were called the theosophists in London at that time. Anyway, there were various sides to her. At that time — it was the beginning of the century — she gave a lecture on theosophy and imperialism. The imperialistic impulses were developing rapidly. Mrs Besant's line of argument was rather against imperialism. And we could see how, from that moment onwards, she was finished in London, even among those who were then theosophists. A few personal friends stood by her, but everybody else was through with her because she had dared to say something against imperialism. In such things are revealed the forces which, if you can penetrate them, bring you to the point at which you can see how things are interconnected at a higher level.

Until quite recently a remnant of the puritanical element was still at work in England. Though politics were being led by puppets, marionettes, there was nevertheless something puritanical about these marionettes, about Asquith and Grey. This had to be removed so that the impulses I was speaking about could come into their own; and what now came was the most willing marionette of all with regard to everything I have described to you. But there is nothing puritanical left. Let us look first at the negative side: the cynical rejection of the idea of peace with the hypocritical justification that it is being rejected because what is wanted is peace. Nowadays the craziest things can be said with impunity and without being taken amiss. That is the negative side. On the positive side we have an

event of the greatest imaginable importance: the gathering of colonial ministers, which is one of the first actions of this man who has been placed by a negative miracle in one of the highest positions in the world. At last the public is beginning to notice what is going on. But the public did not notice until it had had its nose rubbed in it, whereas those who live in ideas based in reality have seen it clearly for some time.

It is impossible to find your way about in the realm of reality if you have no inclination to accept genuine ideas. Only then can you look at the world in such a way: You see something which you consider is insignificant; then you see it again, and yet again and still consider it insignificant; but on the fourth and fifth occasion you realize that it is important because it is a significant symptom of future events. Not everything is equally important, but you have to have a sense for what is important, and this sense can only be gained if you take into your soul those impulses which can only come about on the basis of spiritual science.

In the last few days somebody handed me a most interesting essay by a very popular British writer who is now a journalist. He is connected with the military, and in everything he writes he reveals how he is linked with the threads that are being spun. The essay he wrote recently in *The London Magazine* is significant enough. It was handed to me, as they say, by chance. But there is no chance in such occurrences. It is most interesting what this military author, linked as he is with the threads that are guiding events, has to say about the current situation:

'Our people had, and have, the will to conquer ... In that grand spirit the war has been fought, and the memory of our unquenchable determination to conquer will be the noblest heritage that we shall bequeath to our successors, the sons and daughters of England and of her glorious Dominions ... We shall have a million square miles of German colonial territory in our hands. We shall have many million veteran officers and men. We shall have greater naval predominance than before. The world will possess indubitable proofs that our Empire is one and indivisible, that its spirit is unconquerable, and that the martial qualities of the race are worthy of its glorious past ... We have all the moral and material attributes of power on a scale hitherto undreamed of ... But the war will end one day, and then how shall we stand? Taking Army, Navy,

and resources together, we shall be the first military Power in the world.'

Is not a peculiar impression given when someone believes so urgently that he must fight against 'militarism' and then states what a lofty ideal it is to be the predominant military force in the world!

'We shall be recognised as the mainstay of the Alliance.'

This ought to be read in France.

'We have taken the leading part in the Alliance, and the leadership of Europe belongs to us of right.'

Now he takes Kipling's words, 'We have the ships, the money and the men', and makes them his own.

'... and if Parliament would vote supplies for a couple of years and then adjourn sine die, most of us would be content.'

Such things are an expression of those impulses and instincts which are connected with the strings that are being pulled. They may be observed entirely objectively, without taking sides in the way in which no doubt well-meaning, though short-sighted, patriots tend to take sides. Why should such things not be observed? They are objective facts! The impulses that live in mankind are objective facts which historical events bring to the fore.

While it is essential for us here to avoid taking sides at all costs, it is equally important, especially in lectures, to strive to speak with the utmost objectivity. As you will see, as soon as you speak with the utmost objectivity, the facts themselves provide you with proof.

It is impossible to gain an understanding of the world without being willing to take note of facts. This so-called answering note from the Entente, this New Year's Eve gift to the world — my dear friends, it is unlikely that a document composed as this one is will be found again however far you search in history, and this applies both to the basis on which it is written and to the way it is set out and composed. What is written there will have the direst consequences, yet the best way to read it is to skip every single sentence and to realize: Nothing that appears in writing in this document matters! What matters is that behind it there stands what I have been describing to you, and that it is this that is the aim. Of course nobody would dream of saying so in a note. And if you ask whether it can be achieved by means of negotiations, the answer is, obviously, No. Of course such a thing cannot be achieved by means of peace negotiations. It can only be achieved by creating guarantees, and guarantees are contained in dominance. Guarantees mean that the one who wants the guarantees is the only one who can decree what they shall be and that all the others no longer have any say in the matter, and all this is brought about by the interrelationships of power. At present there is a long way to go before this can be achieved. But to live under the illusion that this is not the goal would mean a great lack of responsibility towards the sense for truth that human beings ought to have.

Let nobody suppose that what I have said is directed against the British people, for I make a distinction between this British people and those who pull the strings — if I may use this expression — those who stand behind the events in the way I have frequently described. Neither is it necessary to identify oneself with such impulses, though obviously it cannot be my task to prevent someone from doing so. Also, I shall not prohibit, either in thought or feeling, anyone within our Movement from identifying with such impulses. But let such a one say what is true and not that he is identifying himself with the ideal of the rights of small nations and the like. Let him be clear that he desires to dominate the world. Then we shall be understanding one another in the realm of truth, and that is what matters. We shall make progress if human beings are true. If they say what is really true, we shall make progress. However terrible the truth may be, it will get us further than what is untrue. This is what we should inscribe on our hearts. We make better progress with this than with what is untrue.

Obviously, it would be foolish to imagine that a world power could be moved by all kinds of persuasion or by all manner of propositions to give up its aims. Obviously, it would be foolish to adopt an attitude of high-handed morality and apply all kinds of moral yardsticks. I told you the story

of the Opium Wars expressly to turn you away from moral yardsticks. What matters is to speak the truth, to say what is true. It would be far better for the world — though not for those who pull the strings — if we could all say baldly and cynically: This is what is wanted.

This, then, is the meaning in this particular field, of our guiding line and goal: 'Wisdom lies solely in truth'.



Lecture 16

Tragedy and Guilt Among Nations

7 January 1917, Dornach

These lectures on the theme of current events are particularly suited to helping us realize what we can gain for our soul by striving to acquaint ourselves with spiritual knowledge. I have often stressed that this spiritual knowledge must not remain merely theoretical. We must make it come alive by filling it with those hallowed feelings and other impulses which belong to it, so that it can give to our souls that impetus and mood which will enable us as scientists of the spirit to relate to events in the human realm in a manner differing from that of someone who is not a spiritual scientist.

We have reflected in various ways on how individual human beings belong to particular nations, nationalities. But what the individual bears within him that belongs to mankind as a whole — that part of him which is not specialized and individualized with the characteristics of a particular nation — it is of this that spiritual science helps us to become fully aware, for the main content of anthroposophical spiritual science is valid for every individual human being, regardless of any differences among various groups. Indeed, even the national differences are seen differently from an anthroposophical point of view since, in contrast to the non-anthroposophical point of view, we are able to consider objectively what constitutes these differences — the various aspects can be seen objectively.

We are familiar with the threefold nature of our soul in that it consists of the sentient soul, the intellectual or mind soul and the consciousness soul, all three being filled, spiritually permeated, enlivened by our egohood. When the Italian folk soul works into individual human beings, it is the sentient soul that is influenced by the forces and impulses with which it works. In the French individual it is the intellectual or mind soul, and in the British individual the consciousness soul through which the folk soul works. For the folk souls of Central Europe it is the ego that is receptive, and for those of the Slav peoples the spirit-self. If we could fill ourselves with an understanding of this, we should no longer be tempted to form judgements in the way in which they are so frequently formed.

A certain person heard this and was furious, because he understood anthroposophical spiritual science to be saying that in the German nation the folk soul works through the ego, as if this was something higher than a folk soul working through the consciousness soul. This was his own misunderstanding! For in spiritual science different aspects of knowledge are viewed objectively, side by side. The folk souls have tasks to do and to accomplish them they have to work into their nations. But as regards the working of the folk souls in human souls we must realize that in our fifth post-Atlantean period a certain development has to take place. And those who are drawn towards anthroposophical spiritual science ought to feel themselves in the forefront of this development.

How does the folk soul work down into the human soul and mind? To start with we have to note that this working is subconscious and only partially rises up into consciousness. The individual human being feels that he belongs to one nation or another. On the whole, the folk soul works on the individuality via the maternal principle. It is the maternal principle that is embedded in the realm of the folk soul. The effect of the paternal principle is to detach the individual, as a physical and etheric being belonging to nature, from the group. I have frequently discussed this in past years. In the Christian world view this is even expressed in the Gospels. This, too, I discussed some time ago. As things are today, it is in the first instance through the blood that the folk soul works into the individual, and also through what corresponds in the etheric body to blood. Naturally, this is more or less an animal impulse, and it remains at the animal level for by far the greater part of mankind today. Through his blood the individual belongs to a particular nation. The mysterious forces and impulses working in the blood are very difficult to describe since they are extraordinarily complex and manifold. Suffice it to say that they lie beneath the surface of consciousness.

People are far more conscious in all those aspects of their make-up which belong to mankind as a whole, irrespective of national differences. That is why the pathos, the passion, the affectation of belonging to a particular nationality bursts forth with a kind of elemental force. People do not attempt to apply logical reasons or judgements when it is a question of specifying or sensing their attachment to their nationality. It is his blood, and his heart which is influenced by his blood, that bind the individual to his nationality and let him live within it. The impulses in question are subconscious, and it is a good step forward if we can at least succeed in recognizing the subconscious nature of this situation. It is important

especially for those who are approaching spiritual science if they can undergo this development in themselves and come to feel about these things in a way that differs from the way the rest of mankind feels.

When people who do not belong to spiritual science are asked what binds them to their nation they will — indeed, they must — answer: My blood! This is the sole idea which they are capable of forming about their sense of belonging to a particular nationality. A student of spiritual science, however, ought gradually to reach a point at which he is able to give not this, but a different answer. If he cannot gradually develop to a point where this different answer is possible, this means that he sees spiritual science as something purely theoretical, not practical and living. Someone who does not study spiritual science can only say: I am connected to my nationality through my blood, through my blood I defend what lives in my nation, it is my blood that obliges me to identify with my nationality. One who does study spiritual science, however, must answer: I am connected with my nationality through my karma, for this is a part of my karma. As soon as concepts of karma are brought into the question, the whole relationship becomes much more spiritual. Someone who does not follow spiritual science will summon his blood to account for the pathos, the impulsiveness of everything he does as a member of a particular nation. But someone who has developed through spiritual science will feel connected to one nation or another through his karma.

The matter becomes spiritual. Externally such a person might act in the same way; even if he feels this more spiritual aspect he might do the same things. But inwardly he will feel, spiritually; his feeling will be quite different from that of a person who feels his links with his nation purely at an animal level.

Here you see one of the points at which belonging to spiritual science changes the soul, brings a new mood into the soul. But at the same time you see how much the general consciousness of our time is lagging behind what could already be known by those who want to know it. In the general consciousness of our time the individual's attachment to a particular nation can only be seen as something that lives in the blood, or in that which is not at all of the blood but which is regulated in connection with the blood and out of this perception of the blood. A far freer view of nationality will gain ground once the whole matter is viewed as a matter of karma. Then certain delicate concepts will arise for someone who perhaps attaches himself consciously to a certain nation, thus bringing about a change of karma.

But however we view the matter, whether in the less complete sense shared by the greater part of mankind today, or in the more complete sense that can be attained through the study of spiritual science, nevertheless the fact remains that the general situation of the world today means that mankind is differentiated into groups. Nothing could make us more painfully aware than current events that this differentiation into groups is still for the most part prevalent. In addition, this differentiation into groups is mingled with quite other conditions and facts because it is to be even more difficult for human hearts and souls to gain an understanding of the reasons for the painful enmities, the painful disharmonies that have arisen amongst mankind today.

In short, we are touching on something pervaded by tragedy which should have nothing to do with ordinary logic or ordinary, superficial judgements. For whether these things are seen as a matter of blood or as a matter of karma, blood lies below, and karma above, logic. As a result, what we have been discussing must of necessity result in conflicts in human coexistence and these conflicts must be seen to be necessary. To believe that these conflicts can be judged in accordance with those concepts that apply to individual human beings must lead to the greatest errors. The widespread discussion of conflicts among nations in the same terms as those applicable to conflicts between individuals is the gravest mistake. I have already said that concepts such as justice and freedom apply to individual human beings. To claim them as parts of a programme for nations proves from the start a lack of knowledge about the characteristics of nations and a lack of will to enter into the question of national characteristics.

For those who understand these things and are capable, through spiritual knowledge, of seeing what is factually and naturally necessary, there is something paradoxical about the belief expressed in so many publications today, for it is comparable with the shark who makes a pact with the little fishes which he normally eats, saying: It is utterly inhumane to eat little fishes; I shall cease doing so! By saying this, he is condemning himself to death, for it happens to be the way of the world that sharks eat little fish!

It is necessary to come to a profound sense for the fact that it is not possible to understand the world without seeing the reality of the necessary conflicts leading to all that is tragic in the world. And to believe that something like Paradise is possible on the physical plane shows a total lack of comprehension of the peculiarities of the physical plane. Paradise does not exist on earth. There can be no comprehension among those who

strive to realize the new Jerusalem as a Utopia on earth or who, like the social democrats, want to bring about some other satisfactory solution. There is a profound law which says that human beings, in so far as they live here on the physical plane, can only reach a satisfactory view of reality if they are aware that higher worlds also exist, and that they are connected in their souls with these higher worlds. Only if we understand that we are citizens of higher worlds can a satisfactory view be attained. Therefore, when spiritual consciousness was extinguished, a time had to come when mankind could no longer understand why so much disaster, so many conflicts, are present on the earth. These conflicts can only be resolved when we feel ourselves not only to be living in the physical world, but also in the spiritual world. Then we may begin to grasp that just as man cannot always be young but has also to grow old, so there has to be a breaking down of what was once built up — conflict and destruction as well as creation. When you understand this, you also understand that conflicts have to arise between groups of human beings. These conflicts are the tragic element of world events, and they must be seen to be something tragic.

In order to conjure up before your soul the living concept, the living idea that I am trying to describe, let me remind you of a rather caustic remark once made by the poet Friedrich Hebbel. He was, as you know, a genius of a somewhat ponderous caste, one who wrote rather laboriously, despite a considerable fund of worldly humour. I told you on another occasion that he was not at all far from a view of the world which would have accorded with spiritual science. Thus he once jotted down in his notebook the following theme: Plato, reincarnated, takes his place in a secondary school where the teacher is dealing with the subject of Plato. He cannot understand a word of what Plato is supposed to have said and the teacher scolds him severely for this. Hebbel wanted to work this idea into a dramatic episode. He never actually did so, but you see that he did indeed consider bringing the idea of reincarnation into a play.

Hebbel was a contemporary of Grillparzer and knew him. As I said, Hebbel was a somewhat sombre, melancholy genius, but after he had seen Grillparzer's plays *The Golden Fleece*, *Thou shalt not lie!* and *A Dream is Life* and so on, he said — and this is most interesting: Grillparzer depicts tragic conflicts, but only those of which it can be said that, if people were clever enough to see through the situations, it would be possible to resolve them in the end. According to Hebbel, the tragic circumstances in Grillparzer's plays only come about because the characters are not clever enough to see through the tragic situations. This, he says, is not really

tragic. Real tragedy among human beings only comes about when those involved are as clever as anything and yet none of their cleverness and caution can help them, so that conflict becomes inevitable.

What Hebbel as a dramatist calls real tragedy is something that we ought to introduce as a concept into human evolution, human destiny, so that we do not continue for ever to form the naive judgement that one thing or another might have been avoided. Situations which lead to conflicts such as the present one cannot be avoided. And all those declamations about blame are totally out of place in face of a truly penetrating judgement.

It was for this purpose that I arranged these lectures which we have been conducting over the past days and weeks. I arranged them in order to demonstrate clearly that even in the case of an event such as the Opium Wars it is impossible to speak of blame in the way blame is meant in situations involving individual human beings. Concepts such as guilt, freedom, and so on, which can be applied to individual human beings, cannot be applied to souls living on other planes, and folk souls do not live on the physical plane but only work into the physical plane through individual souls. Their abode lies in other spheres, on other planes.

Such things are sensed nowadays by some isolated individuals. But they are not understood when we judge events on the basis of concepts which are customary today, instead of making the effort to take into account the actual evidence. To stand up today as a member of a nation and pronounce judgement on other nations in a manner that is only justified when referring to individuals proves nothing except one's own backwardness in the ability to judge. It is, though, a historical necessity, because certain statesmen are backward in relation to what could be known today, that this backwardness, this ignorance, is brought to bear even in the most terrible historical documents, as a result of which infinite rivers of blood will flow. On the other side stands the possibility of stressing again and again, for those who want to hear it, that the progress and salvation of mankind depend on finding judgements from the realms of spiritual life.

There is indeed a sense in some quarters for that which is necessary as a basis for judgement; but it cannot be brought into consciousness. I shall give you an example, for if I may say so, spiritual science will only be absorbed into our very flesh and blood if we learn to observe ordinary, everyday reality from the viewpoint of spiritual science. In England, in the seventies and eighties of the nineteenth century, the historian Professor

Seeley was active. What he taught was in many cases decisive for what later came to live in many souls. Seeley was perhaps the first English historical imperialist. His imperialism was historical and his history imperialistic, for he viewed British history as it had developed over the centuries from the point of view that the trend had always been towards the foundation of the great British Empire which now covers one quarter of the habitable surface of the earth. His lectures appeared in print in the seventies and were frequently reprinted; sometimes there was a new edition every year, for he had very many students. In these lectures he sought to gather up all the separate facts which made the British Empire what it is today. He saw it as something in the nature of divine providence that all the different pieces came together in the way in which they did, as a result of different impulses. He even asks: How did it all happen? And answers expressly: No individuals decided all these things, performed all these actions at just the right moment, which joined yet another portion to the British Empire with the aim of creating the greatest *imperium* that had ever existed; no, all this happened in earlier times as though by instinct.

The various parts came together by instinct and in Seeley's view there is a divine and spiritual order in the way they did so. Now, he says, it is our task to lift up into consciousness what has hitherto taken place instinctively and to round off what arose thus instinctively with our consciousness into an *imperium* such as has never existed on the earth before. He saw it as his task as an imperialistic historian consciously to penetrate what had come together unconsciously. Seeley intends, as it were, to bring into the present consciousness of the fifth post-Atlantean period all that contributed to the rise of the British Empire out of the still-atavistic forces belonging to the laws of the fourth post-Atlantean period. But as we have pointed out, it was not only reasoned, intellectual thinking which took hold of the instinctive coming-together of the different parts. As I have told you, during the final decades of the nineteenth century certain members of occult streams began — not with ordinary consciousness, but with occult consciousness — to expand this British Empire by placing before their souls, and the souls of their pupils, maps which showed what still had to come about if the British Empire was to beam its forces over the whole world. In these occult circles the following idea was consciously cultivated: The fifth post-Atlantean period belongs to the English-speaking peoples. Based on this, all the arrangements were carried out and all the details elaborated. No doubt the Regius Professor was not aware of this; but others were and used all of it consciously in their impulses. This needs to be recorded.

We shall speak more about what it was that they were aware of. But when people are not aware of something it nevertheless creeps into their soul and occupies them in a certain way. Thus, in our time, an extraordinary collaboration came about between something occult hovering in the background and pulling strings, and something of which people are unaware, but which lives in the forefront of events on the physical plane.

One must know such things if one wants to form judgements in the proper way. Over the last few weeks I have quoted a number of peculiar incidents, such as the matter of the *Almanach of Madame de Thèbes* and others. No doubt you remember. Now consider the following quite objectively without taking sides in any way. It is something extraordinary even for somebody who only thinks in the ordinary way; but for those who observe spiritual connections it is something that demands more than mere consideration, it demands to be meditated upon and taken into one's impulses: Is it not extraordinary that as early as the nineties of the nineteenth century an English book should have been published that was written by three editors of *The Times* and given the title *The Great War of 189-?* The timing was handled in a somewhat dilettante fashion. Though the date suggested is rather earlier, the reference is to the present war. This book contains a small error, for we are told that the war will break out as a result of the assassination of the Bulgarian Prince Ferdinand and that it will then escalate into the European conflagration covering the world. What is foretold in detail about this European conflagration covering the world is remarkably prophetic and has been confirmed in the main by subsequent events. We can truly say that the book's greatest error is the confusion between the Bulgarian Prince Ferdinand and Franz Ferdinand of Austria, and the placing of the assassination in Sofia instead of Sarajevo. I consider that there is a significance which should not be underestimated in the appearance of a book in 1892 which so remarkably accurately portrays a future event. Only by endeavouring to form judgements which are not abstract, but founded on what actually exists, can we develop the capacity to see the hidden configuration of things.

Naturally enough, even those who were able to see what was to come misplaced certain details — this is inevitable when speaking about such things. It is not always possible to foresee everything accurately. But we ought to ponder on the fact that there were people at that time who had such strong reasons for going into these matters that they even went as far as publication. I am telling you all this, especially in connection with all that we are considering, so that you can sharpen your capacity for forming judgements. It is essential to have the will to look facts in the face and see

how they relate to one another. In earlier lectures here I said: In the fifth post-Atlantean period we can only make progress if we strive on the one hand to achieve Imagination, and on the other to let the facts speak for themselves. All preconceived judgements are doomed increasingly to become empty phrases. Least of all can abstract thinking — as opposed to thinking that is bound up with actual facts — lead to judgements about the tragic conflicts in the world, the tragic play of impulses which work in the way I have described.

There exists today a knack, linked with world history, a knack of saying things which seem very convincing to many people but which, in fact, reveal nothing on which it would be worth basing a judgement. Let us consider a judgement such as the following: Those in power in the British Empire did not want war. To back this up, suitable correspondence, telegrams, letters and so forth, about all sorts of proposals for conferences and so on are quoted. People who judge, not on the basis of reality but abstractly, can indeed be convinced by these things, because the material available to back up such a statement can sound very convincing. But for a judgement to be valid it must not only be convincing or correct in the abstract, it must live in reality. It is perfectly possible, under certain circumstances, to prove that those in power in the British Empire — or rather those who mattered — did not want a war, and with such proof the greatest impression can be made in the whole of the periphery. In order to prove it — I say 'prove' — it is not even necessary to speak a direct untruth; yet in reality it remains an untruth. Why? Because it is, in fact, true and can be proved to be true, and yet this truth is not worth a snap of the fingers and is totally irrelevant.

You may be certain that those in power in the British Empire would very much have preferred to prevent the conflict in so far as the British Empire is a participant. But what those who matter wanted to achieve by means of the war — this they certainly desired with every ounce of energy at their disposal. Had it been possible to achieve this without a war, they would obviously greatly have preferred it, and from the beginning it was not at all out of the question that these aims might have been achieved by means other than war. To do this it would have been necessary to create some sort of substitute, some international arrangement, by means of which representatives of the various states could have come together to decide certain matters. If you take care to ensure in advance that you have a majority in such a body, then of course you can achieve your aims without a war, as long as the minority are prepared to go along with you.

So you see, in the last resort it is not a matter of whether one wanted to wage or prevent war, but of what one's aims were in the first place. And the objective observer cannot fail to see that the aim was indeed the one about which I have given you a number of hints — it is only possible to hint. As always, I beg you to take into account that I am not passing a judgement on moral grounds, but placing the concept of tragedy on the scales; I am saying that when conflicts are tackled by means of battles, when much blood is spilt — this stems from the tragedy of those conflicts. In contemplating this tragedy externally, we must, of course, have the will to be affected by these things in a way that differs somewhat from the ordinary.

How often do we hear: A share of the blame for this war must be laid at the door of those opinions, sensations and feelings which such people as Treitschke and Bernhardi spread among the German people. It can be quite grotesque, for the names of these writers have often enough been cited as belonging to deceivers, even by people who are convinced in the most honest way that this hits the nail on the head. Sometimes Nietzsche is included, sometimes others as well. There is much to be learnt by taking into account what such things are based on, in what I might call 'the realm of what is true'. But before going into this from the spiritual point of view — for much can be learnt about the spiritual realm by attending to ordinary things — let me draw your attention to the way in which just such phenomena as the German historian Treitschke can illustrate for us everything that is so tragic in human evolution. The only thing is that one must not make judgements of an utterly superficial kind.

Had I been inclined to make judgements of a superficial nature, I should for some time now certainly have looked upon Treitschke as a social monster. I only met him once, at a time when he was already totally deaf. You wrote your questions on scraps of paper and he then replied. When I was introduced to him, he asked: Where are you from? I wrote down that I was an Austrian. He replied: Well, well, — he was loud-spoken, since he could hear nothing — Austrians are either geniuses or rascals, one or the other; and so forth. With Treitschke it was always like this: If you did not want to count yourself a genius, you had had it. He was a vivacious man with considerable depth of character, and he often expressed himself in sharply defined terms. He wrote a much cited history of the German people. It is quoted in a certain way, but it could easily be quoted in another way, too, for anyone who wanted a collection of anti-German vulgarities could just copy them straight from Treitschke. However, this is not what people do. Instead, they seek out passages which are far less

frequent than those in which Treitschke tells his people the truth about themselves. They seek out passages which are written, so they think, in a 'Prussian and militaristic' manner.

In this connection I want to introduce you to a rather interesting judgement. It stems from a man who was quite justified in forming it, because he, too, was a historian. He was also particularly interested in Treitschke's definite antipathy towards more recent history and developments in England. Treitschke certainly entertained this antipathy and it soon became obvious when you got to know him.

This historian, who knew Treitschke well, wrote that Treitschke's dislike of modern England was based partly on historical, and partly on moral grounds, for

'Britain's world-predominance outrages him as a man almost as much as it outrages him as a German. It outrages him because of its immorality, its arrogance and its pretentious security. And not without justice'

please note this

'he delineates English policy throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as aimed consistently at the repression of Prussia, so soon as English politicians discovered the true nature of that state and divined the great future reserved for it by destiny. Had not England been Prussia's treacherous but timid enemy in 1864 and 1866, and again in 1870–71, and, above all, in 1874–75?'

This is what this historian says in his discussion of Treitschke's antipathy towards England. The strongest point he makes in Treitschke's favour is his

'conviction, which becomes more intense as the years advance, that Britain's world-predominance is out of all

proportion to Britain's real strength and to her worth or value, whether that worth be considered in the political, the social, the intellectual, or the moral sphere.'

He continues:

'It is the detestation of a sham ... That which Treitschke hates in England is what Napoleon hated in England — a pretentiousness, an overweening middle-class self-satisfaction, which is not really patriotism, not the high and serious passion of Germany in 1813 and 1870, but an insular, narrow conceit; in fact, the emotion enshrined in that most vulgar of all national hymns, "Rule Britannia".'

He goes on:

'... But Treitschke is seldom witty, though often grossly if unintentionally offensive. He is as unable as Heine to see anything fine in the English character.'

You see, this is another judgement about Treitschke. And while we are just discussing this historian, let me read to you a judgement he formed about someone else, much-maligned Bernhardi:

'But what marks out this work'

the book in question is the one which is constantly quoted these days as being particularly abominable

'from all others of the same kind, giving it something of the distinction of a really epoch-making book, is that it represents

a definite attempt made by a German soldier to understand not merely how Germany could make war upon England most effectively, but why Germany ought to make war upon England.'

All this is written about Treitschke and Bernhardi by the English professor Cramb, who from his own point of view could be called the English Treitschke. If you delve into the matter, you will find an extraordinary similarity between the tone of Cramb and that of Treitschke, for Cramb, equally, is utterly preoccupied with making clear that the British Empire must dominate the world and that everything must be done to bring this about. You could say that he speaks about England in the way Treitschke speaks about Germany, allowing of course for the differences between an Englishman and a German. Here you see how one of two men — each of whom, speaking from his own point of view, must needs say the opposite of the other — is nevertheless capable of appreciating what the other says. In a certain sense a point had been reached at which what had to be laid aside could indeed be laid aside, in order to come to what is above the individual and belongs to history.

It is therefore an extremely depressing relapse, a backward step for people, to find that now, even in the most weighty documents, judgements come to expression which are utterly inapplicable. There is really no need to go at all far in order to find tangible truths. But to do so one needs the keen sense which today can only be maintained through some connection with spiritual science. On another front there is something equally grotesque: The Russian plan to gain possession of the Dardanelles and Constantinople has existed and been admitted for centuries; yet at the same time the Russians claim to be entirely blameless, absolutely blameless. Here, in a historical document of the first water — the Tsar's decree that has recently been going round the world — we have the juxtaposition once again: We are absolutely blameless, but we mean to conquer, yet we are blameless. In Russia, too, people have not always held the opinions they hold today.

Take Kuropatkin for instance. In 1910 he published a book *The Tasks of the Russian Army*. In this book there is a remarkable passage which those who speak of Russia's great blamelessness could do well to mark and digest. It says:

'If Russia does not bring to an end her interference in something foreign to her, yet of vital interest to Austria, then a war over the question of Serbia can be expected to break out in the twentieth century between Russia and Austria.'

The Russian general Kuropatkin wrote this in 1910. Of course he had in mind what existed on the Russian side that could lead to a war with Austria over the Serbian conflict.

The question now arises: Why is the truth being so distorted at present? The answer is that something has got to be said, yet it is not as easy as all that to speak the truth. I hinted at this yesterday. The things that are said are intended to spread a fog over the truth so as to distract people's attention from the truth. That is why arguments are chosen which will have an immediate sentimental appeal for those who lack the will to get to the bottom of things.

If only people could come more and more to understand above all the full significance of the many unconscious or subconscious untruths. I have often pointed out that it is no excuse to say that one believes something just because so and so said it. Of course I do not mean that many people do not believe in what they are saying, but this is not the point. These things work in the world, and those who make statements have a duty to take the trouble to find out the truth; merely believing something is not enough. Someone might speak quite truly when he says that he wanted to prevent the war. But this truth is not worth a fig in view of the fact that he intended to use other means instead to achieve his desired aim, the aim he is striving for with all his might. To reverse the truth in this way, whether unconsciously or subconsciously, is something much worse than an untruth, even though it appears to be the truth.

This is now the immensely difficult karma of mankind: that people do not feel in duty bound to pursue the actual, real truth and truthfulness that lives in the facts — indeed, that the very opposite of this seems to have started to rule the world and to be all set to do so ever increasingly. External deeds are always the consequence of what lives in mankind in the way of thought. They are the consequence of untruthfulness, which may indeed appear in the guise of truth because it can be 'proved', though only superficially. What lives in the judgements of human beings can become,

on another plane, the thundering of cannon and the spilling of blood. There is certainly a connection between the two. The conclusion we have to draw from this is that we must enter ever more deeply into the facts, that we must develop a sense which can lead us to see in the appropriate places those things which can really throw light and reveal what is essential.



Lecture 17

The Events of 1914 and What was Behind Them

8 January 1917, Dornach

When, after repeated requests, I decided to speak about some aspects of most recent history leading up to the present, I expressly stated that my concern was the understanding of the facts and that there was no question of entering into politics or anything to do with politics. I frequently repeated this statement. Despite this, it seems to me that a definite carelessness — not to use a stronger word — is gaining ground amongst us in this respect. People do not consider that when someone is speaking the truth with the intensity that has been the case, he has a right to claim that attention is also paid to the manner of its expression. It appears that here and there people have been speaking about these lectures as if they were political lectures. Lack of consideration has for a long time been the order of the day among some of our members — only a few, of course; I refer only to those who are meant. Everything I have said and repeated over and over again out of anxiety for our concerns has fallen on deaf ears in some quarters. It is perfectly apparent that again and again the matters we speak about here are reported to outsiders in the strangest manner.

As such, I have nothing against reports if they remain within the obvious bounds. But it is clear from various recent publications — among them a most scandalous compilation from the Vollrath camp — that matters are not reported in a manner befitting the way they are discussed here, but in a manner — perhaps from want of a better understanding — that enables the most horrible distortions to be fabricated. I know very well that the source of this is to be found in our midst, and if again and again I hold my peace and refrain from taking steps against those so-called members who behave in this way, it is out of love for our whole Movement and our whole Society. It is surely not possible to hold a constant succession of hearings. It would, however, be possible for members who understand what is going on, to approach in a suitable manner those of whom it is known that their attitude to the spiritual content given here is not what it ought to be. I do not even want to maintain — though sometimes it is indeed the case — that there is a direct lack of morality in people's behaviour, but there is certainly a lack of insight into the way one might behave. If someone

wants to speak about what he has heard, it is incumbent upon him to ask himself with honest — let me say — self-knowledge, whether he has really understood it in a way which enables him to pass it on.

It is necessary, unfortunately, to draw attention to this from time to time. I assure you that I am not doing so without good reason. If things go on as they are, it will become necessary to remain silent about certain matters, and it is easy to see what would then become of our Movement. And a share in bringing this about would lie with those members who again and again fail to prevent themselves from using the most awful expressions which can then lead to frightful distortions. Surely it is not necessary to speak about these things in places where they can be overheard by people who do not belong amongst us, and to use expressions which might come easily to the tongue, but which in no way correspond to the whole purpose on which these lectures are founded!

I must admit that having decided after repeated requests to give these lectures, I can only view as entirely personal attacks the instances in which they have been described as 'political lectures'.

Now that we have discussed the many considerations contained in the lectures of the past few weeks, it will today be possible to draw some of them together in order to throw light on aspects which can help us to understand what is happening today. I shall first endeavour to recount quite baldly, in the most external fashion, the historical sequence of events as they occurred, and then, on the basis of the insights gained over the past weeks, I will point out some of the deeper-lying causes. I want to state expressly that, particularly today, I shall attempt to weigh carefully every single expression so that each one provides an exact delineation within which the view it expresses can come to light. Let me start, then, by describing quite externally and briefly certain events, viewpoints and impulses.

As you of course all know, the present painful events have come about in connection with the murder in June 1914 of Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austrian throne. This assassination was followed in the whole of Europe by a newspaper campaign which showed, in what might be called surging waves, the degree to which passions had been aroused in every quarter. All this led to the well-known ultimatum from the monarchy of Austria-Hungary to Serbia which, in the main, was rejected by Serbia; then on to the Austro-Serbian conflict which was intended by the leading Austrian

statesmen to consist of a military entry into Serbia, without any annexation of Serbian territory, for the purpose of exerting military pressure in order to force an acceptance of the ultimatum. The purpose of the ultimatum was to prevent Serbia from inciting unrest against the stability of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy via Austria's southern Slav population.

As you know, Austria comprises quite a number of nations — there are thirteen recognized languages and many more than thirteen distinct peoples. In the southern region the population is Slav; more to the West are the Slovenian Slavs; to the East, adjacent to them, the Dalmatian, Croatian, Slovenian, Serbian, Serbo-Croat population; then also the various groups who live in the territories of Bosnia and Herzegovina which were annexed by Austria in 1908, though occupied by her long before that. Serbia borders on the territories populated by these southern Slavs. Austria believed it could be proved — and evidence of this proof can be found all over the place by anyone who cares to seek it — that Serbia was inciting unrest with the aim of founding a Southern Slav kingdom under the sovereignty of Serbia and entailing the detachment of the southern Slav population of Austria.

At all costs the assassination of Franz Ferdinand had to be linked with these things, for the following reason: From 1867 onwards, the monarchy of Austria-Hungary was a dual state comprising, in accordance with a not very concise description 'the kingdoms and lands represented in the *Reichsrat*', and secondly 'the lands of the Holy Crown of St Stephen'. Among the lands represented in the *Reichsrat* were Upper and Lower Austria, Salzburg, Styria, Carinthia, Carniola and Istria, Dalmatia, Moravia, Bohemia and Silesia, Galicia, Lodomeria and Bukovina. To the lands of the Holy Crown of St Stephen belong first and foremost the Magyar regions to which was annexed what had formerly been Transylvania, which is inhabited by a number of peoples; further, Croatia and Slavonia, the latter enjoying a kind of limited self-government within the Hungarian state. A dual monarchy, in other words.

Now it was known that Franz Ferdinand, the heir to the throne, wanted to overcome the drawbacks of the dualism of Austria-Hungary and replace this dualism with a 'triadic' reorganization. This triadic structure was to come about by making the southern Slav territories belonging to Austria self-governing, in the way the lands and kingdoms represented in the *Reichsrat* and also the lands of the Holy Crown of St Stephen were self-governing. This would have put a triadic structure in place of the existing dualism. You can see how, had it been realized, this would have led to an

individualization of the separate southern Slav peoples within a kind of southern Slav community in the Austro-Slav regions. It would have meant a step closer to the aim of assimilating the western Slavs with western culture, thus working against what I have called Russianism in these lectures. This could quite well have worked out, for the structure of the Austrian state is entirely federalistic, not centralistic, and before the war it tended anyway increasingly to grant federal status to the different peoples. From 1867 to 1879 centralism was the aim; from 1879 onwards the efforts to centralize had to be seen as a failure, and from then on federalism was the aim.

In opposition to this were the efforts on the part of Serbia to found a confederation of southern Slavs under the hegemony of Serbia. This did not arise from within the Serbian people, but I have described to you how peoples are, in a way, led simply by means of suggestion. For this to happen, the southern Slav territories would, of course, have to be wrested from Austria-Hungary.

This concludes my brief summary of what lies behind the Austro-Serbian conflict. What I have just been telling you is all to do with the Austro-Serbian conflict. It is thinkable that this conflict could have been 'localized' — I have used this expression once before. Had this come about — I am speaking hypothetically — the European world war would have been avoided. What would have happened if the strictly circumscribed intentions of the Austrian statesmen had been realized? Part of the Austro-Hungarian army would have marched into Serbia and stayed there until Serbia agreed to accept the ultimatum which would have quashed the possibility of a southern Slav confederation under Serbian hegemony, and, of course, Russian supremacy. If no other European power had interfered in this matter, if they had all done nothing more than stand to attention, as it were, then nothing would have taken place except the acceptance of this ultimatum. For Austria had guaranteed that she had no intention of annexing any parts of Serbian territory in any way. As a result, such assassinations as took place many times — that of Franz Ferdinand was only the last in a whole sequence incited by Serbian agitators — such assassinations would not have taken place, and without such agitation the establishment of a southern Slav confederation under the supremacy of Russia is, or rather would, of course, have been impossible. If events had taken this course — I speak hypothetically again — this war need never have broken out.

So what is the connection between this Austro-Serbian conflict and the World War? To comprehend this connection it is necessary to pass beyond an understanding of the external situation and, if I may say so, enter the deeper secrets of European politics. It is not politics we want to enter; we want to understand in our soul what it was that lived in these politics. I want to answer the question: How did a European conflict arise out of the Austro-Serbian conflict? What is the link between the Austro-Serbian question and the European question?

We must turn our attention to what I have just said about the southern Slav confederation. It was the British Empire, the more it took on a conscious form, that was interested in a southern Slav confederation, independent of Austria, but under the supremacy of Russia. In the societies I have mentioned it was the establishment of what was termed the Danube confederation — by which was meant this southern Slav confederation, which was to comprise the southern Slav peoples together with Romania and include the southern Slavs of Austria — that was expressly discussed. In the nineties of the nineteenth century we find everywhere in the occult schools of the West, under the direct influence of British occultists, indications that such a Danube confederation would have to come into being. Attempts were also made to manipulate the whole of European politics towards the creation of this Danube confederation, which would entail the relinquishing of the Austro-Slav territories.

Why was the British Empire interested in this Danube confederation, a project which was anti-Austrian and pro-Russian? The powers which have been in opposition to one another most strongly in recent times as a consequence of the imperialism which has broken out across the world, those powers which actually coexist with the greatest hostility, are the British Empire and the Russian Empire. Such hidden hostilities can indeed manifest outwardly as friendships and alliances. When there is such bitter hostility between countries outwardly coexisting peacefully, a certain consequence results from the fact that our earth has a specific characteristic: namely, that it is spherical in shape. If our earth were a flat plain stretching in all directions, such conflicts could not come about. But since our earth is round, not only do we eventually arrive back at our starting point if we walk long enough in a straight line, but something else also happens: Expanding empires come up against each other at a certain point, and when they collide they have to follow through with their opposing interests. This occurred between the British and the Russian Empires. Among many other situations, it became most obviously apparent

when they collided with great force in Persia. The question was: Should Russia succeed in moving down against India and there gradually hem in the British Empire, or would the British Empire erect defences?

When your aim is to gain sovereignty, you can pursue it by means of war, or by other means, depending on which seems the most favourable. For the British Empire it seemed for the moment — in the case of states, only limited periods of time are reckoned with — more favourable to prevent Russia from proceeding against India by providing a different channel, by diverting her attention in another direction in which she could achieve the satisfaction of her natural ambition. Empires are always ambitious. This was to be brought about by conceding to Russia the sovereignty over the so-called Danube confederation. Thus the British Empire was indirectly interested in making the Danube confederation as extensive as possible, for the Slavs in the South wanted to belong together, and this feeling of belonging was stirred up in the way I have described to you. Thus the confederation of southern Slavs was to be played into Russia's hand so that she might withdraw her attention from other directions. This was why the confederation of southern Slavs, to be set up under Russian sovereignty, was in the British interest. It was a long story, prepared well beforehand.

Here we see one of the threads linking the Austro-Serbian question to the question of sovereignty on a world scale. This is how the whole relationship between the British and the Russian Empires was drawn into the matter. It was not a matter of Austria and Serbia, for the whole Austro-Serbian question necessarily became the question: Should Austria take the step towards a triadic structure, thus diverting the confederation of southern Slavs from its path, or should steps be taken towards a Russian-dominated southern Slav confederation? In this way the Austro-Serbian question became coupled with the European question.

When such situations exist — for what I have just described lived in human beings as absolutely real impulses — it is like an electric charge which will at some point have to be discharged. This, then, was one of the threads.

It is still, however, highly questionable whether the Austro-Serbian conflict would have led to the World War, if there had not been further aspects in addition to those we have just discussed. Indeed, it is highly unlikely that it would have done, if there had been no other causes. But there were plenty of other impulses, all of which reinforced the situation. First and foremost among these was the Franco-Russian alliance within the

general European situation. This Franco-Russian alliance had existed since the nineties of the nineteenth century and, looking at the situation objectively, it could not have been more unnatural. No one will doubt that France had entered into this alliance with a view to winning back Alsace-Lorraine, for there is no other imaginable reason for this alliance. All other reasons would only have spoken against such an alliance. In the end, though, those other reasons carry little weight in comparison with the driving forces, for the fact is that an alliance such as this exists; through its very existence it represents a real force. It is there. Much more important than the actual aim of this alliance is the fact that here are a western and an eastern state who in combination constitute a monstrous military power. And between them lies Germany who could not but feel permanently threatened militarily by the scale of this combined French and Russian military might. It was this encirclement of Germany to West and East by the Franco-Russian alliance which became one of the driving forces in European affairs.

To discover further influences which played a part we must look at the following: In recent decades, imperialism has led to a general desire for expansion. You need only look, for instance, at the monstrous growth of the British Empire. Or think of France, whose territorial expansion over the last few decades has been incomparably greater than at any earlier time, when France, as she herself said, marched at the head of European civilization.

The events of recent decades have been like a chain reaction: In every case what came next could not have taken place without what had gone before. The most recent point of departure — of course we could go back further — lies in the British Empire's seizure of sovereignty over Egypt. For today's way of thinking it is perfectly reasonable to justify such an action by claiming the necessity of rounding off and securing one's assets. The expansion of British sovereignty over Egypt was justified by saying that a bridge to India was needed. The hope was that Arabia could be gained too, thus creating a direct link with India.

The expansion of the British Empire to include Egypt provided, to some extent, a protective barrier against any awkward expansion of the Russian Empire westwards; any such expansion westwards need not have harmed the British Empire to any great extent if Egypt had been able to provide the necessary link with India.

Now since the earth is spherical, there is insufficient territory for unlimited expansion outwards by empires because eventually they will clash. In consequence the expansion of one empire generates in the other an equal lust for expansion. Thus the expansion by France to include Morocco, in two stages in 1905 and 1911, was nothing other than a consequence of the expansion of the British Empire to include Egypt. The mutual recognition of these expansions — France's recognition of British dominion over Egypt and British recognition of France's dominion over Morocco — provided the threads with which an Entente Cordiale between the French and the British Empires could be spun. But because Germany was in the middle, efforts were made, as you know, to establish the Triple Alliance: Germany, Austria, Italy.

However, the distribution of Morocco and Egypt, and what followed this, meant that, at the Algeciras Conference, and particularly with the help of an elderly Italian politician who was well versed in these things, Italy was even then successfully drawn into the sphere of influence of the western entente between France and England. After the Algeciras Conference sensible people in Central Europe no longer believed that Italy would be able to remain faithful to the Triple Alliance. Because of the way she had behaved there had to be consequences for her, resulting from the seizure of Morocco by France. And the consequence was that Italy was permitted to establish herself in Tripoli. In effect this meant that Italy had been given permission by the West to wage war on Turkey. So Egypt led to Morocco, and Morocco to Tripoli. Then, because Tripoli meant a new weakening of the Turkish position, Tripoli led to the Balkan War. These events took place like a chain reaction, Egypt-Morocco-Tripoli-Balkan War; each is unthinkable without its predecessor.

Turkey having been weakened by the Italo-Turkish, or Tripoli War, the southern Slav peoples, with the others in their wake, and also the Greek peoples, believed themselves strong enough to win the Balkan peninsula for themselves. As a result of this, the trend towards a southern Slav confederation became linked with the national aspirations of the Balkan countries. The linking of these two chains gave the Balkan War an outcome in which Serbia was the strongest winner. Serbia has grown very powerful, incomparably more so than she was before. In consequence there came a revival of the ideal of founding the southern Slav confederation under the hegemony of Serbia and the overall sovereignty of Russia. This led to the agitations which culminated in the assassination of Franz Ferdinand, which

in turn led to the Austro-Serbian War. Now we have brought the two links together: The Austro-Serbian question was linked with the European question as a consequence of the whole historical process.

Those who followed these events with understanding were able to see under these circumstances many years ahead to the coming war, hanging like a sword of Damocles over European culture and civilization. Wherever these things were discussed you could hear how people realized that Russia's pretensions would lead to a conflict between Central and Eastern Europe. This conflict was inevitable. No one who studies the realities of history will say that this conflict between Central and Eastern Europe was not based on what may be called a spiritual necessity. Just as in ancient times conflict arose between the Roman and the Germanic peoples, so in modern times there had to be conflict between Central and Eastern Europe. There were manifold forms it could have taken, but conflict there had to be. Everything else, in so far as it had to do with the East, was included in this conflict.

It was the pretensions of Russianism that led to the expectation that somewhere or other these pretensions would lead to an attempt by Russia to impose sovereignty on the Balkan league. This was expected. The geographical situation made it inevitable that there would be a clash between Russia and Austria. And when this clash occurred — so said all those who had been contemplating these things over the years — everything else would automatically follow.

How, it was asked, would the situation be shaped by the existing structure of alliances at the moment of Russia's attack on Austria? Obviously no one expected Austria to attack Russia of her own accord. This was unthinkable; Austria could not possibly find herself in a position to launch an attack on Russia. It had to be supposed, therefore, that matters would arrange themselves in a way that would enable Russia to attack Austria. Well and good! Because of the alliance between Austria and Germany, Germany could be expected to stand by Austria and attack Russia in her turn. And as a result of Germany's attack on Russia — I am telling you what was presumed — the Franco-Russian alliance would come into action. France would be obliged to take Russia's side and attack Germany. And because of the relationship between France and England — whether laid down in a treaty or not — England would have to join in the attack on the side of Russia and France. These things were foreseen. The structure of treaties and alliances would automatically lead to a sequence of events.

In the end, the sequence was not quite what had been expected by those who concerned themselves day in, day out, with the future of Europe. What form did it take? Let us see. I have already described to you the history of the ultimatum, the rejection of the ultimatum, the resulting insistence by Austria on acceptance of the ultimatum. But the European powers did not remain indifferent to all this, for Russia immediately made ready to enter the fray as Serbia's protector. This made the localization of the Austro-Serbian question unthinkable. From the British quarter came all sorts of meaningless suggestions of the kind made by those who either want to take a hand in affairs without thinking things through properly, or who want to build up for themselves from the start a world-wide reputation of having endeavoured to settle the matter by peaceful means. This is not actually the aim, but it has to be possible later on to say that it was.

So the meaningless suggestion was made to call a conference made up, of all things, of England, Germany, France and Italy, to decide about the questions pending. Just imagine what would have been the outcome of such a conference! A majority verdict would have been required on whether Austria's demands to Serbia were justified or not. On the basis of the real situation, imagine, please, how the voting would have gone! Italy had inwardly deserted the Triple Alliance, France was on Russia's side, Russia was obviously only satisfied if Austria was refused the right to insist on acceptance of the ultimatum, England was in favour of the Danube confederation. Leaving aside Austria, the majority would have gone to Italy, France and England. Germany would obviously have been out-voted at all costs. This conference could not possibly have led to anything other than a refusal for what Austria, from her position, was compelled to demand. That means that if this conference had been held it would have been nothing but a farce, for Austria would either have been forced to give up her pretensions, or, regardless of the outcome of the conference, she would have continued to demand acceptance of the ultimatum. In other words, the conference would have been nothing but a bluff, as they say. A thorough study of the documentation reveals, however, that from the start Russia's pretension was to interfere in the Serbo-Austrian question. So it is really irrelevant whether the World War came about as the result of an automatic sequence of events or of deliberate scene-setting leading inevitably to the War.

It was the scene-setting that took place for, in addition to the various impulses, you must also take into account a quite particular mood. Maybe no other world event, no other historical event but this, has ever been quite so dependent on a certain mood. The mood of soul of those

participating in the outbreak of the War at the end of July 1914 was certainly one of the most important causes. Of course there were also agitations at the outbreak of earlier wars, but they did not sweep in with such stormy, such hurricane force, as did the events between 24 July and 1 August 1914. Within a few days a monstrous agitation had gathered over the participants, an agitation in which was concentrated all the accumulated anxiety of the many years during which this coming event had been foreseen. This mood must definitely be taken into account. Those who do not do so can only speak in empty phrases.

All kinds of points could be brought in to characterize this mood, but I shall draw your attention to only one. An event had taken place which was indirectly, though in fact very strongly, connected with the outbreak of the War. If it is to be evaluated properly it will, and must, be seen in its proper place amongst the other events in Europe. This was the German defence bill, laid before Parliament after the Balkan War, which budgeted for an enlargement of the German army by means of a single large defence payment. This enlargement of the German army, which, by the way, was not anywhere near completion by the time the War broke out, can be studied by anyone in connection with the results of the Balkan War. These results showed that for an uncertain time in the future the clash between Russia and Austria was being manipulated. It was only because of certain situations, which I do not want to go into here, that Russia was prevented as early as 1913 from attacking Austria in order to gain sovereignty and dominion over the Balkan confederation. The enlargement of the German army was undertaken for no other reason — as I said, I am choosing my expressions very precisely today — than the threatened dispute with the East. Yet the French reaction followed promptly: If Germany is enlarging her army, then we must do something about strengthening ours. What this means is that the destiny, the inevitable necessity for Central Europe to take precautions with regard to the East, always produced reinforcements in the West, which naturally produced further reactions in their turn.

In this way matters progressed. In particular, everything connected with the defence bill after the Balkan War generated terrible anxiety in Central Europe because the whole of the European periphery was seen to have turned against Central Europe. Opinions differed only in the matter of Italy: Some still thought she would somehow throw in her lot with Central Europe, while others no longer held this to be possible.

Let us still assume — hypothetically — that the World War did not break out. There was only one precondition that could have prevented it. Russia would have had to refrain from immediate war threats — in other words mobilization, which under the prevailing circumstances could only be regarded as a war threat. Central Europe could not for one moment have thought that France would not go along with Russia, so an assault on two fronts had to be reckoned with. The only course of action open to those in positions of responsibility was to paralyse this assault in some way. No one in a responsible position could have thought: Let us spend the next fortnight at a conference! Not only could this conference have led absolutely nowhere, as I said, but it would have meant certain defeat. But no one can be expected to accept certain defeat from the outset. So the only possibility was to match the monstrous military superiority of West and East by means of speed.

For this the only possible course of action, as I showed earlier, was to violate international law and march through Belgium. Any other solution could only have led to the involvement of most of the German army in a long war of defence in the West while leaving the way open to invasion from the East. This was one of those historical moments at which — whether you can express it aptly or not — a state is forced to enter into a breach of the law in self-preservation. There is no other course of action open to those responsible for that state. In Central Europe it was — and I am choosing my words very carefully today in order to make my meaning quite clear — for some of those in responsible positions utterly monstrous to attempt war on two fronts at once.

So the attempt was made to restrict the matter to a single front. Careful, carefully intentioned, attempts were made to keep France neutral, and it was believed that France could be induced to remain neutral. No one in Central Europe had any intention of harming France. With a feeling of total responsibility it is possible to say that absolutely no one in Central Europe, no one in Germany, had any intention of harming France. What was done was done only with a view to tying matters up as quickly as possible in the West in order to prevent the threatened invasion from the East. It therefore never ceases to be astonishing that so much talk persists in the world about all the atrocities Germany has committed towards the West. None of the atrocities would have occurred if only France had declared her neutrality.

France was perfectly capable of protecting herself and Belgium against any attack. That France was forced to keep her agreement with Russia is her own affair and should not be trotted out in the same breath as the atrocities committed by Germany, for the allegiance of one state to another is no business of her enemies.

Since it proved impossible to keep France neutral by direct means, the attempt was then made via England — here, too, without success. I have touched a number of times on how England could have saved Belgium and, equally well, France. These things must be viewed absolutely objectively. Please accept as totally objective the statement that, once the war between Austria and Serbia could no longer be localized because Russia would not allow this, every effort was made at least to prevent it from spreading to the West. Truly, no one in Central Europe was seized with the madness of wanting to make war on two fronts, let alone subsequently on three.

That all the other universal untruths followed on from this is really not surprising now, when every day astonishes us with new lies, spoken, written and printed. Before coming here today I found someone had put on my desk a pamphlet by one of the participants engaged in the neutrality debate with Georg Brandes. Here, on the English side, you have William Archer, in whose pamphlet you find juxtaposed the black infamy of Germany and the pure innocence of the allies. Ten points illustrate the black infamy, and the angelic, utter innocence of the allies; we need consider only one of these, the second. The second point states that in Germany there exists a notable faction which is openly agitating for further territorial expansion, either in or outside Europe. In contrast it is said of the allies — in English, mark you: The allies have no desire for any territorial expansion, least of all at Germany's expense; even France's feelings for Alsace-Lorraine are exclusively peaceful.

My dear friends, much can be both printed and spoken these days! The other nine points are in similar vein. Just think of the expansion undertaken by England and France over recent decades; and then read that these countries have no desire for territorial expansion. It is quite possible nowadays to say and print the exact opposite of the truth, just as it is possible for countless people to believe it. People do indeed believe these things.

Here, then, you have the historical view of these events. Now we must link this external historical process with what we can discover through our knowledge of the impulses from the West which have been at work for a long time. Not all the impulses that make use to a greater or lesser degree of occult forces — such as we have discussed — are included in what might be called the outer ramifications: namely, Freemasonry, though as we have seen, a great deal is indeed brought about by western Freemasonry. Many strings are pulled by those involved there. And as I said, account is taken of long stretches of time.

Now add to the points I have been making the fact that modern Freemasonry undergoes a process of consolidation in England at the beginning of the eighteenth century, on foundations, of course, which are older. Within Britain, not the Empire, but the United Kingdom, Freemasonry remains — let me use the correct expression — essentially respectable in the interests it pursues. But everywhere else, outside Britain, chiefly — or indeed exclusively — political interests are pursued by Freemasonry.

Such political interests, to the most marked degree, are pursued for instance by the French *Grand Orient*, and also by other Grand Lodges. You could ask: What business is it of the English if political trends in other countries are pursued by certain orders of Freemasonry which possess an occult background? In reply you might remind yourself that the first Grand Lodge in Paris was founded under the jurisdiction of England, not France! Englishmen, not Frenchmen, founded it; and then they let the French in. Then also remind yourself that after the founding of this Grand Lodge in Paris in 1725, this *Grand Orient* in turn sanctioned the founding of a lodge under its own jurisdiction in Paris in 1729. There were, under the jurisdiction of England, foundations in Gibraltar in 1729, Madrid in 1728, Lisbon in 1736, Florence in 1735, Moscow in 1731, Stockholm in 1726, Geneva in 1735, Lausanne in 1739 and Hamburg in 1737. I could carry on for a long time with this list. I could show you how a network was founded of these lodges, which were to act as the external tools for certain occult, political impulses. They differed in character from those in the United Kingdom itself. In addition to the breathtaking sequence of changes as we see them in history, such as the Jacobins and the furore they created, the Carbonari and their political activities, the Cortes in Spain and others, they also have a strong influence on the culture of their time and send out shoots which even show in the works of the greatest spirits of their time. We need only think of Rousseau's natural philosophy, or the critical philosophy of Voltaire, which became ever more cynical though its aim was to enlighten, or the efforts of the Illuminati, who wanted to overcome the

prevailing cynicism, and similar circles. These progressive circles were crushed by reactionary streams, but continued to work in manifold ways underground.

So here you have the source of much that I have been describing. And you must attach a degree of importance to the following: The English Freemasons can maintain today that their lodges are entirely respectable and that any others are none of their business; yet if you look beyond the historical connections and the interplay of opposing currents, you are sure to find high-level British politics hiding in the background.

To understand the deeper meaning of these politics it is necessary to draw a little on recent history. Preparations having been under way from the sixteenth century onwards, there has been a tendency ever since the seventeenth century towards the democratization of society — in some countries more quickly, in others more slowly — by taking power away from the few and giving it to the broad masses. I am not here involved in politics and I shall not therefore express myself in favour of either democracy or anything else. I simply wish to state facts. The impulse towards democracy is having its effect in modern times at varying speeds, and so different streams are coming into being. It is a mistake, where several streams are apparent, to follow the course of only one. The way streams flow in the world is such that one always forms a complement to the others. Let us say a green and a red stream are flowing along side by side. Nothing occult is meant by these colours — it is simply to illustrate that there are two streams flowing side by side. Usually people are, let me say, hypnotized into looking at only one of the streams, while they fail to see the other flowing beside it during the same period in history. As you know, if you push a hen's beak into the ground and then draw a line leading away, the hen will always walk along this line. In the same way people today, especially university historians, see only the one side, and can therefore never really understand the historical process.

Parallel with the democratic stream there came into being the use of occult motives in the various secret societies — in isolated cases, also Masonic orders. In their purposes and aims these are not, of course, spiritual, but there developed, let us call it, a spiritual aristocracy parallel to that democratic stream which was at work in the French Revolution; the aristocracy of the lodges developed. To see clearly as a human being today, to be open to the world and to understand the world, it is necessary not to be dazzled by democratic logic — which has a place only in its own sphere — by empty phrases about democratic progress and so on; it is necessary

also to point to that other stream which asserted itself with the intent of gaining power for the few by means that lie hidden within the womb of the lodge — the ritual and its suggestive influence. It is necessary to point to this also.

This has been forgotten during the age of materialism, but before the fifties of the last century people did point these things out. Study the philosophical historians prior to 1850 and you will see that they pointed to the connection between the lodges and the French Revolution with all that followed it. During the period that can be seen as preparatory for today, western historical development, the western world, never emancipated itself from the lodges. The influence of the lodges was always strongly at work. The lodges knew how to find channels through which to impress certain directions on people's thoughts. Once a web like this has been spun — of which I have shown you merely a few strands — the button need only be pressed for things to be set in motion.

Emancipation from all these situations, and the impartial embracing of humanity as such, only really came about under the influence of such great spirituality as developed in German philosophy beginning with Lessing, and developing through Herder and Goethe. Here you have a spiritual stream which took account of all that lives in the lodges, but in such a way that the mystery was brought out of the obscurity of the lodges and transformed into a purely human matter. You need only glance at Goethe's fairy tale *The Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily*, at *Wilhelm Meister* and other of Goethe's writings. This was material with which the step to emancipation could be taken and which still today makes emancipation possible. So you may view that whole part of German cultural history portrayed in my book *Vom Menschenrätsel* ('The Riddle of Man') as a forgotten reverberation which is entirely independent of all the intrigues of the lodges.

In western culture over the last few centuries preceding our own day you will easily find many ways of demonstrating how the character of ideas in the exoteric world stemmed from the esoteric thinking of the lodges. Obviously this does not apply to the time before Queen Elizabeth and Shakespeare but it is certainly true of what came later. But the spiritual culture linked with Lessing, Herder and Goethe has no such connections. You might ask: What about German Freemasonry — in Austria it is proscribed, so there is none there — or Magyar Freemasonry? Well, the

others did not allow them to join in. They are quite an innocuous crowd. Though they might appear as thick as thieves with regard to their secrets, this is nothing but show.

The real, mighty impulses emanating from the quarters I have described to you are truly not found in German Freemasonry, which I have no wish to offend. So you can easily understand how it was possible for some rather strange occurrences to take place. Suppose, for instance, someone were to make known in Germany the things I have told you about societies, their secret connections and their external branches — the lodges of Freemasonry. It could be rather useful to make these things known there, but what would be the consequence? Experts would be asked to corroborate these things, and in this case the experts are the Freemasons themselves. But it would never occur to any Freemason in Germany to say anything other than that the English lodges do not concern themselves with politics, that they are concerned only with entirely respectable matters. This is all he knows, for he is ignorant of anything else. You can even be told — and this has actually happened — if you ask about specific names, that they are not on the list of members. They have the list but are unaware that perhaps the most important of all are not included in the list. In short, German Freemasonry is a quite innocuous society.

This does not alter the fact, though — and this may truly be said without any kind of arrogance or nationalistic affectation — that the spiritual life cultivated by certain western secret brotherhoods actually stems from Central Europe. Look at this historically. Robert Fludd: pupil of Paracelsus; Saint-Martin in France: pupil of Jakob Böhme. The origin of the movement itself is to be found in Central Europe. From the West comes the organization, the establishment in degrees — some western lodges have ninety-two degrees; just imagine how elevated you can become if you rise to the ninety-second degree — the use of knowledge for political aims, and the introduction of certain external elements.

We have just had an example which is quite typical, one to which I drew your attention. I am only describing these things in order to make you aware of their objective nature, just as the facts of natural history can be described; not from any nationalistic affectation. I drew your attention to the recent appearance of a book by Sir Oliver Lodge, in which he reports on communications he has received through various mediums from his son who was killed in action. A book like this, written by such a distinguished scientist, is sure to cause quite a sensation. Now that I have read the book there is no need for me to retract anything I said to you a little while ago. I

said at the time that I would return to this subject. The strongest proof offered by Sir Oliver Lodge is the following: Seances with various mediums result in the manifestation of the soul of Raymond Lodge, who died in action. These seances tell us nothing people do not know already and would be unlikely to make any strong impression on anyone. But one thing did make a strong impression on the eminent scientist Sir Oliver Lodge and his whole family, who up to that point had been very sceptical about such things. At one of the seances a group photograph was mentioned, showing Oliver Lodge's son together with other people. This photograph, one of several, was described as showing the same people at the same place, but in varying arrangements; the same people are seen, but with differing gestures. Raymond Lodge described this photograph through the medium at that seance in England. But Sir Oliver Lodge and his family knew nothing about this picture, for it had been taken at the Franco-Belgian front at the end of Raymond Lodge's life and sent by him to his family, though it had not yet arrived. So this medium described a group photograph which existed but was unknown to the family: the participants in the seance. They only saw it after it had been described by the medium.

For those who dabble in the occult, this is naturally tremendously convincing. What should you make of the fact that a group photograph is described at a seance, the participants of which know nothing about it? The family, the participants in the seance, know nothing of it and nor do the mediums, because it has not yet arrived in England. It is still on the way. It only arrived later. Yet an exact description is given of where Raymond Lodge is sitting in relation to the others and even of the way he has laid his hand on a friend's shoulder. What could be more convincing than this?

However, Sir Oliver Lodge's interpretation can only have been reached by someone who merely dabbles in the occult. If he had known nothing much but had investigated the literature — for instance Schubert or similar people who still wrote about such things in Germany around the first half of the nineteenth century — he would have found countless examples of something that every genuine occultist knows: When consciousness is damped down even slightly, future events can be seen. The most simple case of seeing a future event is when someone experiencing a moment of lowered consciousness sees a funeral procession which will not take place for several days. A person has not even died, yet someone sees his funeral. Something in the future is seen. This is quite normal when consciousness is lowered. So this is what took place: A photograph has been taken in Flanders and is on its way to England. The time will come when the family

will focus their eyes and their understanding on it, when they will bear it in their thoughts. The medium foresees it as an image of the future. Whether you foresee a funeral procession, or whether you foresee how a family receives such and such a photograph of their son in a few days' time — it is the same phenomenon: that of seeing a future event in advance. This is just a phenomenon.

If he had known something about real occult facts, he would not have interpreted the event as he did. Such an interpretation arises because occult values, occult laws, are seen from a materialistic standpoint. It comes about because people avoid undertaking that form of development which would enable them to comprehend the spiritual world in an inward process. Instead they want to see the spiritual realm by laboratory means, purely materialistically. The spirit is made materialistic, whether by Sir Oliver Lodge or anybody else. But this is only one example of what happens to everything that is spiritual. These things can be observed, just as you can observe the progression from Paracelsus to Fludd, from Jakob Böhme to Saint-Martin; everywhere the spirit is made more materialistic.

As the Anthroposophical Society we only succeeded in saving ourselves from becoming materialistic by emancipating ourselves from the Theosophical Society. For impulses emanating from the kind of society I have described penetrate deeply into the social fabric. Naturally, here again I must beg you not to misunderstand me. I am not saying that this is a natural characteristic of the western nations. But it exists and has succeeded in influencing the course of history and is not even without influence on the untruthfulness which is now playing such a devastating part.

It is particularly to this untruthfulness that I am obliged to draw you attention, for this untruthfulness always takes the form of accusation, of blaming others. That dismal New Year's Eve note is really nothing but an accusation based on a distortion of the facts, just as is the article by Mr Archer which I read to you here. But you see such things are beginning to be believed, they are beginning to play their role. In a few weeks' time people will have long forgotten that an opportunity to achieve peace was present in a form that could not be overlooked by the world, and that this opportunity was thwarted by the powers of the periphery. People in Europe will once again begin to believe that the offer of peace was refused by the powers of the Entente on purely humanitarian grounds, on the basis of the extraordinary reasoning that if one wants peace one must prevent it from coming about. Even such grotesque untruths as this are believed

nowadays. That they can be believed at all derives from preparations made by the kind of occultism I have been describing to you. It is indeed a sign of an arrant corruption of the soul when it becomes possible to write down side by side the two sentences I mentioned about the black and the white raven. And this corruption of the soul comes about as a consequence of an atmosphere tampered with by organizations such as I have described.

In this connection, too — I can say this quite objectively — there has been a tendency for Central Europe to emancipate itself. In all the Central European spiritual life thrown open by Lessing, Herder, Goethe, such as we have spoken about during the course of our anthroposophical life, you have seen clearly enough how the direction was towards a gradual evolution into the spiritual world. What it is not inclined to do, is enter into any kind of permanent compromise with what lives in the western streams such as those I have described to you. This is impossible. That is why things appear in a different way.

Let us look back for a moment to Fichte, so disparaged in the West today; let us turn to his *Reden an die deutsche Nation*. What is Fichte aiming at? That the German nation should educate itself! What he says in *Reden an die deutsche Nation* is not aimed at other nations; he is endeavouring to inspire Germans to improve themselves. But others seem to have what we might call a real 'genius' for misunderstanding whatever comes into being in Germany. That harmless national anthem *Deutschland, Deutschland über alles*, which, if you take the trouble to read the next few lines, speaks of nothing more than loving one's fatherland above all others — for only the different parts of the fatherland are named — is made into something utterly grotesque. In the same way, if one wants to, one can misunderstand Fichte, since he begins *Reden an die deutsche Nation* with the words 'I speak for Germans as such, and about Germans as such'. Why does he say this? Because Germany is divided into a whole number of small individual states, and he does not want to address the Prussians, or the Swabians or the Saxons, or the people of Oldenburg, Mecklenburg or Austria and so on, but Germans as such. He wanted to unite all the individuals. So he is talking to Germans and only to Germans. I do not want to praise the Germans, but such things may justifiably be included in a description of them.

I have brought up this matter today because there is definitely a tendency to sound a note in the centre, a note differing from that of the periphery. And if our anthroposophical work can contribute to this other note, there is no reason why we should not say so amongst ourselves. Just

today I received a pamphlet by our friend Ludwig von Polzer, who as you know worked here: *Thoughts during Wartime*. Whether you agree in detail with what he says or not, it is interesting to note that he is not particularly concerned with attacking and insulting others but rather with reading the riot act to his Austrian compatriots. It is to them he speaks. Obviously he has come to be an Austrian as a result of his karma, but he nevertheless reads the riot act to his Austrian compatriots. He does not say: We are blameless, we never did this or that, we are pure white angels and all the others are black devils. No, he says:

'Why does mankind hate itself and tear itself to pieces? Are external political differences of opinion really the cause of so much suffering? Every party to the fray claims to know what it is about, but in reality none of them know.

A declining, decadent culture is fighting its deathly struggle. The Central Powers, who are fighting for the first germination of a new culture, have not recognized it as yet; they fight for something they do not know, for something unknown to them; and they are themselves still filled with the convictions against which their own soldiers are bleeding in battle.

The old degenerate ways must be, as it were, vomited forth and that is why in their final fling they are running so wild.

Do we not come up against it amongst ourselves wherever we turn, this attitude of the Entente which bears the old, decadent culture? Has it not infected us as well? We see it on the streets in the latest fashions, it is embodied in modern architecture, it grins down at us from the hoardings, in commerce it runs to orgies, it inflates itself in bureaucratic madness, in its self-important untruthful humanism it lies to itself, our press seeks to outbid its colleagues of the Entente in devotion to the truth, and so on.

The Entente is here among us, fuming and raging, claiming to work for our honest soldiers and compatriots, almost all of whom have meanwhile died a sacrificial death.

All these things running so horrifyingly wild in our own country — let it be hoped for the last time before the end — are not deutsch.'

So all those things worthy of censure in his own country he calls 'not *deutsch*'. His main aim is to appeal to the conscience of his own compatriots. There are further, similar passages in this booklet. It is good that such a thing is said for once in connection with our own endeavours. There is no need for us to be in total harmony with every sentence that is written amongst us. The most wonderful achievement will be to work on all these things independently, preserving our individuality and taking nothing as dogma or as the word of a higher authority. Those things which are meant to come to the fore are quite able to do so without the help of any authority. But to give our Society meaning we need to stand together in unanimity. In part this means, of course, that we should be alert to what goes on amongst us and should recognize those who work alongside us and who endeavour to place before the world what goes on within our Anthroposophical Society in such a way that it really reflects the intentions of our Society. The main thing we can do to help our age is to work with understanding through the impulses of this age from our viewpoint. We need not lose heart, for however unfavourable conditions become in time, we may recall Lessing's words: Is not the whole of eternity mine? This is a thought that concerns every single human being.

We should be particularly careful to develop good practices with regard to the proper evaluation and estimation of all that comes to the fore amongst ourselves. In this connection I hope you will not mind my mentioning something, without wishing to say anything unpleasant to anyone. The periodical *Das Reich*, produced by Alexander von Bernus, makes every endeavour to move within our stream. So what does it matter if we agree or disagree with one or another of the articles it publishes? It is quite possible to disagree with a good deal. But many mistakes have been made on the part of our members with regard to this periodical. Seeing how it has been berated from all sides, I have to say that it is really not right to throw obstacles in the path of efforts which genuinely endeavour to work in harmony with our Movement. Of course everybody is entitled to his own opinion about the verses which Alexander von Bernus composed in connection with certain historical occult teachings which may be found amongst us. But I do consider things have been taken too far when floods

of blatantly rude letters start to arrive from our members. Where will it lead if we ill-treat those who are on our side while taking very little notice of those who insult us, just letting them go on doing so?

I wanted to bring up the matter of this periodical *Das Reich*, which strives to promote our endeavours, because I want to reply to the question that could be asked: What can we do? The very reason why these lectures have been given is to find a reply to this question: What can we do? What we can do is maintain an understanding attitude, in accordance with our anthroposophical spiritual science, towards everything going on at present! For what would be the significance of this spiritual science for us if we could really not transcend the attitude prevalent all over Europe today of people who speak of national aspirations and the like, and shape events in accordance with these national aspirations. Within the Society which serves anthroposophical spiritual science no one need become a faithless son of his nation, or deny anything he ought not to deny because he is firmly united with a particular nation as a result of his karma. But no one can be a true anthroposophist if he turns a blind eye towards the enormity of what is going on just now and allows himself to be deafened by all those means which some of those in power use today to stun us in order to avoid having to state what they are really playing at. So let me point out those things that are easily believed when they come towards us in a sentimental form, whereas what has always been hidden by the screens behind which occult events take place still has to remain hidden away behind these screens.

It must become clear to us that a time could come again — I am choosing my words very warily today, so I say *could* come again — in which the battle grows extremely terrible because peace is definitely not wanted. It could grow even more terrible than it has hitherto been if something is not introduced from one side or the other which can prevent this terror. Then there will once again be an opportunity to speak about the atrocities of Central Europe; then under the rubble and ashes will be buried the fact that these atrocities could have been prevented if people had not roared like a bull against moves towards peace. It was within the power of countries of the periphery to bring about peace. Yet the time will come — it is by no means unlikely that the time will come — when it will be said once again: The Germans are doing this or that and flouting every international law.

Indeed, my dear friends, it is once again fashionable for the encircling powers, having failed to bring about what could have held such actions in check, to accuse those who are encircled of protecting themselves on all

sides. We must come to see this clearly in all its enormity. Beside all that may very well have happened, for instance in Belgium, must be placed the fact that the British Empire could have prevented all that has happened in Belgium.

Harsh though it might sound, it has to be said that it is untruthful to speak about the atrocities in Belgium without taking into account how easily they could have been prevented by the English. And it goes without saying that we feel the tragic destiny of France. Yet France was truly in a position which could have enabled her not to participate in the war.

The Central Powers were not in a position to avoid waging a defensive war once it became obvious that France would take part in any case. It is all very well to say the two could have faced each other, frontier to frontier. This is the very thing that was not possible, because Franco-Russian militarism so greatly outweighs what is called Prussian militarism.

However strongly we feel we belong to one group or another, we can surely resolve to look at these things squarely — I say 'can', not 'must'. Then, when we work through this and make it a part of our lives, each in his own way will be able to do whatever he wants to do, in answer to the question: What can the individual do? Unless ever more and more people come to nurture the idea of making a united European stand against the belligerence of powers now at work invisibly, the collapse of European culture will indeed be inevitable. Even now a belligerent wave from the East is threatening to engulf us — from Japan, where a form of imperialism is in preparation which might turn out to be far mightier than any imperialism the world has so far known. The will to conquer is expressed in the cry of the new national anthem which, reminiscent of the English hymn, 'Rule Britannia', now resounds in 'Rule Nippon'. To show you that the powers of Europe would have good reason not to mock the word 'peace', not to mock the content of the peace idea, let me read to you this hymn, now quoted in Japanese newspapers:

*When Nippon, at the Lord's command,
Rose from the sea at dawn,
There sounded throughout all the world
A call from heaven's blue dome:
Born, Japan, are you to rule.
Rise proudly with the morning sun:
You I choose to rule the world.*

*Torn by hate and blinding rage
Europe drowns in her own blood,
But you, devoid of blame or fault,
Shall be the guardian of the earth.
Born, Japan, are you to rule.
Rise proudly with the morning sun:
You I choose to rule my world.*

This is what is now booming across the world from the East. This is the Orient's answer to Europe, bathed in blood. Yet despite this, there are people in Europe who want to scorn the call for peace! This is a fact to which we cannot give too much thought.

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Lecture 18

Truthfulness in the Practice of History

13 January 1917, Dornach

It seems to me today more than ever necessary that the members of our Movement should be knowledgeable about what is going on in the world. Indeed this purpose has been served to a greater or lesser degree by the discussions we have been having here. To speak of spiritual science in the way we understand it means to fill ourselves with knowledge of how our world, which we observe with our physical understanding and senses, is in fact a revelation of the spirit. As long as the spiritual world is taken in the abstract, as long as the human being is divided up into his constituent parts, as long as all kinds of theories about karma and reincarnation are expounded — something we have really never done here in such a theoretical way — spiritual science cannot become fruitful for life. That is why I have been directing your attention in all kinds of ways to external reality, whereby I never lost sight of all that stands behind this external reality, either by way of direct occult factors, or by way of impulses being used in one way or another by human beings.

Those who understand the true situation today to some extent will find it becoming increasingly obvious in future, when looking back at this time, that the old way of looking at history is no longer sufficient for an understanding of the present. Circumstances will make certain occult teachings necessary for the increasingly mature understanding of human beings, and those who shut out such possibilities will in future have to bear the mark of ignorance, of lack of understanding,

Since the nineteenth century it has been the custom to construct history purely materialistically, on the basis — as people put it — of the available documents. Today it is not yet realized that this does not lead to a true depiction of historical impulses, but merely to a description of materialistic spectres — paradoxical though this may sound: a description of materialistic spectres. Even in the best history books, the description of people and events of the past right up to the present shows nothing but spectres without any real life, however realistic it is meant to be. It can, indeed, only be a description of spectres because all reality is founded on

spiritual impulses, and if these are omitted, what remains are spectres. Thus up to today, the recounting of history has been spectral, yet in a certain way it has satisfied human souls; it has worked in a certain way.

In many respects, today's great tragedy is the way in which karma is lived through in such untrue, spectral ideas which people have gradually amassed. But within our Movement, too, we must not allow the process of history to fall into two disconnected halves — though there are some among us who would like this: On the one hand to luxuriate in so-called super-sensible ideas, which remain, however, more or less abstract concepts, and on the other hand to become firmly stuck in habitual opinions, no different from the ordinary vulgar understanding of external reality viewed entirely materialistically. These two aspects, external physical reality and spiritual existence, must unite, that is, we must understand that in place of traditional historical methods something must be developed which I have called symptomatic history, a history of symptoms which will teach us that the historical process expresses itself in some phenomena more strongly than in others.

Recently I have perhaps described things rather too realistically, though only for those whose feeling makes them ask: Why is he telling us things we anyway hear elsewhere? Look more closely, however, and you will find that you do not, actually, hear them elsewhere in the way they are described here. You do not find them juxtaposed as they are here, as symptoms in which various characteristic details unite to form a living concept of reality. The obvious question now is: How do symptoms such as the ones I have quoted come about? Let me go a little further into this.

During the course of these lectures I have mentioned a whole series of facts, some of which people might well consider excessively minute, such as that of the descendant of the Voidarevich family, the voivodes of Herzegovina, or that matter of the Russian-Slav Welfare Committee and so on. Such things could, in one way, be viewed as utterly insignificant. In another way, though, you could say: What is the connection between such things? What is this way of looking at history that collects widely different and separate details and then endeavours to fit them together in a total picture? A more direct way of asking me this question could be: How has it come about that as you have gone through life you have collected and know all about just these particular events, which have to be seen as characteristic of our time? I should like to answer this question in a way which I hope will give you a living idea of how spiritual science can intervene in life.

During the course of life one comes to know about certain things if one's karma leads to them, and if one's karma is allowed to take its course honestly and truthfully. Many people believe they are giving their karma a free reign, or are surrendering themselves to their karma, but this can be a great illusion. No one can follow external events in such a way that the truth is revealed to him, if he fails to surrender himself genuinely to his karma, if he fails to leave much in the subconscious realm, if he fails to let much pass unnoticed before his soul, for every morsel of sympathy or antipathy clouds free vision. Nothing is more likely to cloud free vision than what is today called the historical method. This historical method brings spectres into being because today's historian is unable to surrender himself to his karma. Obviously if he did so from his earliest years, he would fail every exam. He is not allowed to surrender himself to his karma and thus learn to know those things to which his karma leads him; he has to learn to know what the exam regulations and so forth require of him. But they require all kinds of things which of course tear his karma to shreds, and he can never arrive at the actual truth if he follows the stream of those requirements.

The actual truth can only be reached if these things about which spiritual science speaks are taken as seriously as life — if they are not taken as mere theories but as seriously as life. Another way of not taking them as seriously as life is to allow one's view to be clouded by all kinds of sympathies and antipathies. You have to approach things objectively, and then the stream of the world will bring you what you need in order to reach an understanding.

Now one aspect of surrendering to one's karma with regard to present events may be found in the fact that you, my dear friends, have been brought into the Anthroposophical Society by your karma. So it really should be possible in the Anthroposophical Society to speak about the facts without being hampered by sympathies and antipathies. If not, it would mean that, even within this Society, karma was not being taken as seriously as life.

I wanted to give you this introduction to what we still have to discuss because I wish to show you certain important spiritual facts which cannot, however, be understood unless we can link them to life, and unless we can penetrate the really tangled undergrowth of untruths which today buzz about in the world. The world today is filled with untruthfulness, and the sense for truth must be cultivated in the Anthroposophical Society for as

long as it exists — and regardless of how long it is likely to exist under present circumstances — if it is to have a real meaning, a real sense for life.

I have — you could say — burdened you with a great variety of things recently, not simply to throw light on them in one way or another, but because I am filled with the conviction that it is important to correct certain concepts. Those who believe that I say these things from any kind of nationalistic feeling, simply do not understand me.

Terrible accusations are being continuously hurled at the centre from what is today the periphery, all of which end, in some form or other, in the phrase: Never mind, the German will be burnt. Of course, people are ashamed to quote this directly. Among these insults is the fact that in the widest circles certain personalities, whose works are of course not known or understood, are pilloried as being the despoilers, the corrupters of the German people. One of those brought to the forefront in this way is the German historian Heinrich Treitschke.

Now, as I have said, I should like to view such a personality not from a national, but from a purely human standpoint. I told you that I never had much to do with Treitschke but that I did meet him once. I said that he was a somewhat blustering character. Today let me add that at that meeting I did form a picture of his being and his character, for we covered much more than just those first few words which I have already quoted to you. We spoke about historical interpretation, about publications on history which were causing rather a sensation then, in the nineties, and there was time — banquets usually last for several hours — to go into many questions of principle with regard to scientific history. I was well able to form a picture of this man at the end of his life — he died soon afterwards — quite apart from the fact that his work as a historian is very well known to me.

The main thing I want to say is that Treitschke is a personality who gives us cause to approach him to some extent from an occult standpoint. Socrates spoke, in a good sense, of a kind of *daimon*. In the case of Treitschke you could say that he was indwelt by a form of *daimon*; not an evil demon, a kind of *daimon*. You could sense that he was not merely driven by considerations of the materialistic intellect but that his driving force came from within, from what Socrates called the daimonic forces. I could even say that this is what led him throughout the course of his life. This man from Saxony was an enthusiastic champion of the nascent

German state; for he worked in a most significant way even before this state was founded. His *German History*, though, was written after its founding. In a manner characteristic of Central Europe, there lived in him something that is not known in the periphery, not only not wanted but also not known, something which people do not wish to understand. This was a sense for reality, for what is concrete. There lived in him a certain aversion to abstract theories and to everything expressed in empty phrases. This aversion was present with daimonic force to such an extent that you could look, you might say, through the personality to the spiritual forces speaking out of it.

In addition to this, Treitschke went profoundly deaf very early in life, so that he heard neither his own voice nor that of others, but associated only with his own inner being. Such a destiny turns a person in upon himself. The complete absence of a sense of hearing, far more than the absence of one of the other senses, brings a person who is so inclined into contact with occult powers which are at work and which usually remain unnoticed because people are distracted by their sense-perceptions from what speaks to them over and above their senses. So there is definitely a significance in a karma which makes a person totally deaf early on in life, and it is connected in this case with what I have called a daimonic nature.

This nature, this human being, in contrast to many — indeed most — people today, was formed and shaped as a whole. His intellect never worked in isolation; his whole soul was always involved. There are plenty of plain truths in the world, truths which can easily be confirmed by 'logical proof'. But special note should be taken, whether one agrees with them or not, of truths with which human blood accords, truths filled with warm human feeling. For the human being is the channel linking the physical world with the spiritual world, and we approach the spiritual world not only by studying the theories of spiritual science, but also by acquiring a sense of how each individual represents a channel between the physical world and the spiritual world.

Above all else, Heinrich Treitschke was a personality who strove to form his knowledge and his thoughts on the basis of a broad understanding, an understanding always founded on judgements of the soul and not of the intellect. His judgements were always warm because they were formed by the critical faculty of his soul. They may have had a blustery quality, but they were always warm through having been formed by his critical faculty of soul. From this angle Treitschke always placed at the centre of his considerations the question of human freedom, which — since he was a

historian and prepared himself early on to become the historian of his people — for him was always linked with the question of political freedom, freedom from the state.

There is among German literature a work which deeply penetrates the question of the relationship between the overall power of the state and the freedom of the individual, not only the freedom living in the individual soul, but freedom as it can be realized in social life. I know of no other work in world literature which penetrates so deeply into this question. It is entitled *The Sphere and Duties of Government* and is by Wilhelm von Humboldt, the friend of Schiller and brother of the writer Alexander von Humboldt. This work, written at the turn of the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, defends most beautifully the human personality in its full, free unfolding, against every aspect of state omnipotence. It is said that the state may only intervene in the realm of the human individual to the extent that such intervention leads to the removal of obstacles standing in the way of the personality's free unfolding.

This work stems from the same source as Schiller's wonderful *Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man*. I could say that Wilhelm von Humboldt's work on the limitations of the state is the brother of Schiller's *Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man*. It stems from an age when people were endeavouring to assemble every thought from cultural life capable of placing the human being firmly on the soil of freedom. For various reasons it was not much used during the nineteenth century, yet it was often enough consulted by those who, during the course of the nineteenth century, were endeavouring to reach an understanding of the more external aspects of the concept of freedom. Of course the nineteenth century was in one way the time when in many respects the concept of freedom was laid in its grave. But people were still keen to come to an understanding of the concept of freedom, and in this connection Wilhelm von Humboldt's work *The Sphere and Duties of Government* gained a degree of international importance in Europe.

Both the Frenchman Laboulaye and the Englishman John Stuart Mill took it as their point of departure. This work was an important point of departure for both these thinkers. Both, in their turn, and each in his own field, endeavoured to come to grips with the concept of freedom. Laboulaye considered that the institutions of his country, in so far as they concerned the relationship between state and individual, were suited only to the smothering of any true freedom, any free unfolding of the personality, by the state. John Stuart Mill, once he had discovered Wilhelm

von Humboldt's work, took his departure from it and argued forcefully, in his own work on freedom, that English society could only undermine a true experience of freedom. With Laboulaye it is the state, with John Stuart Mill society. John Stuart Mill's work poses the question: How can an unfolding of the personality be achieved in the atmosphere of unfreedom generated by society?

Then Treitschke, with the critical faculty of soul I mentioned just now, and linking his work to that of Laboulaye and Mill, himself wrote about freedom at the beginning of the eighteen-sixties. Treitschke's paper on freedom is of particular and special interest because as a historian and as a politician he is immersed in that schism which invades the human soul when, on the one hand it recognizes the necessity of a social structure called the state and, on the other, is filled with enthusiasm for what we call human freedom. In this way, in the sixties of the nineteenth century, Treitschke set himself to discuss the concept of freedom on the basis of Laboulaye and John Stuart Mill.

In this paper *Freedom* he endeavoured to work out a concept of the state which, on the one hand, does not deny the necessity of a state structure, yet, on the other hand, does make of the state something that is not the gravedigger of freedom; but its cultivator and guardian. A state structure that could achieve this was what he had in mind: This was the time, remember, when a German, asked to name his fatherland, might easily have replied: Schwarzburg-Sondershausen, or Reuss-Schleiz, or something similar. At the beginning of the sixties what we now call the German Reich did not yet exist. At a time when a great many people were thinking about bringing together in some way all the individual groups in which Germans lived, Treitschke, too, was thinking about the necessity of a state structure. But for him it was axiomatic that no state should be allowed to come about which did not guarantee, to the human personality, conditions in which it could unfold as freely as possible. Even if it cannot be maintained that Treitschke achieved any rounded-off philosophical concepts, nevertheless his paper on freedom does contain many points worth considering very deeply.

In appreciating Treitschke and taking into account those aspects which are important for an occult understanding of him, we must not forget that he was a fearless person willing to serve no god other than truth. Many things that are said today without any objectivity about Treitschke are the height of stupidity. Such judgements buzzing about in the world today cannot be given even the flimsiest of foundations, for the simple reason

that something is missing. I mentioned it the other day when I said that if people were willing to investigate what spiritual science has to say about the differences between the folk spirits, then fewer stupid statements would be made. I said this apropos of various stupid remarks made both by and about Romain Rolland. I had to say it because a really penetrating view of what is called a folk spirit can only be undertaken through spiritual science. Those who do not want to become involved in this can only reach subjective and therefore stupid judgements such as those of Romain Rolland.

Those who are willing to take into account what arises out of a spiritual scientific view of the folk spirits must be clear above all about one thing: that a person who is typical of his people will bear certain traits characteristic of that people. What made Treitschke typical was his daimonic nature. And it is true to say that to understand Treitschke is to understand much — not all, but much — of what was characteristic of the German people in the second half of the nineteenth century. Those for whom it is possible to gain a point of view from spiritual knowledge must investigate — not through cosmopolitan, but through national individuals — the fundamental difference that exists between western European and Central European judgements.

This cannot be taken into account for matters which are general and human, but they are relevant in so far as the daimon of a people lives in the folk spirit. With this reservation I shall say what I now have to bring forward. When the characteristics of a people are seen working through individuals it is possible to say what a certain American said. It is better if I tell you what this American said, because if I use my own words they might be taken amiss. He said: A French judgement, if it comes out of the nature of the people — not an individual, whose judgement might indeed be cosmopolitan — a judgement that comes out of the very substance of the French people lives in the word; an English judgement lives in practical political concepts; and a German judgement lives in an a-national, a non-national, search for knowledge.

This was said by an American travelling in Europe. It means that certain judgements formed in the West turn into something different when they are taken into the substance of the German people. In the West they are abstract in character. But a German belonging to the German people tends to translate judgements into their concrete components. He thus calls

many things by their true name which are never touched upon by their true name in the West. Let us take a concept we have been discussing: the concept of the state.

In his lectures on politics, which were later published, Treitschke spoke about the state. Of course very many people speak about the state; but let us for the moment consider only what it means when someone speaks about the state by drawing on the very substance of the people to whom he belongs. In the West people tend to speak about it by using the state as a hook from which to suspend all sorts of concepts which, for one reason or another, they want to link with the concept of the state. Thus they attach to it such concepts as freedom, justice and many others, and they might even come up with the peculiar statement: The state must be divested of any concepts to do with power; the state must be a *Rechtsstaat*, a state subject to the law. You can say this only so long as you are not obliged to look squarely at the concept of the state.

But if you approach the concept of the state in the way Treitschke did, you discover the mystery of the state. Instead of demanding that the state must be based on the principle that power is above the law — an assertion slanderously attributed to Treitschke — you come to realize that the concept of the state is unthinkable without the concept of power. Power is simply a truth in this situation because it is impossible to found a state except by basing it on power. If you refuse to admit this, you are quite simply not representing the truth. So Treitschke could not avoid speaking about the state in connection with power. This is then distorted by those who claim Treitschke to mean that in the German concept of the state, power is above the law. Yet there is no question that Treitschke ever thought like this. His soul was far too strongly imbued with the meaning of what Humboldt said in his *Sphere and Duties of Government*. Just because the state cannot avoid unfolding a certain power, it must not be allowed to become omnipotent. A *Rechtsstaat*, a state subject to the law, is a contradiction in terms, like saying — perhaps not iron made of wood, but certainly iron made of copper. The two concepts are disparate, to use a term from the sphere of logic; they have nothing to do with one another. But this conclusion can only be reached by one who takes things really seriously.

From the same viewpoint Nietzsche arrived at his concept of 'the will to power'. Again, it is nothing but a monstrous defamation to impute that Nietzsche defended the 'principle of power'. The only thing he defended was the need to consider how far power is indeed one of the basic drives

of human beings. It is quite in character that Nietzsche should postulate the following. He says: There are people who from certain principles of asceticism defend the thesis that power should be opposed. Why do they do this? Because by their very nature they can achieve quite a degree of power by means of opposing power! To oppose power is their particular will to power! To stress powerlessness is merely their particular will to power! To stress powerlessness in an ascetic way gives them in their own way a particular power! What lay at the foundation of what Nietzsche said, and also what pervades Treitschke's considerations is: not to try and convince oneself that black is white; to see things as they are in very truth and not to turn out empty phrases.

So you see, neither Treitschke nor Nietzsche intended to introduce into social life any kind of principle of power. Their concern was simply to show that power lives wherever the state manifests, and that it would be untruthful to maintain anything different. One could say that the karma under which Treitschke worked was: to come upon the idea that it is a monstrosity to live with the illusion of abstract, empty concepts which one trumpets forth into the world. He wanted to take a straightforward hold on reality and this is what is so attractive about his writings. From the same standpoint he could say of the concept of freedom: The question as to whether the state exists in order to promote, or not to promote, freedom, is no question at all. In other words, his object was to seek things where they live in their reality. I do not want to defend this, but simply to describe it.

Surely a fearless human being who only wanted to state things as he saw them with his sense for truth cannot be weeded out by means of inciting opinion against him. And yet everywhere these days people are weeded out by means of incitements against them. Treitschke is a fearless spirit whose aim, no matter what he is discussing, is truly never to mince his words. It would be far more to the point — I really must repeat this again — to indicate how Treitschke was in reality a kind of teacher for those who wanted to listen to him. There were not nearly as many who listened as is claimed nowadays. When Treitschke speaks about freedom he does this far less as a critic of other nations than as an educator of his own. I should now like to read you a passage from his article *Freedom*, which ought to be at least as well known as so much that is quoted out of context and which cannot possibly be understood without proper context. Having first discussed what aspects of society promote freedom, Treitschke writes:

'It is still most timely' — he is speaking in the eighteen-sixties — 'to speak of class prejudices. How truly discouraging to discover that this great civilized nation' — he means the Germans — 'continues to acknowledge the legal concept of misalliance in marriage, a concept thrown overboard by the ancients at the beginning of their rise to civilization. We do not, of course, refer to that crude titled gentry who hold a career in the stable to be more respectable than a scientific calling, and the rule of the fist more noble than the free citizen's respect for the law. That caricature of aristocracy has had its comeuppance. But even the motley crowd of the so-called educated, well-to-do classes cherishes a multitude of unfree, intolerant class conceptions. How hard are the loveless judgements passed on the shamefully misnamed dangerous classes! How heartless the deprecation of "luxury" for the lower orders, when a free and noble individual ought to be overjoyed to see the poor beginning to take some pride in themselves and the decency of their appearance! What abject fear at every sign of defiance and of self-respect among the lower classes! German goodness of heart has perhaps preserved our educated classes from developing this attitude in a form as crude as that held among blunter Britons; but so long as aristocratic interests, of which the cleverer among us have never been entirely free, take these forms, there is not much hope for our inner freedom.

We enter a field in which unfreedom and intolerance flourish in abundance when we enquire after the class concepts of that most mighty and exclusive of all "classes" — or whatever else you would like to call this natural aristocracy — the male sex. Unbelievably widespread amongst us, lords of creation, are the ramifications of a silent conspiracy, thoroughly to defraud women of a portion of harmonious human culture. For women gain a part of their culture only through us. Yet we take it for granted amongst ourselves that religious enlightenment is a duty of the educated man but a bringer of corruption to the populace and to women. Indeed, how many of us find a woman most particularly winsome the moment she displays some glaring superstition. And as for "politically-minded females", they are an abomination we prefer not to mention.

Is this indeed our manly faith in the divine nature of freedom? Is religious enlightenment really only a matter of sober understanding and not to a far greater degree a need of the soul? Yet we imagine a woman's warmth of heart might suffer if we let her take her own delight in the great spiritual works of the last hundred years. Do we truly understand German women so little as to imagine that they could ever become "political" and start to worry their heads over ground rents and commercial agreements? Yet the political poverty of our people has to it a human side which might be more deeply, more delicately, more intimately understood by women than by ourselves. Of this abundance of enthusiasm and love, which we so often confront with coldness, inner poverty and heartlessness, could not a small fraction be reserved for our fatherland? Must the shame of the French occupation return once more if our women are to feel themselves, as do their neighbours in East and West, daughters of a great nation? With our unfree lack of magnanimity we have maintained silence towards them for far too long about what stirs in our breast; we felt that they were great enough to be told no more than the most trifling of trifles; and because we were too small-minded not to begrudge them the freedom of culture and education, there is now only a minority of German women capable of understanding the earnest gravity of this momentous era.'

You see how it is possible to quote from Treitschke passages which refer to matters of general humanity, even though on his part he wrote them out of a national spirit for his own nation. If any of the nations who today abuse Treitschke had among them a spirit who meant to them what he means to Germans, you would see that they would place him on the highest pedestal. Imagine an Italian Treitschke. What would the Italians say if the Germans were to speak of their Italian Treitschke in the way they and many others speak of the German Treitschke. The infinite tragedy of our age is that it is stamped with ignorance and with all that counts on ignorance. It would be utterly impossible for such untruths to buzz about in the world today if it were not at every moment feasible to count on people's ignorance. By ignorance I do not, of course, mean the fact that not everybody has time to inform himself about everything. What I do mean is that a little self-knowledge is what is needed.

Of course certain situations cannot be judged if certain things are not known, and judgements born of ignorance, made about whole nations, work in the most terrible way. Today so very much is born out of ignorance. This is, as a matter of fact, caused by that black magic — I have described it like this on other occasions too — known today as journalism. It is a kind of black magic, and there was a certain truth in the way folk legend felt the inventors of the art of printing — with all the perspectives this opens up — to be black magicians.

You might now exclaim: As if there were not enough follies and oddities in anthroposophical spiritual science — now the art of printing is described as black magic! But I did only say 'a kind' of black magic. I have often stressed that it is wrong always to say: I must not let Ahriman anywhere near me; away with him! I must not let Lucifer anywhere near me; I only want to have dealings with the good gods! If this is what you want, you can have no dealings with the world, for whether you like it or not, the world hangs in the balance between Ahriman and Lucifer. It is impossible to have dealings with the world if you have this attitude of mind, an attitude which appears particularly frequently in our circles. One must achieve truthfulness even in the smallest matters. This must be the practical outcome of our efforts in spiritual science — the practical outcome. You can feel this in yourselves: If you cannot develop the urge for truthfulness in yourselves, you will always be open to the danger of being infected, influenced, by the untruthfulness that lives in the world.

That is why I said the other day: In future all the efforts that have been made towards peace will be forgotten, and in the periphery the only thing to be remembered will be the shouting-down of peace; but it will not be remembered as a shouting-down but as something that was justified; everything else will be forgotten. This is sure to be what will happen. So at least our discussions here should be a contribution to making it possible to sense the truth of the situation. For today one of the foremost demands made of those who are truly concerned with the welfare of mankind and the progress of mankind is that they should not allow themselves to be taken in by untruthfulness.

Let us look at one of the facts of today totally *sine ira* but not *sine studio*; without sympathy and antipathy but with a basis of facts. You have, I am sure, all read the note from the Entente to President Wilson. From a certain standpoint this note, in contrast to all the earlier ones, could be regarded as a favourable symptom for the future. For if things are taken too far, if

the bowstring threatens to snap, then there is once again hope, the hope that if spiritual powers are challenged, then the blow will also be returned by the spiritual side. This note certainly outdid all the earlier ones.

Let us now look at the facts. Here, roughly, is Austria-Hungary as it is today. [The lecturer drew.] Here is the Danube and this is where Vienna would be. Now assume that the demands of the note from the Entente are met. It says that the Italians — that is the Austrian Italians — want to be liberated. The worst thing about this note from the Entente is that it suffers from that inner untruthfulness which arises out of total ignorance. That is why it is difficult to make the drawing I now want to make. There will be difficulties, as you will see. Assume that the Italian Austrians are liberated. Now the southern Slavs are also to be liberated. This is rather difficult. If the southern Slavs were liberated, the map would look like this, for they live everywhere over here.

Further it is said, funnily enough: The Czecho-Slovaks are to be liberated. We know the Czechs and also the Slovaks. It goes without saying that only the Entente has heard of Czecho-Slovaks. Let us presume that it is the Czechs and the Slovaks who are meant. If we go by what the Czechs themselves think, the result would be like this. Then on to the liberation of the Romanians. This is what it would look like. Also to be liberated, as the note says '... in accordance with the will of His Majesty the Tsar', are the Poles inhabiting Galicia; but this is to be done by Austria herself. In the end, Hungary would look something like this, and Austria something like this.

This map is the result of carrying out what is said about Austria in the note from the Entente. And at the same time it is said that there is no intention of doing anything to the peoples of Central Europe!

The whole note demonstrates, for instance, a total lack of awareness of the difficulties of managing all this *here*, where the Slavs are in the majority, compared with *there*, where they are a tiny minority. The whole note lays bare the most arrogant, unscrupulous ignorance of the situation! With this ignorance, historical notes are written. And to add insult to injury it is further said that the only intention is ... I really don't know, for it is almost too repulsive to repeat these empty phrases.

What could be better proof than this note from the Entente of the fact that Austria was forced to defend herself? What could give better proof? In short, this note can only be seen as something pathological. It is a

challenge to truth and reality. It is taking things too far. So let us hope, since it is a challenge to the spiritual world, that this spiritual world will find it necessary to put things right, even though, of course, human beings will have to be the tools with which the spiritual world will work.

It really is time for an illustration such as the one I have sketched here to be shown all over the world in order to demonstrate this utter historical ignorance and lack of understanding about Central Europe. Obviously, where power rules, reason cannot have much effect. But a start must be made by understanding that, when rights and freedoms are mentioned, power is meant, actual power. Things must be called by their true names. This is what our time is suffering from: That people cannot bring themselves to call things by their right names, that people cannot make the resolve to call things by their right names. Many people fail to understand a great deal. When you come up against something like this absolutely idiotic division of the Austrian nations, it becomes perfectly obvious that this note stems from people who know nothing of what exists in Central Europe, yet who possess the arrogance to judge things about which they know nothing and who want nothing other than to extend their power over these territories. They could not care less what the real situation is.

But you do have to ask how such things could come about in the first place. For instance in some versions it says: Liberation of the Slavs, the Czechs and the Slovaks. But the Swiss newspapers, whose translation is probably more accurate, speak about Czecho-Slovaks. You will agree, if someone makes a correct statement, you are not curious about the source of his information; but when someone speaks absolute balderdash, such as the description of the nations in the note from the Entente, you do begin to wonder about its source. It is indeed not uninteresting to take note when situations seem to run, in a way, parallel, though of course without basing any hypothesis on this, or drawing any conclusions. I naturally asked myself: What is the source of these nonsensical terms? I repeat: Without forming any kind of hypothesis or conclusions, let me give you an *aperçu*.

In the last few days — I am not judging the fact, but simply telling you this — a sentence passed in Austria on the Czech leader, Kramar, has been made public. He was for a long time one of the most influential people in Austria. He was sentenced to death, and this sentence was then commuted to fifteen years hard labour. The wording of the sentence also includes the statement that certain articles that had appeared in *The Times* — in English, of course — had been found in the possession of Kramar in his

own language. Now Dr Kramar has a friend, the university professor Masaryk, who has fled from Austria and now lives in London and Paris. So let us consider certain sentences from Kramar's programme which were the basis on which he was sentenced. If you understand nothing about the situation in Austria and you read these sentences in *The Times*, or wherever else — they also appeared in Paris in *Revue tchèque* — and play about a little with the wording, not forgetting that Kramar of course uses the proper terms, you arrive, curiously enough, at the sentences about the peoples of Austria as they appear in the note from the Entente. And if the term 'Czecho-Slovaks' is indeed used, you gain the strange impression that Kramar was hoping to found a state consisting of Czechs and Slovaks, which would be meaningful. But those in western Europe who know nothing about the actual situation would make of this: 'Czecho-Slovaks'.

It is indeed necessary today, when so many underground channels play their part, to clarify certain questions about interconnections. I do not want to build any hypotheses, nor draw any conclusions in connection with what I have said, but the fact remains that a curious conformity exists between the sentence that was passed and the text of the note from the Entente. Obviously you can have different opinions about this sentence, depending on your point of view. Kramar could be seen either as a martyr or a criminal. But I do not want to pass judgement. The important thing is to be in a position to observe this curious conformity. As I said, I simply noticed this when I was puzzling about the origin, apart from everything else, of the stupendous ignorance on which the note is based.

We must certainly speak about this stupendous ignorance. For it is significant, and is one of the characteristics of our time, that on a basis of this kind of reality an opinion is expressed by those who dominate one half of the habitable earth. It is a challenge indeed to the spirit of truth.

[The next few sentences in this lecture refer to a quotation from an 'article' dated 25 July 1914 mentioning Rasputin, which the stenographer unfortunately did not record. Since they are meaningless without the quotation, they have been omitted. Ed.]

It will always be possible, if one has the power, to give the facts an impudent slap in the face — and the periphery does have this power. But you cannot slap truth in the face. Truth speaks and will — let us hope — also be an impulse which, when things are at their worst, can lead mankind to some kind of salvation.

We shall continue tomorrow.



Lecture 19

The Conscious Manipulation of the Subconscious

14 January 1917, Dornach

The nature of man is complicated, and very much of what actually goes on within the human being remains more or less beneath the threshold of consciousness, merely sending its effects up into consciousness. True self-knowledge cannot be won without first obtaining insight into the working of the sub-consciousness weaving below the surface in the impulses of soul. These, it could be said, move in the depths of the ocean of consciousness and come to the surface only in the wake of the waves they create. Ordinary consciousness can perceive only the waves that rise to the surface, and on the whole one is not capable of understanding their significance, so true self-knowledge is not possible. Merely pondering on what is washed up into consciousness does not lead to self-knowledge; for things in the depths of the soul often differ greatly from what they become in ordinary, everyday consciousness. Today we shall look a little into this nature of man in order to gain, from this point of view, an idea of how the subconscious soul-impulses in the human being really work.

In this field we can, of course, to a greater or lesser extent, speak only in pictures. But if you bring together much of what we have hitherto discussed within our Anthroposophical Movement, you will be able to understand the realities that want to speak through the pictures. We can say: The invisible nature of man, his ego, his astral body, his etheric body, work through his visible nature, so what is not manifest works through what is manifest. However, the manner in which what is evident works through what is not evident is very complicated. But if we work our way bit by bit through the various parts of this complicated process, and place them all together, we shall, in the end, attain an overall view of the being of man. Even this, though, will always remain incomplete, for the being of man is infinitely complex. But at least we can gain a certain basic knowledge of human nature as a valid foundation for self-knowledge.

Today we shall examine how the separate components of man's nature express themselves in a more or less pictorial or formalized manner through physical life. Here is a human being. To illustrate what I want to

tell you, I shall start with what we recognize for earthly man as the aspect of which we are conscious: the ego. I must emphasize that pictorial explanations can very easily lead to misunderstandings, because things said earlier seem to contradict other things said later. Follow carefully, and you will soon notice that such contradictions are, in fact, non-existent.



So let us start with the ego-nature of man, with that component we call our ego. This ego-nature is, of course, entirely super-sensible; it is the most super-sensible part we have as yet acquired, but it works through the physical. In the intellectualistic sense the ego works in our physical being chiefly through the nervous system which is called the system of ganglia, the nervous system radiating from the solar plexus. Diagrammatically we can indicate this nervous system, this system of ganglia, this system of the solar plexus, thus (see diagram, dark shading). It is active in a way which, at first glance, does not appear to have much to do with what, in a materialistic sense, we could call the life of the nerves. Yet it is the actual point of contact for real ego-activity. This is not a contradiction of the fact that when we begin to see ourselves spiritually, we have to seek the centre

of the ego in the head. Since the ego-component of the human being is super-sensible, the point at which we experience our ego is not the same as the point at which it chiefly works in us.

We must be quite clear what we mean when we say: The ego works through the point of contact of the solar plexus. What it means is this: The ego itself is equipped with only a very dull consciousness. The ego-thought is not the same as the ego. The ego-thought is what is washed up into consciousness, but the ego-thought is not the real ego. The real ego intervenes as a formative force in the whole human organism through the solar plexus.

Certainly you can say that the ego distributes itself over the whole body. But its main point of contact, where it particularly intervenes in the formative element of the human organism, is the solar plexus. A better expression would be the system of ganglia, because all the ramifications are part of this process — the system of ganglia. It is a process that lives in the subconscious and works in this system of ganglia. Since the system of ganglia plays its part in the circulation of blood as well, this does not contradict the fact that the ego expresses itself in the blood. The exact meaning of everything that is said must be considered. It is one thing to say: The ego intervenes through the system of ganglia in the formative forces and in all the life processes of the organism. But something else is meant when we say: The blood with its circulation is an expression of the ego in the human being. The nature of the human being is, as I said, complicated.

To understand the significance of what has been said, it will be useful to answer the following question: What is the relationship of the ego with the system of ganglia and all that is connected with it? How is this ego anchored, as it were, in the abdominal organs of the human being?

When the human being is in a normal state of health, the ego is chained to the solar plexus and all that is connected with it. It is bound by the solar plexus. What does this mean? This human ego, given to man during the course of earthly evolution as a gift from the Spirits of Form, has been, as we know, subjected to the temptation of Lucifer. The ego, as it now exists in man, and because it has been infected by luciferic forces, would be a bearer of evil forces. The truth of this fact must definitely be recognized. The ego is not a bearer of evil forces because of its own nature, but because it has become infected with luciferic forces through the temptation by Lucifer; it is in fact the bearer of truly evil forces, forces which, because

of the luciferic infection, tend to distort the thought life of the ego towards evil. Since the moment when the ego was given to him, man has been able to think. If there had been no luciferic temptation, man would think only good thoughts about everything. But as the luciferic temptation did, in fact, take place, the ego does not think good thoughts, but thoughts infected by Lucifer. This is a fact of earthly evolution: the ego is malicious and dastardly. It thinks only of showing itself in a good light and consigning everything else to the shadow. It is infected with all kinds of egoisms. This is how it is, because it is infected by Lucifer.

Now the system of ganglia, the solar plexus, is something in man that has come over from the Moon incarnation of the earth. It is a kind of house for the ego; the ego fits into it in a certain way. In fact, it can be held a prisoner there. So we have the following state of affairs: Because of its luciferic infection, the ego tends all the time to behave in a dastardly, lying manner and place itself in the light, while consigning everything else to the shade. But it is held prisoner by the nervous system of the abdomen. There it has to behave itself. By means of the nervous system of the abdomen the properly progressing forces, which have come to us from ancient Saturn, Sun and Moon, compel the ego not to be a demon in the bad sense of the word. So the manner in which we bear our ego within us is to have it bound by the organs of the abdomen.

Assume now that these abdominal organs are unhealthy in some way, or not in a normal state. Not to be in a normal state means not to want to take in fully what fits into them spiritually, what spiritually belongs to them. The ego can be somewhat freer in its activity if the abdominal organs are not quite healthy. If this freeing is brought about by some physical hyperactivity, this can express itself in the human being in that the ego is let loose on the external world, instead of remaining bound. When the ego behaves freely in this way, we have a case of psychological illness: the human being displays the characteristics of the ego infected by Lucifer. The characteristics of the ego of which I have spoken then make their appearance. There is certainly no need to be a materialist in order to understand fully the manner in which the spiritual — in this case the ego — can be bound to physical organs in life between birth and death, though in a way that differs from what is perceived by a materialist. There is no need to be a materialist to see how, in a manner of speaking, the devil can throw off his chains and break loose. This is one instance of psychological illness.

The freeing of the ego, however, is not necessarily a question of psychological illness, because another state of affairs is also possible. In such an instance it is not a question of illness in the abdomen but rather a 'switching off' of its normal activity. This is what happens in the great majority of cases of hypnotic consciousness. The functioning of the system of ganglia in the abdomen is put into a state — either by natural causes or by all kinds of mesmeric effects — in which it is unable properly to keep the ego under control. Thus in this way, too, the ego has an opportunity to become more involved with its environment. It is not embedded in the system of ganglia and is therefore free to make use of channels to the outside world which enable it to perceive from a distance all kinds of processes in space and time which, when it is embedded in the system of ganglia, are processes which it cannot normally perceive.

So it is important to know that a certain relationship exists between the hypnotized state, which in a mild way switches off the normal activity of the processes bound to the system of ganglia in ordinary consciousness, and certain forms of madness, where the switching-off is caused by deformation or illness in certain abdominal organs. If the ego is freed, if it feels, you might say, free of its chains and is linked, not with its body but with the spiritual forces in its environment, this is always, in a way, a pathological state, just as is also the case in madness. That is why some forms of madness are characterized by the appearance of spite, mendacity, cunning and craftiness — everything that comes from luciferic infection; the urge to place oneself in the light and consign others to the shadow, and so on.

Now you will understand why a person's constitution of soul depends on the very way the shell which binds his ego is fashioned. In order not to focus too closely on the human being and perhaps offend some human souls, let us instead look for a moment at a lion, a savage carnivore, and how it compares with a bull or an ox. You can see the difference. Even though the lion has a group ego while the human being is endowed with an individual ego, we can still use this comparison. What is the difference between the lion's nature and the ox's nature? The lion is definitely a carnivore while the ox is for the most part a vegetarian. The difference is this: What in the lion corresponds to his group ego is less bound; the forceful activity suitable for his abdominal organs makes the ego freer, lets it loose more on its environment, whereas in the vegetarian ox the group ego is more bound to the abdominal organs. The ox lives more bound up in itself.

You can see why it can be good sense for human beings to become vegetarian — of course, only if they so wish. For what does a vegetarian diet bring about? It makes the abdominal organs even more capable of binding the ego, which, if this does not sound like a paradox, leads to the human being becoming more gentle. His evil demon is more internalized and lives less in the environment. Nobody, however, should persuade himself that he does not possess this demon, for he does, but it is more imprisoned within him. It would be easy to set up an experiment to compare the behaviour of hungry carnivores and hungry vegetarians. When hungry, one is apt to be less inhibited. So it would be likely that the hungry vegetarians, who are in the habit of containing themselves as a result of their vegetarian diet, would be the more savage. For hunger brings about changes in the functions of the abdominal organs, which are then less able to fetter the ego than they are when satiated. I do not mean to be absolute in what I say, because the carnivore in any case binds the ego less strongly than the vegetarian. But I said that, in comparison, the hungry vegetarian, in contrast to his state when satiated, is likely to be far more savage than the hungry carnivore, in contrast to his state when satiated.

Human nature is indeed exceedingly complicated. One very good way of attaining some knowledge as a basis for true, genuine self-knowledge in life is to pay attention to the connection between the spiritual and bodily parts. I should add, though, that vegetarians should take care not allow themselves to become too undernourished. If they are undernourished they are in danger of damaging themselves, and then their chains — the prison for their devil, who shows himself in wiliness, lies and so on — are weakened. They then let their devil out into the environment, and the environment is troubled by their problems. Either that, or else they themselves have the trouble. They fail to cope with themselves, for they either constantly have a mania for manifesting the various bad qualities of the ego, or — if they are well brought-up — they have the urge to keep all this to themselves, in which case, too, it can happen that they fail to cope with themselves. All kinds of dissatisfactions arise in their soul. It is important to see this.



Just as the ego has its point of contact in the system of ganglia, so does the astral body have its point of contact in all those processes which are linked with the nervous system of the spinal cord. Naturally, the nerves run through the whole body; but in the nervous system of the spinal cord we have a second point of contact. Included in this, of course, are once again all the processes connected with this spinal nervous system. I am not speaking of the cerebral nervous system. I mean the nervous system of the spinal cord which has to do, for instance, with our reflex actions and is a regulator for much that goes on in the human body. In the present context we must include all the processes regulated by this nervous system. Again we have to see that the astral body is either bound to everything connected with this spinal system or that it can become free of it, through illness or through partial somnolence brought about by mesmerism or something similar. The entity which is bound here received its luciferic attributes, which are mingled a little with ahrimanic attributes, as long ago as the time of ancient Moon. Therefore these are weaker than the luciferic attributes of the ego, but they are present in the astral body, too. If you want to turn your soul to a contemplation of the process by

which this luciferic infection crept into the astral body, you will have to study what I said in my book *Occult Science* about the separation of the moon from evolution as a whole. This infection made its appearance during the time of ancient Moon. Here you will discover another reason for certain characteristics in the human being, characteristics of a hypnotic nature — higher hypnotic characteristics which are bound, in the main, to the organs of the chest and which bring in higher experiences than do the organs of the abdomen. At the same time you will see that if something is not in order, so that the astral body cannot be bound as it should be, something can again come about which is a psychological illness, a psychological disorder. Just as the ego can be released, causing signs of madness, so also can the astral body be released, which again leads to signs of madness.

When the ego is released, this leads, as I have said, to characteristics such as spite, cunning, wiliness, fraudulence, giving prominence to oneself and putting everyone else in the shade, and so on. When the astral body is released, this leads to volatility of ideas and lack of cohesive thought, manic states on the one hand or, on the other, to withdrawal, depression, hypochondria. Again, these conditions could be brought about by hypnotic or mesmeric intervention; but in this case the organs are not ill, but have had their normal physical function suppressed by the intervention of a hypnotist or mesmerist.

There is much in our human nature which must be held in check, for in a way we do belong to the devil. We are at least partially decent human beings solely because the devils in us are held in check by the divine spiritual forces which have developed in the proper way through the periods of ancient Saturn, Sun and Moon. Because of the various temptations, we do not possess all-that-great an aptitude for decency. A good many bad dispositions and moods of soul life are the result of meeting with the demon in us. The appearance of the demonic element comes about because what is bound can become unbound.

We shall speak on another occasion about what it is in the life between death and a new birth that binds those aspects that are bound by our physical body now, during life between birth and death. You will agree that we owe a great debt of gratitude to the cosmic order that here, between birth and death, we possess our physical organism, for without it we would have no prison for our higher components. When these higher components

are set free, after we have laid aside our physical body, different conditions come into operation, which we will discuss another time. Suffice it to say that the higher components still retain some fetters, even then.

Now, just as the astral body is bound in this way by the system of the spinal cord and all the processes of organic life connected with it, so is the etheric body bound by the cerebral system and everything that belongs to it. Therefore, the etheric body has its point of contact by means of the cerebral system. Similar things could be said here, too. In our head there is a prison for our etheric body. Madness or hypnotic conditions come into operation if the body is not quite well and the etheric body is let loose. Left to itself, i.e., not enclosed in the prison of the head, the etheric body has the tendency to reproduce itself, thus becoming a stranger to itself and spilling over into the world, carrying its life into other things. This is a description of the conditions that come about if the prison warden releases the etheric body.



So we have three possibilities for psychological illness, and also three possibilities of escaping from the physical body. These three possibilities must definitely be taken into consideration — but of course in quite a

different way — when a person is to become free of his physical body through Initiation. What we have been speaking about is a freeing brought about by illness, when the organs of the physical body do not remain healthy and are then incapable of containing the higher components. Somnolence of the brain would result if brain activity were damped down. The etheric body would be freed and a somnolent condition would take over. But when the brain is defective, the prison can no longer hold the prisoner — that is, the etheric body — which then embarks on its own adventures, endeavouring to live and create its own disordered, muddled life by opening out into the world. So you see clearly that psychological illnesses are, in the main, caused by a kind of freeing from the physical basis to which the various higher components of man belong during life between birth and death.

The etheric body, when it is freed, has mainly ahrimanic characteristics. Envy, jealousy, avarice and similar states will be pathologically exaggerated, always in connection with a kind of spreading into the environment, a kind of letting oneself go. Try to understand it like this: The only point of attraction for the ego is, more or less, the system of ganglia and whatever is connected with it; the astral body's point of contact is with the spinal system, but together with the system of ganglia; and the etheric body is linked with the cerebral system, but jointly, with both the spinal system and the system of ganglia. So, from this point of view, the system of ganglia also has to do with the brain, for instance, in so far as it serves all subconscious organic processes. If the system of ganglia brings about a process of illness which runs its course in the brain, then it could be the etheric body which is freed, even though the root cause lies in the system of ganglia. You see how very complicated things are.

Psychiatry today has, as yet, no means of distinguishing between these three forms of soul sickness. Psychiatry will only achieve some degree of perfection when distinction is made between psychological abnormalities brought about by the freeing from bondage of the etheric body, or the astral body, or the ego. Then there will be a really significant way of distinguishing between, and assessing, the various symptoms of psychological abnormality — and it will be important to assess them in this way.

You see from all this how self-knowledge can only be built up on a penetrating view of the complicated nature of the human being. Knowledge can certainly have disagreeable sides to it. But knowledge is not supposed to be a toy, for it is the most serious matter in the whole of

human life. Someone who knows everything there is to know about human nature — if he is even only somewhat inclined to understand it in a way which is not egoistic, if he is inclined to think and feel about it in an objective way — can have in this knowledge an important healing factor at his disposal. One might be too weak to use this healing factor; but this knowledge is an important healing factor. It cannot be gained by remaining in one's subjective nature; it cannot be gained by failing to extricate oneself from this.

This is a great problem for a movement such as ours. On the one hand it is necessary to strive earnestly for the highest knowledge, but on the other hand not everybody who decides to join such a movement is inclined to accept such knowledge with total objectivity and with full earnestness. Such knowledge brings health to personal life only if one is not constantly busy reflecting upon one's own personality, if one is not constantly wondering: How do *I* feel, what is going on in *me*, how am I getting on in the world, what is living in my soul, and so on. It brings healing only if we free ourselves from all that and concern ourselves instead with the affairs of mankind as a whole, matters which concern every human being. Difficulty arises only if one wants to concentrate on oneself, if one cannot get away from oneself. The more one is capable of turning away from oneself and towards all that concerns people and the world in general, the more can knowledge become a healing factor.

How glad I would be if only you would believe this! A movement like ours gives plenty of opportunity for observing the very opposite of what I have been saying. It is, of course, natural and justified that people who cannot easily get away from themselves should turn to our Movement for comfort and hope and confidence. But if they do not honestly strive to get away from themselves, if they continue to concern themselves with their own head and their own heart — not to mention whatever else very many people in our Movement are concerned with — then knowledge cannot become for them what, in truth, it is. It is possible to be interested in knowledge in such a way that it becomes not only a personal, but also a general human affair. The more personal considerations are involved, the more one is distracted from what is healing in all the knowledge about the deeper aspects of the world.

From the points of view we have now reached we must endeavour to gain clarity about how certain impulses in human nature are connected with the freeing of the soul and spiritual element, either in states brought about by hypnosis or mesmerism, or in madness. A process of freeing is

always connected with a merging into the spiritual element. But this is in turn bound up with a certain feeling of voluptuousness, with real voluptuousness, both direct and indirect. For whatever has become free — be it the etheric or astral body, or the ego — in a way pours itself into the spiritual world. And this pouring forth is definitely connected with inner feelings of bliss.

Somebody with a psychological abnormality gains a certain satisfaction from his abnormal soul activity and is therefore loath to depart from it. In every age, those who have concerned themselves with the healing of psychological abnormalities have reported the following experience: When doctors have found a way of healing their patients, it happens that as the moment of health approaches, the patient senses that he can no longer freely merge with his spiritual environment and that he has lost a certain feeling of voluptuous bliss, so he begins to hate the doctor who has taken this from him. Usually those who are not psychologically ill are grateful to their doctor when he heals them, but efforts expended on the psychologically ill are met with the opposite. You will find this documented in the appropriate literature. Doctors have frequently found that when a cure is effected, or even only an attempt is made to overcome the sickness, the patient begins to find his doctor abhorrent because he is taking away what the patient really wants, especially in his subconscious, even if he would consciously deny this.

Such things lead us deep into the mystery of the human being's soul nature. We then also understand that the ego, or the etheric or the astral body, after endeavouring to work with the help of their physical tools, if they then become free, yet are still strong and imbued with the forms they had within their physical tools, can more easily unfold certain forces than was possible for them within the diseased organs. That is why people with periodic illnesses — for there are cyclic, periodic abnormalities of the soul — when they once again leave their organism, often feel that they have capacities which they do not otherwise possess. This gives them great satisfaction, and when they then return to their physical body a certain awareness of what they have experienced remains with them; they can sometimes be very clear about themselves and what has happened.

During the first half of the nineteenth century a well-known physician, Willis, cured someone suffering from madness; that is, he brought him to a point at which he was once more capable of thinking sensibly about himself. And this person, who was intelligent, wrote a kind of review of his madness. If you take into account what I have just said, you will well

understand what this intelligent individual wrote. His illness involved the freeing of all three higher components. He wrote 'I expected my fits of insanity with impatience ... with bliss'. Remember, he awaited the moment of leaving his body with impatience because he knew he would then enjoy a kind of bliss.

'Everything appeared easy to me. No obstacles presented themselves either in theory or practice. My memory acquired, all of a sudden, a singular degree of perfection ...'

Someone who understands these things can tell from this that the patient must otherwise have suffered from severe constipation, i.e. an abdominal condition, which led to a dulling of his memory. As soon as his ego tore itself free, his memory was again intact.

'Long passages of Latin authors occurred to my mind. In general, I have great difficulty in finding rhythmical terminations, but then I could write verses with as great facility as prose.'

You see how exactly the patient described himself, and it is understandable that in a certain way he endeavoured to induce the abnormal state. This cannot actually be done, of course, but he was glad when it came, for it brought him voluptuous enjoyment.

This is the main difficulty in the case of psychological abnormalities for, subjectively, the patients have to be led from a happy to an unhappy state of mind, and so they are truly downcast about it. In their ordinary consciousness this is different, of course, but in their subconscious they are downcast if they are cured. Of course they go to the doctor and say they want to be cured; but subconsciously they do not, in reality, want to be cured. This is the difficulty. The freed component or components resist with all their might being torn away from the bliss they enter when they are freed. You see how, by looking at things in this way, we do justice to the material foundation of our physical existence, and yet we do not become materialists.

Take a person who is stupid to a greater degree than is apparent in external life. There are such people. Well, stupidity is only one stage on the way to a certain abnormality of soul: namely, imbecility. The cause is possibly that the otherwise bound etheric body is free because the brain is too compact and cannot achieve sufficient fluidity in the way it works. Perhaps this person shoots himself in the head without killing himself. Someone who knows what to look for might find that this is not a bad thing, as long as he had not done himself any other harm. For the resulting loosening of his compact brain might lead to his becoming clever. There are certainly known cases in which head wounds have led to people becoming more wide awake than they were before.

There is truly nothing in the physically-perceptible world as complicated as the nature of the human being. It is more complicated than anything else in the world. To understand man in his totality you have to view him in the way I have been describing. We have seen, for instance, that in the human being as he stands before us with his head, the activity of this head depends in some degree on the etheric body connecting up in the right way to it. Abnormal activity comes about if the etheric body is freed, if it is unbound. Because of the way the human being is normally organized with regard to his sense organs and the nerves of his brain, the etheric body can have a normal relationship with the ordinary environment. What man is as a result of the special connection between his etheric body and his head makes him into a human being like all others in his existence between birth and death in the physical world. If we had nothing else about us except the normal connection of our etheric body with our head, all human beings would be the same, and there would also be no way of feeling connected with that part of our being that is immortal. For our head brings to us the experiences we have in life between birth and death through our senses, through the nerves of the brain.

Consider this in connection with what I have said about the loss of the head during the course of reincarnation: What is now our head was in our previous incarnation our body, and what is now our body will become our head in our next incarnation. We know about this connection with our immortal part which runs through all births and deaths, even though without the wisdom of spiritual science this knowledge can only take the form of a belief. Through our head we can understand this connection, but we can only have this knowledge because we have the system of the spinal cord as an organ of our astral body. This is where those ideas and feelings are wrought which bring us into a mutual relationship with our immortal, our super-personal, part.

Everything we possess only for this life between birth and death is given to us through the earthly, solid element in our organism. On other occasions I have pointed out that there is indeed very little of the solid element in our make-up, of which ninety-five per cent consists, in fact, of fluid, of a pillar of fluid. The human being is a pillar of water containing only five per cent of solid ingredients. Yet only this solid element can be the bearer of our ordinary thoughts in physical life; and only in so far as we are permeated by the fluid element with its pulsation can we know about our super-personal part. And this fluid element with its pulsation is linked with the spinal system, which for the most part regulates this fluid element and its pulsation.

How all this is related to certain things I have described on other occasions, to the pulsating rise and fall of fluid between the abdomen and the brain, I shall discuss tomorrow, for at the moment it would take us too far from today's theme. Now, because the human being bears the fluid element within him he is linked with his super-personal part. But this fluid element also establishes his specific personality. If we had only heads, we would all think the same, feel the same. But because we also have hearts, the fluid element, blood and other juices in us, we are specific in some degree; for through this element the hierarchy of the angeloi can have a part in our being. The hierarchy of the angeloi can intervene in us via the fluid element.

A third possibility for intervening in our being is given because even with the normal working together of the higher components with the system of ganglia, it is possible for the airy element and everything connected with it to have an effect on us. This happens in the process of breathing. It is very complicated, and it varies depending on where we breathe, on how much oxygen, how much humidity, how much sun warmth is in the air and so on. It is the hierarchy of the archangeloi, the archangels, who work on us via the airy element. And everything that works in us from the hierarchy of the archangeloi — both those who have progressed normally and those who are retarded — works via the system of ganglia. Also this is the route by which the folk spirits work, for they belong to the hierarchy of the archangeloi. The work done by the folk spirits in the human being takes its effect through the organs which are connected with the system of ganglia. This is why nationality is something so far removed from consciousness, something that works in such a demonic way. And for the reasons I have pointed out it is linked so strongly with everything to do with locality. For

the locality, the local climate, is far more closely connected with the working of the hierarchy of the archangeli than one might imagine. Climate is nothing other than what works on the human being via the air.

So you see that by discussing the system of ganglia one is indicating how the impulses of all that belongs to the folk soul work in man's unconscious. You will now also understand why, more than one might ordinarily think, belonging to a particular nation is connected with certain characteristics which are linked to the system of ganglia. More than one might think, the problem of nationality has to be seen in relation to the problem of sexuality. Belonging to a nation has the same organic foundation — the system of ganglia — as the sexual element. Quite externally you can understand this when you remember that you belong to a nation by birth, that is, your body develops inside that of a mother who belongs to a particular nation. This of itself creates a link. So you see what subterranean soul foundations connect the problem of nationality with the problem of sexuality. That is why these two impulses in life manifest in such related ways. If your eyes are open to life you will see a tremendous amount of similarity between the way people behave in an erotic sense and the way they show their connection to their nationality. I am not speaking either for or against either of these things, but the facts are as I have described them. Arousal of a nationalistic kind, which works particularly strongly in the unconscious if it is not brought up into ego-consciousness by making it a question of karma as I described the other day, is very similar to sexual arousal. It is no good glossing over these things by making out that the emotional illusions and longings of national feeling are noble, while sexual feelings are rather less so. For the facts are as I have described them to you.

From all this you will see that a good amount of agreement can be reached amongst people in matters of the head, for in the head everyone is the same. If we consisted of heads only, we would understand one another famously. It is peculiar to say: If we consisted of heads only. But when life has brought one together with all kinds of people one grows accustomed to speaking in paradoxes such as this. In parenthesis, let me tell you that I once met quite an important Austrian poet who also entertained philosophical thoughts and was terribly worried about the way human beings were growing ever more and more intellectual. He said: People are growing more and more intellectual, so in the end the rest of their body will waste away and there will be nothing left but walking heads. He was quite serious.

If, as I said, we were heads, it would be easy for us to reach an understanding about all kinds of things. It is less easy to reach an understanding about matters which have to be comprehended via the tool of the spinal system. That is why people are embattled with regard to their view of the world, their religion and everything else they connect with what is super-personal. And there is no doubt at all that today they are embattled also with regard to everything for which the system of ganglia is the organ. By this I do not mean the external war; I mean the war that speaks in the language of hate against hate, for the external war need not necessarily have anything to do with all that is unfolding in such a terrible way in the form of hate against hate.

It is essential for people to become conscious of these things. Only if people can come to understand the nature of the human being will it be possible to find a way out of that chaos into which mankind has entered. Tomorrow we shall speak more about this chaos. But we must be clear about one thing: The knowledge and understanding we gain about the complicated nature of the human being must be filled with a mood that I described just now as an impersonal mood.

So far I have only described harmless, personal moods such as those in people who cannot cope with themselves, who go on and on about their heart, or one thing and another. But in the world at large we meet with less harmless moods, either personal or belonging to the egoism of a whole group. Occult knowledge is not always applied in a selfless manner, as you saw during our considerations over the past few weeks. We can certainly look more deeply into the impulses at work in human history if we have an understanding of the complexity of human nature. For what we can come to know with regard to the individual is connected in turn with all that happens between people, both on a one to one basis and also between the different groupings that come about during human evolution.

Now I told you that occult knowledge was used by certain secret brotherhoods in order to give a turn to events which would serve not general human aims but the egoistic aims of a particular group. I told you that certain secret brotherhoods entertained views about how Europe ought to be structured and how they could influence that structuring. Today I want to add to what has already been made plain something that has not yet been mentioned. I do this because it seems to me to be a good thing that once at least, in however small a circle, something is said which will certainly be made known in the future, just as the division of Austria has been made known in the note from the Entente to President Wilson.

Those who knew about these things could have sketched the division of Austria as long ago as the nineties — I do not want to go back any further — on the basis of the maps I have already mentioned.

Whatever is made publicly known is only a fragment. It flows into external, exoteric affairs at a time when it is considered to be useful; but the rest, meanwhile, is held back. Truly, I say what I am now going to tell you not from the slightest political or inflammatory motive, but solely in order to let you have the facts. They do exist in the world. I am truly very far from wanting to worry anyone, or persuade anyone to believe anything in particular or be anxious about anything; for I am concerned only with knowledge. So let me sketch approximately part of the future map of Europe as it was worked out in those secret brotherhoods. So as not to take too long, my sketch will only be approximate. As I said, this is the form which such secret societies thought Europe should take at some point in the future. [The lecturer drew.]

First they turned their attention to the southern European Balkan confederation. This was to be a kind of bulwark against Russianism. Obviously, in the West, Russianism was considered to be the opposite pole, definitely not something with which to remain linked for ever, but something against which there would always be a need to fight. Since the intention was to weld together the present Kingdom of Italy with the Balkan Slavs and the southern Slavs at present belonging to Austria, this confederation would comprise a large part of the Apennine peninsula, the Italian-speaking part of Switzerland, the southern part of Austria, Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia. To this the northern part of Greece would be added. The confederation would also include Hungary and the Danube estuary. This would be the Balkan confederation. Next to this, eastwards, would be everything belonging to Russia in the wider sense. In the programme shown in these maps it was always — I mention this expressly — sharply stressed that however Poland might behave, it was a necessity of world history that the whole of this country should, whatever the circumstances, be returned to the Russian Empire. From the start the programme said that Poland, including the parts now belonging to Prussia, must once again be included in the Russian Empire. So according to the programme, the Russian Empire would include today's Poland, and also Galicia reaching beyond the Slovaks. The part that I am shading here would dip in like a peninsula. This would be Bukovina. [Drawing was continued].

Then would come France which, starting at the Rhine estuary, would cover the territory over as far as the Rhine and the French-speaking part of Switzerland and would be bounded here by the Pyrenees, and here something like this. Nothing much was said about the Scandinavian peoples. No doubt they have been granted a good long respite.

The rest would be: German-speaking Switzerland with Germany and the German parts of Austria. They would cover this area. And these coloured parts would fall more or less into the sphere of influence, however that may appear, of the British Empire: Holland, Belgium, the coast, Portugal, Spain, the lower part of Italy — we can speak about the islands another time — and the southern part of Greece.

So here we have a map for which the one we tried to draw on the board yesterday is clearly a kind of payment on account. The Central European part looks quite similar to that implied by the note from the Entente to Wilson. This is what was seen to be an ideal structure for Europe. I repeat yet again: This is not something remotely intended to influence anybody. All I want to show is that this structure for Europe, clearly traceable by me to the nineties, or even the eighties, was taught in certain secret societies.

The reasons for wanting to shape Europe like this were also always given. The ways and means — of course the reasons were eminently sensible — for achieving this structure for Europe were more or less described. We shall talk about this tomorrow. Just let me say that I am not making this up. It is something that lived as a powerful impulse in many heads, something that had to be brought about, something that would have to be brought about by every effort.

I know very well how ill will could easily maintain that it is improper, in consideration of a particular point, to say such things precisely here, of all places. But I do not want to be inflammatory, nor do I want to set up a picture of the future, either for those nations now at war or for those who are neutral. I have nothing to do with these things. I speak about them merely to show you the impulses which existed in those circles. What we have here is a picture of the future arising from endeavours to use certain impulses in the egoistic interests of a group. Those who are shocked to see what would disappear, might remind themselves that we are concerned with the tasks of mankind in general. Things which emanate from the egoistic interests of a group are obvious, and there is no need to regard them as fateful, as pending fate. What I do regard as fatal, however, is the attitude of hiding one's head in the sand, of simply refusing to recognize

such facts because they are uncomfortable, with the excuse that such things ought not even to be thought because they might cause disquiet. Of course I know that it could be said: We should not speak about such things because they might upset people who are honestly striving to be neutral. But the foundations on which we stand ought to have enabled us to transcend this kind of upset by now. We should be capable of looking at what is really happening in the world. And when I say these things it is on the assumption that you are sensible enough to take them in the right way.



Lecture 20

The Battles of the Fifth Post-Atlantean Period as Expressions of the Conflict Between Materialism and Spiritual Life

15 January 1917, Dornach

I pointed out yesterday how the spiritual components of man's being have their points of contact in his physical organism. Awareness of this will have to enter into the consciousness of mankind as a whole, for it is this knowledge that in truth must lead man to the light out of the darkness of today's materialism, which will last for a very, very long time. Never, though, must the thread of spiritual knowledge be lost entirely. At least a small group of human beings must always ensure that this does not happen. I have already shown how the true discoveries of material science — which anthroposophical spiritual science must certainly not fail to recognize — are put in the correct light when things are seen spiritually, especially the human being. The examples I started with yesterday can show you how the physical processes in the human being are fully recognized by spiritual science — only spiritual science recognizes what is spiritual and investigates how the spiritual element is anchored in the physical element, especially, in the first instance, in the human being.

Thus we avoided the pitfall of seeking the spiritual element solely in abstract concepts which are unable to deal with something that has been created by it, namely, the material world. What is spiritual must not live only in a Cloud-cuckoo-land floating above the material world. It must be so strong and intense that it can permeate the material element and show how spiritual it is and how it has been created by the spirit. Thus true spiritual knowledge must come to the possibility of understanding the material world and existence on the physical plane. It is important now, of all times, to pay attention to the interaction of spiritual and material elements in the human being, because now it is necessary properly to understand the intervention of something not material, namely, the folk soul, in the human being.

I said: Those things in everyday life which we think, feel and will — not as members of one group of people or another but as citizens of the earth — are bound to the solid, earthly element. Even though only five per cent of our body is made of this earthly element, I said that that in us which gives us in the world between birth and death our purely personal knowledge, will impulses and degrees of feeling, is bound to the mineral, solid element of the brain; that is where it has its point of contact. As soon as we progress to what leads us into super-personal or sub-personal realms, we can no longer count on conceptions which are brought to us by the solid element, for conceptions here are brought by the fluid element. And conceptions which take us so far into the super-personal or sub-personal realm that we come to the intervention of the archangeloi in our being are brought to us by the airy element. The airy element is the mediator between these archangel beings and their sphere and everything which the human being experiences in that very subconscious way I described yesterday.

Well over ninety per cent of our physical being is a pillar of water, a pillar of liquid, but this liquid element in the human being, of which very little account has so far been taken by natural science, is the main bearer of life in the human being. I have pointed out how the aeriform element works through the liquid element into the solid element which is anchored in the brain. We breathe in; because we breathe in a stream of air and fill our body with it, the organ we call the diaphragm is pushed down. In this sucking-in of the stream of air and everything that goes with it, down to the lowering of the diaphragm, is to be found that sphere in which the impulses emanating from the kingdom of the archangeloi work. Just as all this remains in the subconscious, so does the real manner of the folk soul's working remain in the subconscious. As I said by way of comparison yesterday, it surges up like waves, in a form that differs utterly from the way it lives down there in the depths. When the diaphragm is pushed downwards it, in a way, dams up the blood in the veins of the abdomen. This pushes the stream of cerebral fluid upwards through the spinal cord so that it pours into the brain, or rather round the solidified mass of the brain. So now, as a result of breathing in, the cerebral fluid is in the brain, has been pushed up. In the way these pulsations of the cerebral fluid work lie all the impulses that come into man from the sphere of the archangeloi, everything man can have in the way of conceptions and feelings which lift him into the realm of the super-personal or sub-personal, everything that connects him with the forces that reach beyond birth and death. And in the brain itself the cerebral fluid comes up against the solid element.

Parallel with this runs the process by which all our ideas and conceptions ebb and flow in the liquid element. These ideas and conceptions are spiritual entities which ebb and flow in the liquid element, and they appear as our everyday conceptions relating to the external world because they come up against the solid element and are mirrored back by this solid element into consciousness.

When we breathe out, a damming-up takes place in the blood vessels of the brain, and the cerebral fluid is pushed down through the spinal cord into the abdomen. There is room for it there because breathing out has raised the diaphragm. So thinking and having ideas and so on is not the mere brain process of which the sciences of anatomy and physiology dream today. What takes place in the brain is a mirroring-back by something solid, and this is connected with what is not mirrored but remains in the fluid element whence, via the detour of breathing, it regulates the influence of the aeriform element. This is also the detour via which everything is mediated to us which belongs to a particular climate, the local soil conditions of a particular terrain and all the other influences connected with breathing. That part of breathing which never enters our consciousness but remains like an ocean swell, is where spiritual realities surge. Via the detour through the cerebral fluid the breathing process is connected with the brain.

Here you have a physical process belonging to the whole human being, described in such a way that you can recognize it as a revelation of the spirit which surrounds us everywhere, just as does air or humidity. This gives you, through a true understanding of physical processes, an insight into how his earthly surroundings, together with the spirit contained in them, work on man, and into how, as a being both spiritual and physical, man is embedded in his earthly environment, which is also spiritual and physical. The air, water and warmth which surround us are nothing other than bodies for the spirit, just as our muscles and nerves are bodies for the spirit.

I am presenting you with these things now because they show how human life is founded on processes which are not at all obvious to present-day science. It will be the task of the fifth post-Atlantean period to raise these processes to the level of true knowledge. During the course of the fifth post-Atlantean period this realization must enter into everything we do — in teaching, in education generally and in the whole of external life. It must, in due course, be recognized that what is seen as science in materialistic circles today will gradually have to disappear from the life of

the earth, together with all the consequences it has for life. All the battles still to be won in the fifth post-Atlantean period will be no more than an external expression of a spiritual battle, just as, in the final analysis, the present battle is an external expression of the confrontation between materialism and spiritual life. Hidden though these things are, behind today's infinitely sad events lies the battle of materialism against spiritual life. This battle will have to be fought to the end. It will take various forms, but it must be fought to the end because human beings must learn to bear everything they need to bear in order to achieve the spiritual view necessary for the sixth post-Atlantean period. It may be said that there must be much suffering, but only out of pain and suffering can arise what truly binds knowledge to our self. For the other side of the coin is that connected with the materialistic view of the world, is the materialistic way of life, which is only beginning today but which will take on infinitely more terrible forms.

The materialistic way of life began when science became willing to recognize only what is material. It has already led to a stage at which people are prepared, in life, too, to accept only what is material. This will be taken much, much further and will become far more intense. For the fifth post-Atlantean period must be lived to the end. In all areas it must reach a kind of climax. For spirituality needs its opposite pole if it is to recognize itself with the intensity that will be needed if mankind is to step with maturity into the sixth post-Atlantean period.

So do not shy away from following the spiritual guidelines offered as a possibility for comprehending the external facts of the world. For it is the prime task and duty of all those who strive spiritually to comprehend the course of human evolution up to the present and also to understand the likely evolution of the future in spiritual directions. We have often spoken of our inheritance from the fourth post-Atlantean period which ended in the fifteenth century, and of the fact that it is the task of the fifth post-Atlantean period to develop to the full the consciousness soul.

Now it is precisely the consciousness soul which will unite man intimately with all material events and everything belonging to materialism. We have seen how, in the fourth post-Atlantean period, from the eighth century BC right up to the fifteenth century AD, the Greco-Latin element gradually came to dominate the world, first in what is usually called the Roman Empire and later in the Roman Papacy which reached the climax of its dominance during the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth centuries. This is at the same time the beginning of the fifth post-Atlantean

period. It coincided with the first breaking of Roman Papal dominance. It is also the beginning of those impulses whose influence has brought about the present sad events. In the end no one can understand what is going on today without taking a wider view. For really all the peoples of Europe have contributed their share to the sad events of today's Europe. Those who want to understand things must necessarily turn their attention to impulses which have been in preparation for a long time and which today are being given a kind of first chance to show themselves.

So today we shall bring together what can be seen far in the future with things that are close at hand. First let us remember the description I gave of how the southern peoples, the Italian and Spanish peoples and the various kingdoms they have brought forth, represent a kind of after-effect of the third post-Atlantean period — of course, with the inclusion of the overall heritage of the fourth period. You need only follow the whole structure of Italian-Spanish development as it took place at the turn of the fourth to the fifth post-Atlantean period, in order to see that it still included what was directly justified in the third, the Egypto-Chaldean period. You can see this especially in the way in which, emanating from Rome and Spain, a religion spread which was borrowed from the cults of Egypt and Chaldea. In this you have the continued existence of what had been left behind in Egypt and Chaldea, and this reached its climax in the thirteenth century.

Papal supremacy emanated from the South and reached its climax in the thirteenth century. In order to describe it in a way which is meaningful today and which fits the facts, we should have to say that this papal supremacy, which covered and dominated the whole of European culture, was essentially the ecclesiastical element of cultus and hierarchy. This ecclesiastical element of cultus and hierarchy, which was a transformation of ancient Rome into the Roman Catholicism which streamed into Europe, is one of the impulses which continue to work like retarded impulses throughout the whole fifth post-Atlantean period, but especially in its first third. You could, I might add, work out how long this is going to last. You know that one post-Atlantean period lasts approximately 2,160 years. One third of this is 720 years. So starting with the year 1415, this takes the main period to the year 2135. Therefore the last waves of hierarchical Romanism will last into the beginning of the third millennium. These are echoes in which the impulses of the fourth post-Atlantean period assert themselves in the forms of the third post-Atlantean period. But many

things work side by side at the same time, so there are other impulses working together with these. Roman Catholicism had its actual climax in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

Let us now see how it continues. We have to distinguish the way it worked up to the thirteenth century — when it was, you might say, justified, because that was still the fourth post-Atlantean period — and what then followed, when it began to assume the character of a retarded impulse. It seeks to spread. But how? For it certainly spreads significantly. We see that the form of the state, which gradually matures in the new age, is more or less saturated with this Roman Catholicism. We see that the English state as it begins to grow at the beginning of the fifth post-Atlantean period is at first entirely in the hands of this Roman Catholicism. We see how France and the rest of Europe are entirely in the grip of this Roman element of hierarchy and cultus in so far as their ideas and cultural life are concerned. To characterize this impetus we would have to say that there is an impulse on the part of Rome to permeate, to saturate the culture of Europe with this hierarchical ecclesiastical element right up to the bulwark it has itself created in eastern Europe. But it is noteworthy that an impulse like this, if it is a retarded impulse, takes on an external character. It no longer has the strength to develop any inner intensity, but becomes external in character. It spreads out widely on the surface but has no strength to go into its own depths. So we see the strange phenomenon of Roman hierarchism spreading further and further afield yet, in the countries at its core, being unable to give any inward strength, thus depriving its own population of inwardness.

See how such things start. Everywhere Romanism spreads in all shapes and forms, whereas in Italy itself, in Spain, the population is hollowed out. Just think what an extraordinary Christianity lived in Italy when the Papacy was at the height of its glory. It was the Christianity against which the thunderous words of Savonarola were directed. For in isolated individuals, such as Savonarola, the Christ impulse was alive; but these individuals felt impelled to grind official Christianity into the dust. A history telling of what happened at the point from which Christianity rayed forth would have to say: The power of the Roman church element rayed forth, but the Christian souls at the point from which this happened were hollowed out. This could be proved in detail. It is an important truth: Something raying out destroys its own inner core. This is how life goes. Like a human being growing old and using up his forces, so do cultural phenomena, when they spread, use up their own being and hollow themselves out.

On earlier occasions I have shown how the French state was in a certain way a recapitulation of the fourth post-Atlantean period in the fifth. Here we now have a second case of raying forth. For the southern element we used the expression 'ecclesiastical element of cultus and hierarchy' to describe something that strove to found a universal monarchy of the church, a theocracy of Europe. Now we shall endeavour to find an expression to describe that cultural element which bears the culture of the intellectual- or mind-soul from the fourth post-Atlantean period up into the fifth. An expression encompassing all the historical elements, an expression which fits the facts and describes the reality of what is brought into the fifth post-Atlantean period, if we have the good will to find it, would have to be: the universal diplomatic element. Everything connected with this universal diplomatic element is also connected with what grew out of the French state element. It is not for nothing that the French language is the language of diplomacy, even today. Every historical trend is illuminated in detail when you discover that just as the universal theocratic element rays out from Rome and Spain, so the universal diplomatic element rays out from Paris.

And it is remarkable that just as with the Spanish-Italian element — though to a lesser degree because the element being brought forward is less ancient — so also, in the case of the French element, the raying forth is accompanied at its source by a hollowing out. It is particularly interesting to view history in the light of this. Take the way in which great French statesmen, such as Richelieu or Mazarin, inaugurate and carry on world diplomacy by translating old impulses into the diplomatic, political element. The servants of Louis XIV think on a European, not a French, scale and see themselves as the obvious leaders of Europe as regards the diplomatic, the universal, diplomatic element. One element, one impulse, always absorbs the other. It is not for nothing that cardinals practised in politics and diplomacy surround the King of France when the French state is at its zenith.

Studying that time particularly in the history of France, we find that the very concern which sends diplomacy all over Europe withdraws from its own country infinitely great forces in the realm of economics, finance, and also culture in general, hollowing it out down to the fine details. To see things this way, they must, of course, not be viewed in the light of national prejudices, but in all truth, objectively and impartially. This hollowing out is also the source of that uprising of the people into the element of revolution which leads to the exact opposite of what would be the most suitable for the French state: monarchy. In the Spanish-Italian realm there is no

parallel to this Revolution, for the reasons I have already given. Yet it is precisely this Revolution which shows how strangely this contrast works in the French element, this contrast between concern for European diplomacy and the lesser concern for one's own country.

For we must not forget that the fifth post-Atlantean period was accompanied by the spread of civilization and culture across the whole earth, which went with the discovery of hitherto unknown regions. We see how, as a matter of course, those states which border the ocean build up their navies. French diplomacy spreads its concern over the whole earth, and at the same time — you can follow this in the various trends of history — the French navy begins to blossom; but this has its opposite in what rages uncared-for within and then comes to expression in the Revolution. It is notable that the more the Revolution proceeds, the more the French navy is neglected. You can observe how, during the build-up to the French Revolution, France's sea power grows ever smaller as her navy is totally neglected.

This has a significant consequence. When the French element withdraws once again from the revolutionary age and returns to what is more suited to it — the emperorship of Napoleon — there develops in the person of Napoleon that significant opposition to the third element, that element which is now suitable for the fifth post-Atlantean period, the opposition of France against England. This had been in preparation for a long time but in the person of Napoleon it took on quite a new character that differed greatly from the character it had had before.

What is most remarkable in all the waves created by Napoleonism? If you investigate what lived in Europe with regard to Napoleon, you find the important opposition between Napoleon and England. But Napoleon lacked something which was missing in the heritage of the Revolution, something which had to be lacking — I speak of a historical necessity — but which he would have needed so that the second element could have asserted itself against the third, the French against the English, namely: a navy! Hypotheses are only justified in connection with history as tools for understanding, but they can indeed make a great contribution. So let us make a hypothesis: If Napoleon had had a navy which he could have joined to those of other countries with which he was allied, he would not have been defeated at sea by England and the whole of history would have taken a different course. But the Revolution had not given him a navy. Here we see the mutual limitation of the two elements, those of the third and the fourth post-Atlantean periods, as they rise up into the fifth.

Now we come to the third element, the one which corresponds to the fifth post-Atlantean period and has the task of bringing into being the culture of the consciousness soul: the English, the British element. The sentient soul element, brought into culture by the Italian-Spanish sphere, expresses itself in the theocratic element of the cultus — the sentient soul does not live in consciousness. Similarly the political and diplomatic element corresponds to the French sphere. And now in the British sphere we have the commercial and industrial element, in which the human soul lives fully and entirely in the material world of the physical plane. But we must make clear an important difference. The Papacy could only pretend to world dominance for one particular reason.

Here [the lecturer drew] is the fourth post-Atlantean period. Now comes the first element, A, of the fifth post-Atlantean period, the papal, hierarchical element. It strives for a kind of universal monarchy because in a certain way it is the continuation of the universal Roman Empire.

Here, B, is the culture of the intellectual or mind soul. It also strives for something universal, but it is something universal that is very much in the realm of ideas. The most important consequence of the spread of the French element are not the conquests, which are merely side-effects, but the saturation of the world with the political spirit, with political, diplomatic thinking and feeling — that diplomatic, political thinking found not only in French diplomacy and politics, but also in literature and even the other aspects of French artistic life. A universal monarchy in connection with this could only be described as a kind of universal dream. And the way in which France marched in the forefront of civilization is a very exact expression of this dream.

In contrast, we now come to the third element, C. This, in harmony with the whole of the fifth post-Atlantean period, which has the task of bringing to expression the consciousness soul, is what corresponds to the British element, the special bearer of the consciousness soul in the age which is to develop especially the consciousness soul. Hence the pretension of the British element to universal commercial and industrial world dominance.

My dear friends, things which have their foundation in the spiritual world will run their course. They will, with all certainty, run their course. Do not imagine that you can moralize or theorize about this. They will run their course and become fact. Nobody need believe, therefore, that the mission of the British people will not — out of inner necessity — become fact: namely, the mission to found a universal commercial and industrial

monarchy over the whole earth. The pretensions emerge as realities. These things have to be recognized as lying in world karma. And what people express and what they think is only a revelation of spiritual forces behind the scenes. So nobody should believe that British politics will ever be morally reformed and withdraw, out of consideration for the world, from the pretension to dominate the world industrially and commercially. Therefore we need not be surprised either that those who understand these things have founded societies whose sole aim is to realize such aims by the use of means which are also spiritual means.

This is where the forbidden interplay begins. For obviously occult principles, occult means and occult impulses are not permissible as promoters, as driving forces, especially in the fifth post-Atlantean period, which ought to be a purely materialistic civilization. The moment occult impulses work behind the spread of this purely materialistic culture, things become questionable. Yet, as I have shown you, this is what is happening. There are those who want to foster world dominance not only with the forces available on the physical plane, but also with the impulses of occultism, the impulses which lie in the world of the invisible. But these occult means are not used to work for the good of mankind in general but only for the good of a group. If you see the connection between such encompassing viewpoints, given to you from deeper knowledge, and everyday events, you will thoroughly understand a great deal.

There are still plenty of praiseworthy idealists — this is not meant as any kind of mockery, for idealism is always praiseworthy, even when it errs — who believe that the network of commercial and industrial measures, which has been spread by the British Empire over various countries, can only last as long as the war, and that after that people will once more be free to go about their own commercial business. Apart from a few illusions which will be raised by creating some interregnum or other, or by some other means to prevent people from becoming suspicious, all the measures that have been set up during this war to control commercial traffic throughout the world are not intended as something that will disappear once the war is over, but as something which is only beginning with the help of the war and will then continue. The war merely provides the opportunity for noses to be poked into business records. But do not imagine that this poking of noses into business records will cease after the war. I am speaking symbolically to describe something that will take place on the widest scale. What I mean is that commercial world dominance will become more and more thorough.

I am not saying all this in order to be inflammatory, but simply in order to show you what, out of the impulses of world history, really is the case. Only by recognizing what is really the case can people learn to conduct themselves appropriately. That is no doubt why that map of the European world turned out in the way I showed you on the blackboard yesterday. Let me repeat: I have traced this map back to the eighties of the nineteenth century. How far back it goes beyond that I do not know. I state only what I know, only what I can assert with certainty. That is why I have said nothing about the Scandinavian countries, since I do not know whether any plans have been made for them too. I limit myself strictly to what I know, and wish to stress this particularly on this occasion, though it is a principle which I follow on every occasion.

Further, this map — that is, this rearrangement of European affairs — has the tendency to serve the formation of a universal commercial monarchy. Europe is to be arranged in such a way that a universal commercial monarchy can be founded. I am not saying that this is to happen by tomorrow. But you can see that part payments are already being demanded. Only compare the most recent note to Wilson with the map of Europe, and there you have it. Nothing is said as yet about Switzerland. This payment on account will be demanded later. But as the demands appear one by one they will correspond to the map I drew yesterday.

The division of Europe shown there is suited to the founding of commercial world dominance. Study the details of this map and you will see that it is well conceived as a basis for founding what I have just said. I said: commercial world dominance. There is no need actually to possess all the territories, for it is quite sufficient to arrange them in such a way that they fall into one's sphere of influence. It is also very cleverly arranged so that at first those very regions will be drawn into the sphere of influence which I yesterday coloured yellow, as being the ones to be claimed as British: the peripheral territories. Indeed, in order to leave the others a little longer in the warm glow of a certain idealism, it is possible to arrange things in such a way that one practises the commercial domination oneself while leaving the others to play about with territories for a little longer. But the spheres of influence will be established as the drawing shows. It is quite irrelevant whether in the year 1950 there will be a Belgium, or a France extending right up to the border. The important thing is what power Belgians have in Belgium, or the French in France, and what power the British have in Belgium or France. In order to found commercial world

dominance it is not necessary to actually possess the territories. What we must be clear about is that this world dominance is to be commercial and industrial. This is the basis for something extremely important.

I should, though, have to give a whole series of lectures if I needed to prove these things to you in detail. This would be perfectly possible, for the things I am saying can be proved very profoundly. Today, however, I can only draw an outline. In order to found a commercial and industrial world dominance, the first thing to do is to divide the main region into two parts. This has to do with the nature of commercial and industrial affairs. I can only explain this by using an analogy: Whatever takes place on the physical plane always requires a splitting into two parts.

Imagine a teacher without any pupils; there is no such thing. In the same way there cannot be a commercial empire without another region which is its counterpart. Therefore if a British commercial empire is founded, then a Russian opposite pole must be founded too. So that a differentiation can arise between buying and selling, so that the necessary circulation can come about, two regions are needed. If the whole world were to be made into a unified realm, it would be impossible to found a universal commercial realm. It is not quite the same, but similar to saying that if you produce something you need a buyer, otherwise you cannot produce. So this twofold split is necessary. And the fact that this has been initiated as a major trend is a great — indeed, a gigantic — conception on the part of those secret brotherhoods of which I have spoken. To create this contrast is a conception of universal proportions, against which everything else pales into insignificance: this contrast, between the British commercial empire on the one hand and, on the other, all that emanates from the Russian sphere involving, through their spiritual capacities, preparations for the sixth post-Atlantean period, together with everything I have described to you. It is a great, gigantic, admirable conception of these secret brotherhoods about whom we have spoken. Put simply, it is hardly possible to imagine a better opposite pole for what has developed in the West — namely, the supreme flowering of commercial and industrial thought — than the future Russian Slav who in times to come is sure to be even less inclined than he is today to occupy himself professionally with commercial matters, and who, just because of this, will be an excellent polar opposite.

A commercial empire of this kind will, of course, have to state its own terms. Profound thought on the part of Spencer, and even his predecessor, led them to stress repeatedly: The industrial and commercial element which suffuses a nation does not want to have anything to do with war; it

is for peace, it needs peace and loves peace. It is absolutely true: There will indeed be a deep love between the element striving towards commerce and industry and the element striving towards peace in the world. Only this love for peace can sometimes adopt bizarre forms, as witness the present note to Wilson, which certainly contains something peculiar.

Look at what happens to Austria in this map, which is drawn exactly in accordance with the note. Yet this note dares to express something else as well: The common political unity living in the nations of Central Europe is not to be touched in any way. Well, this too is 'gigantic', a gigantically frivolous game with the truth. Usually untruths are not actually put down on paper, but here we have one note which says two different things: We shall dismember the middle realm, but we shall, of course, do it no harm. There is an accompanying chorus from the newspapers too. They write: Let us see whether the Central Powers will agree to these acceptable terms. Everywhere we read: The Entente Powers have stated their terms; now we shall see whether these terms, which ought to be eminently acceptable to the Central Powers, are bluntly rejected or not. Things have come a long way, have they not! For such things are there for all to read.

Now let us see where the thought leads us. We are dealing here with a splitting of the world into two parts, and those concerned are interested in achieving this in such a way that they can say to the world: We want peace, we stand only for peace. The recipe they are following is one which is behind much that is written today. It is like saying: I shall not touch you, I shall not harm a hair of your head, but I shall lock you in a deep dungeon and not give you anything to eat! Have I done anything to you? Could anyone maintain that I have harmed even a single hair of your head?

Many things are shaped in accordance with this recipe. Even the love for peace, despite the fact that it is a reality, is shaped in accordance with it. But if this love for peace is paired with a pretension to commercial world dominance it becomes unacceptable for the other side and it is utterly impossible to apply it. And so the peace-loving commercial empire is sure to find itself in future somewhat disturbed in its love for peace. This is, of course, known to those who divide the world into two parts, and so they need a rampart in between. This rampart is to take the form of the great southern European confederation which also comprises Hungary and everything else I mentioned yesterday. This is supposed to make for peace. Through the sphere of influence I have hinted at, the manner in which the British Empire is behaving towards the Mediterranean shows that it can quite easily give the southern European confederation Constantinople, as

well as all kinds of other things. For they cannot go further than the Mediterranean, since the West, if it so wishes, can blockade the Mediterranean at any time.

In short, you can follow in every detail the gigantic, splendid thought on which this map is based. We have not enough time today to go through everything in detail. But it is a gigantic, splendid thought to leave only the southern ports which lead to the Mediterranean open for France, whilst keeping the others under one's own sphere of influence. This means, basically, that the French Empire, which France was anyway only able to found under the protection of the others, becomes an illusion, and can also be included in one's sphere of influence. If you follow all this, you will see in how gigantic a manner is to be realized — out of what belongs to the culture of the consciousness soul — what these occult schools are striving to achieve.

Those things which correspond to certain impulses do come to pass. For necessity governs world history and world evolution. These things do come to pass. But they come to pass in such a way that forces really do mutually affect one another. Just as there can never be positive without negative electricity; where opposites work on one another with varying intentions — so is it also in the events of human history. Therefore we must be careful, when we turn our attention to such things, to apply judgement that is free of moralizing. This also saves us from asking: Why must such a thing happen? For in the mission of one element or another is included the fact that things develop which must develop. And the adversary, the opposite pole must also exist: namely, something that resists whatever it is that wants to come about. This also must exist. So if we now once again take a wide view of all these things, we shall see something working in from the periphery which we have characterized as these three elements.

First let us return to the centre. Our concern here is that the adversary, the opposite pole should be there, so that a kind of brake can always be applied. This brake is just as necessary as the other element. And I blame one as little as I praise the other. I am simply describing the impulses and the facts. I have not the least inclination to pronounce a morally disparaging judgement on something I am describing as a necessity arising out of the whole character of the fifth post-Atlantean period. There is nothing bad about giving the world a materialistic, industrial, commercial culture, for this is a necessity. But the opposite pole must exist, too, for human evolution cannot proceed in a straight line. Opposing forces must clash with one another, and in this clash reality evolves. In Central Europe

a collection of impulses has always of necessity existed, some of which worked with those streaming to the periphery in the way I have already described, while others had what was in many ways the tragic destiny of working in opposition to these.

These forces certainly stream outwards from Central Europe and make themselves felt elsewhere in many ways. But if you look closely you will find also in Central Europe the forces that oppose those I have described. Consider, for instance, that the first opposition to the theocratic, cultic element of the Spanish and Italian South came from Central Europe. It reached a certain climax in Luther and its greatest profundity in the mysticism of Central Europe. Not only German elements worked here, for mingled in the Central European stream were also Slav elements. Here there was a desire not for the Christianity of the Papal hierarchy, but for precisely that inwardness that had been hollowed out in the South. Savonarola was, after all, simply executed. This inwardness lived in the Czech, John Huss, and in Wyclif who stemmed from the Germanic element in England, and in Zwingli, and in Luther. Its more profound element is to be found in the mysticism of Central Europe, which, by the way, is very close to the Slav element. Precisely these relationships show how things fulfil themselves in a remarkable way. For Central Europe backed up by the Slav element is, in this, certainly an opponent of the periphery. So although they are in many aspects still disunited politically, Central European influences and Slav influences work together. In an occult sense, too, they work together fundamentally in a wonderful way.

We see how a certain materialistic element develops more and more in the South, reaching a peak in such people as Lombroso. We see this materialistic element setting the tone elsewhere in the periphery, as well. Right up to Oliver Lodge, about whom we spoke recently, we see materialism projecting itself into spiritual life. But on the other hand we also see how this is opposed by something which emancipates itself — to start with, from the Roman, hierarchical element. In this, Copernicus, the Pole, stands behind Kepler, the archetypal German; in this, Slav spirits, in particular, stand behind those who are German spirits. Indeed I could say: On the physical plane we see links between what is Central European and what is Slav; Huss, the Czech, Copernicus, the Pole — others might just as easily be named — these form a link stretching across the physical plane. We see, too, how in Central Europe the Slav element joins with the German element — we see the eastern European Slav element growing together with Europe. This, though, we only see when we consider the occult situation.

Let me give only one example: The soul of Galileo lives again in the Russian Lomonosov, and the Russian Lomonosov is in many ways the founder of Slav culture in the East. In between these two lies the spiritual world, so that we might say: The Central European Slavs are still linked with the people of the West on the physical plane; what lies behind this is linked with the people of the West via the higher plane.

This fits entirely with the fact that the Russian element follows the Slav element; but it also fits with the situation in which the western Slav element must be thought of as having a relationship to Western Europe differing from that of the eastern Slav element. Therefore, only those who do not think in accordance with human evolution as a whole, but solely in accordance with the English-speaking Empire, will want to assimilate Poland in the Russian Empire.

This point in particular gives an example of the difference between the kind of thinking which is concerned only with a particular group and that other kind of thinking which is concerned with the good of mankind as a whole. The thinking which is concerned with the good of mankind as a whole could never include the territory of Poland in the Russian Empire. For in a remarkable way it is precisely the western Slavs with their profoundest characteristics who belong to Central Europe. I cannot speak today about the checkered destiny of the Polish people. But I just want to say that the spiritual culture of the Polish people found one of its culminations in the Polish messianic movement — let everybody think what they like about this reality — which, out of the substance of the Polish people contains spiritual feelings and spiritual ideas belonging to mankind as a whole. We are speaking here, in a way, about that Gnostic element which corresponds to one of the three soul components which are to flow from the western Slavs to Central Europe.

The second element lies in the Czech people to whom — not for nothing — John Huss belongs. Here is the second soul component inserted into Central Europe out of the Slav element. And the third component is from the southern Slavs. These three soul components push westwards like three cultural peninsulas and most certainly do not belong to the eastern European Slav element. Externally, on the physical plane, by means of political marriages, but inwardly by means of what I have just been explaining, this Austria has come about whose purpose it is to amalgamate German and western Slav peoples precisely so that the western Slavs can unfold in accordance with their own impulses. This has nothing to do with any principle of dominance! Anyone who has known Austria in the second

half of the nineteenth century will regard as utterly ridiculous what is said in the present note to Wilson about Austria and a certain principle of dominance. Of course the situation is difficult. But anyone familiar with the history of Austria in the nineteenth century knows how possibilities were sought which would enable any Slav people, indeed any nationality whatever, to develop absolutely freely in Austria.

However, all kinds of things are contained in this note. You need only glance at an elementary history textbook to see that the territories Italy is now demanding from Austria have never been under Italian rule. Yet the note says: The Italians are demanding the return of territories which once belonged to them.

But truth is not the concern of this note, for its aim is to say what it wants to say while counting on it that the magical power of modern journalism has persuaded people to believe everything. And you can certainly often count on this. The power of journalism is indeed one of the means on which certain societies count. Just because Austria has been preparing — as it were, beneath the surface — for the mission about which I have spoken, she has always been an opponent, an opposite pole, to any Freemasonry of the kind which has developed in the West in the way I have been describing over the last few weeks. Freemasonry has never been allowed to enter Austria. Its presence begins to be felt to some extent — but merely in the way I have described — only beyond the river Leitha.

Of course there are also other impulses which, as you have seen, are the cause for some degree of leniency, so that the peoples of Central Europe will not be utterly destroyed politically. The war aims, and also the peace initiatives which are at present being made, are in accord with this. But the fact that Austria herself is being attacked so viciously is in part explained by the enmity that has always existed between Austria and western European Freemasonry, right from the days of Maximilian I. It is disguised in various ways, of course, and what I am now saying is easily proved wrong, just because on the physical plane things are disguised, are masked.

So we see how Central Europe has to put up a fight on behalf of mankind, for it is the pole which opposes the impulses coming from the West. This brings it about that the evolution of Central Europe does not proceed in a straight line. It fluctuates, for Central Europe always has to take up and bring to a certain climax, a certain intensity, whatever there is

by way of opposition to any of the impulses coming from the West. Take the hierarchical, theocratic impulse. While a kind of Christianity is carried into Europe on the waves of the hierarchical, theocratic impulse, opposition begins to build up as early as the twelfth century. Read Walther von der Vogelweide, that great Central European poet, and you will find he opposes the Roman Papacy and indeed everything Roman. What later reaches a climax in Huss, in Luther, in Zwingli and so on, is already hinted at by Walther von der Vogelweide. Then you also find what is developing as a more inward Christianity, parallel with that of the periphery but inwardly intimate, in Wolfram von Eschenbach's Parzival epic.

There, at the very beginning of the fifth post-Atlantean period, you have opposition against the theocratic, hierarchical, Roman element emanating from Spain and Italy. This opposing pole works in such an extraordinary way that intimate inwardness is never denied. It remains. It is confiscated from the principle of power and fashioned into the opposing pole.

I am neither praising the one nor blaming the other, for I am simply quoting facts. After the hierarchical, theocratic principle came the diplomatic, political principle. It is carried over in all its forms and in all its side manifestations. Here, some historical details are interesting. Something that is often said in historical textbooks is not actually correct: namely, that the invention of gunpowder was the origin of modern military forces, in contrast to the armies of the age of chivalry in the Middle Ages. A much more important factor came into play when, at the beginning of modern times in Europe, the barter economy of the Middle Ages was replaced by a currency economy, so that those in power came to be administrators of money, which had formerly not been the case. Until then, barter had been much more to the fore, with money playing only a minor role. The currency economy led to the development of mercenary armies that were no longer compatible with the armies of the age of chivalry which had been adapted to the barter economy of the Middle Ages.

This modern military organization started in Switzerland. The Swiss were the first soldiers in the modern sense of the fifth post-Atlantean period. You can follow this in history: It was just because the Swiss became such efficient soldiers that they were able to win all those battles they had to win in order to create a Switzerland which would later be able to withstand the assaults of chivalry. I am speaking to the Swiss amongst us. Basically the Swiss with their armies are the primary, the real, conquerors of chivalry. Chivalry was overcome in Switzerland. It was from Switzerland

alone that the rest of Europe learnt how to use their armies of infantry to overcome the armies of chivalry. Study history, and you will find that this is true.

Now let us proceed in history to Napoleon. Why were Napoleon's soldiers and armies superior to those of Central Europe? It was because Central Europe was still working, at the time of Napoleon, not with Swiss soldiers of course, but with the Swiss military principle, whereas Napoleon had under his command a real national army born out of the French nation itself. You will appreciate this if you follow the battles between the Central Europeans and Napoleon in the right way. How the generals of the Central European armies had to keep a hold on their mercenaries — for that is what they really were — even inside their barracks! Thus they never had the possibility of a strategy of long battle lines. Napoleon is the first to be able to use long battle lines because the French army at his disposal is a national army born of the people. When strategy necessitated a wide distribution of his forces, he did not need to worry that the men might desert. The Prussian general, on the other hand — for instance during the famous campaigns of Frederick the Great — was constantly concerned that a troop dispatched to a distant spot would desert, for his was not a national army but a crowd collected and sometimes coerced from all quarters; they came from all over the place, including quite foreign parts. The national army was invented in France, and this meant that Central Europe, starting with Prussia, also established national armies modelled on that of France. The Central European national armies came into their own when they assumed a French character.

So we see how even in this field things work parallel with the periphery. When it is a matter of armies, obviously the opposition takes the form of waging war. This is not the point I want to make, however, for I want to lead on to a similar contrast in another field.

So far we have seen that the hierarchical, theocratic, Roman character met its opposition in Central Europe in everything that culminated in the Reformation. The diplomatic, French character made its way into Central Europe up to the time of Frederick the Great, right into the eighteenth century. Lessing was still in a position to debate whether he might, indeed, write *Laokoon* in French. Read the published correspondence of the eighteenth century. In Central Europe people wrote excellent French and poor German. The French element flooded the whole of Central Europe. We can say that what the Reformation had done to what came up from the South, Lessing, Herder, Goethe and those who came after them did in

relation to the French, diplomatic element. Here, in Central European literature, Goethe, Schiller, Herder and Lessing emancipate themselves from the West, just as, in the Reformation, Central European Christianity emancipated itself from the South. But this process of separation goes hand in hand with one of combination. In his youth, Lessing still wrote a great deal in French. Leibniz wrote the whole of his philosophy, apart from what he wrote in Latin, in French, not German. In both these fields there was at the same time a working together and a standing in opposition. It is quite correct to summarize as follows: The South and Central Europe — opposition; the West and Central Europe — opposition.

With the third element, the British, it is the same. At first there is some kind of a parallel course. This is expressed especially in the fact that, from the eighteenth century and during the course of the nineteenth century, the great Shakespeare becomes a thoroughly German poet, for he is totally absorbed into German culture. He is not merely translated, he is totally assimilated and lives in the spiritual life of the German nation. For obvious reasons, I do not want to say that he still lives more in the spiritual life of the German nation than in that of the British nation. But look at the whole development, starting with Elias Schlegel, who first translated Shakespeare into German, and on to Lessing's subtly spiritual penetration into the spirit of Shakespeare; the enthusiasm for Shakespeare felt by the German Naturalists of the eighteenth century, and also by Goethe; the absolutely outstanding — not translations — assimilations into German of Shakespeare by Schlegel and Tieck, and so on, right up to the present. Shakespeare lives in the German nation. When I went to Vienna and sat in on the literary history lectures in addition to my scientific studies, the first I heard were by Schröer, who announced he would be speaking about the three greatest German poets, Schiller, Goethe and Shakespeare! Of course Shakespeare has not been captured in the sense that it is claimed that he is actually German. But this one example shows how standing in opposition can at the same time take the form of an absolute working together.

Thus it was with regard to the diplomatic, political, French element. And so it happened also with regard to the British element. At the same time the opposite pole must be present as well. The third element has not yet found a form in Central Europe. The first was all that led to the Reformation; this was in opposition to the southern, hierarchical element. The West is opposed by what culminated in Goethe's *Faust*. And what we now hope for in Central Europe is the development of the element of spiritual science. In consequence there will arise the sharpest opposition between Central Europe and the British realm, an opposition even sharper

than that of Lessing, Goethe and their successors, with regard to the diplomatic, French element. Thus, what took place between us and the followers of Mrs Besant and so on, was no more than a prelude. These things must be seen from wide points of view.

I hope you know me well enough not to think that I speak out of any petty vanity when I say certain things. But I do believe that the great opposition is to be found between what works with experiments on the physical plane — even to proving the existence of the spirit — on the one hand, and on the other hand what in the human soul longs to rise up to the spiritual world. There is no need for anything as coarse as the declaration of an Alcyone as the actual physical Christ, for the more subtle descriptions by Sir Oliver Lodge would be quite sufficient. One senses what is intended. Well, I suppose there is no harm in saying these things. There is indeed a kind of opposition between two things that came into being more or less simultaneously when, on the one hand, Sir Oliver Lodge pointed to the spiritual world in a materialistic way, while at the same time I was writing my book *Vom Menschenrätsel* ('The Riddle of Man'), in which I endeavour, in a totally Central European manner, to point to the paths which are being taken in Central Europe by the human soul to the world of the spirit. There is no greater contrast than that between the book by Oliver Lodge and the book *Vom Menschenrätsel* ('The Riddle of Man'). They are absolute opposites; it is impossible to conceive of any greater contrast.

This very clear differentiation only began more or less at the commencement of the fifth post-Atlantean period. Before that, things were still rather different. At first the universal Roman realm exercised its power, even as far as England, and the sharp differentiation between England and France only really came to the fore with the appearance of the Maid of Orleans. But then everything began, everything which was to happen within the context of these differentiations. The remarkable thing is that, even within this context, the impulse appears which says that a link ought to be created with the opposite pole. Thus, as I have often shown, we see the utterly British philosopher Francis Bacon of Verulam, the founder of modern materialistic thinking, inspired from the same source as Shakespeare, working across so strongly into Central Europe, in the way I have described. Jakob Böhme, too, was inspired from the same source. He transforms the whole inspiration into the soul substance of Central Europe. And again from the same source comes the southern German Jesuit Jakobus Baldus.

You see, beneath the surface of what takes place on the physical plane there works what is to bring about harmony. But one must see things as clearly differentiated and not let it all disappear into a nebulous jumble. One of the greatest, most gigantic spirits of the British realm stands quite close to the opposition against what is merely commercial within the British commercial empire, and that is James I. James I brings in a new element by continuously inoculating into the substance of the British people something that they will have forever, something that they must not lose if they are not to fall utterly into materialism. What it is that he inoculates into them is something that is linked by underground channels to the whole of the rest of European culture. Here we are confronted by a significant mystery.

You will agree — neither one thing nor the other can be called either justified or unjustified; things simply have to be comprehended as necessary facts. But we must be clear that we surely ought to understand these things properly. It is easy to ask the question: What can I myself do in these painful times? The first thing one can do is to endeavour to understand things, to really see through things. This brings up thoughts which are real forces and these will have an effect. What about the question: Have the good forces no power against the evil forces we see all around us? To answer this we have to remember how difficult human freedom makes it for the spiritual world to assert itself amid the surging waves of materialistic life. This is what it is all about. Is it to be made so very easy for human beings to enter fully into the life of the spirit?

Future ages will look back to today and say: How careless these people were with regard to adopting the life of spirit! The spiritual world is sending it down to us, but human beings resist it with all their might. Apart from all the sadness and suffering holding sway at present, the very fact that all this does hold sway is in itself a destiny signifying a trial. Above all it should be accepted and recognized as a trial. Later it will become apparent to what extent it is necessary for those who — so it is said — are guilty, to suffer together with those who are blameless. For after all, during the course of karma all these things are balanced out. You cannot say: Are not the good spirits going to intervene? They do intervene to the extent that we open ourselves to them, if we have the courage to do so. But first of all we must be serious about understanding things; we must be deeply serious about trying to understand.

As a contribution to this understanding it is necessary that a number of people muster the strength to oppose the surging waves of materialism with their deepest personal being. For something else is going to unite with the materialism that works in the industrial, commercial impulse; something coming from other, retarded impulses from the Chinese and Japanese element, particularly the Japanese element, will become increasingly caught up in materialism.

Yesterday somebody asked whether the societies working from the West for a particular group did not take into account that the Japanese might follow suit from the East. Indeed, the people who belong to these societies do not regard this as something terrible, for they see it as a support for materialism. For what follows suit from Asia will simply be a particular form of materialism. What we must be clear about, at all costs, is that we have to oppose the waves of materialism with all our strength. Every human being is capable of doing this. And the fruits of such efforts will be sure to follow. There is no need to give a name to whatever it is that must work against materialism. Don't call it 'Central European', don't call it 'German'; that is not necessary. But do consider how a counteraction of forces can come about and how this can be objectively proved.

You can summarize in two sentences what is needed to work against materialism — which, after all, has some justification. In the fifth post-Atlantean period the world will become even more pervaded by the industrial and commercial element; but the opposite pole must also exist: There must be people who work on the opposite side because of their understanding of the situation. For what is the aim of these secret brotherhoods? They do not work out of any particular British patriotism, but out of the desire to bring the whole world under the yoke of pure materialism. And because, in accordance with the laws of the fifth post-Atlantean period, certain elements of the British people as the bearer of the consciousness soul are most suitable for this, they want, by means of grey magic, to use these elements as promoters of this materialism.

This is the important point. Those who know what impulses are at work in world events can also steer them. No other national element, no other people, has ever before been so usable as material for transforming the whole world into a materialistic realm. Therefore, those who know want to set their foot on the neck of this national element and strip it of all spiritual endeavour — which, of course, lives equally in all human beings. Just because karma has ordained that the consciousness soul should work here particularly strongly, the secret brotherhoods have sought out elements in

the British national character. Their aim is to send a wave of materialism over the earth and make the physical plane the only valid one. A spiritual world is only to be recognized in terms of what the physical plane has to offer.

This must be opposed by the endeavours of those who understand the necessity of a spiritual life on earth. Looked at from this point of view, you can express this counter-force in two sentences. One of these is well-known to you, but it does not yet come fully out of the hearts and souls of human beings: 'My kingdom is not of this world.' The sentence 'My kingdom is not of this world' must sound forth against that kingdom which is to be spread over the physical plane, that kingdom which is only of this world, that kingdom of commercial and industrial materialism.

There is not enough time today to explain to you how the words 'My kingdom is not of this world' link up with the cultivation of what belongs to mankind as a whole — not to what is German, but to what belongs to mankind as a whole. In ancient India there were four castes, in ancient Greece four estates. They came into being one after the other during the course of the second, third and fourth post-Atlantean periods. In the fifth post-Atlantean period the fourth estate, social life, that which belongs to mankind as a whole, must come into being. Not everyone can be a priest, but the priestly element can strive to become the powerful, the dominant estate. We see it doing this in the third post-Atlantean period; there we see it coming to life again in the hierarchical, theocratic, Roman force. And we can see the second caste, the kingly estate in ancient Greece and Rome, coming to life again in the second post-Atlantean element, where the diplomatic, political element is particularly active; for the republican element in France is only the opposite pole of this, just as everything generates its own counterpart. The actual character of the French state corresponds solely to the monarchic principle, so that even now France is a Republic in name only. In reality she is ruled by a king, who happens to be a lawyer who used to conduct cases in Romania. It is not a question of terminology but of facts. What is so terrible today is the way people allow themselves to be so easily intoxicated by words. If somebody is called a president it does not necessarily mean that he is a president, for what matters is the actual situation.

The third estate, as we know, is the industrial element, what was commerce in ancient Egypt and Greece. This is striving to come to the fore again in the British Empire and for the moment must still be dominant over the fourth element, which will eventually be the general, human element.

It is interesting to observe this in one particular phenomenon. You do have to gain some insight into what is really going on if you want to understand the world. Ask the question: Where has the theory of Socialism been worked out with the greatest discernment? You will receive a curious answer: Among German Socialists. For in accordance with the principle I explained to you, the Germans always have the mission to work concepts out in their purest form. So even for Socialism the Germans have worked out pure concepts, but the German concept of Socialism does not fit in at all with the state of affairs in Germany.

Social conditions in Germany do not correspond in any way to the German theory of Socialism! For instance, it is quite comprehensible that, after teaching in a Socialist school for a while, I should have been banned from teaching there, after I said that it ought to be in keeping with Socialism to develop a theory of freedom. On behalf of the leader of the Social Democrats I was told: It is not freedom that matters, but reasoned persuasion! Socialist theory does not fit in with social conditions. In other words, social theory ought to be developed on the basis of the evolution of mankind. On this basis its three great principles are developed: Firstly the principle of the materialistic view of history, secondly the principle of added value, and thirdly the principle of class war.

The three principles are minutely worked out, but they do not fit in with social conditions in Germany. However, they correspond exactly to social conditions in England. That, after all, is where they were worked out. That is where Marx worked on them first of all, and then also Engels, and Bernstein. This is their source. Here they fit in because — to take the third principle — they are founded on the class war. And this class war is waged, basically, in the British soul. Think of Cromwell. If you study all the impulses that have reigned in the British soul since Cromwell, you will wind up with material for the third principle, the principle of class war. Furthermore, since the invention of the spinning-jenny and the commencement of the social life which came into being as a result, everything that has flowed into the theory of added value has been uppermost in the British Empire. And the materialistic view of history is, when you look at it, nothing but Buckle's view of history translated into a pedantic German way of thinking. Look at Buckle's *History of Civilisation*. It is written in accordance with the way such things are written within the framework of British culture: namely, according to the principle of never entering into consequences. Darwin, too, did not enter into the

consequences. He limited himself in a certain way. But in Karl Marx's materialistic view of history the matter is transformed with severity — regardless of consequences — in, if you like, a pedantic, German way.

It is interesting that no theory has been worked out for the general human element, the fourth caste or class. In this element there can be no question of dominance, for there is nothing below it over which dominance might be exercised; it is solely a matter of laying the foundation for human beings to relate with one another. A theory for this will only come about when the general human element given in anthroposophical spiritual science is made the foundation.

This, if it is not misunderstood, will lead to that other, second sentence which is to be added to the first: 'My kingdom is not of this world.' The second sentence is: 'Render unto Caesar what is Caesar's and unto God what is God's.' This means that a proper attitude to life, a real cultivation of life, can only come about when one realizes that the spiritual element must be cultivated, because the spiritual world must penetrate down into the physical world. But there is no point in making any statements at all unless they can be comprehended wholeheartedly in the soul. These statements must be comprehended: 'Render unto Caesar what is Caesar's and unto God what is God's' and 'My kingdom is not of this world.' Then the atmosphere of the spiritual world will come, an atmosphere that has nothing to do with those materialistic things which have especially to develop in the fifth post-Atlantean period. But for this to happen, things must be seen in their true guise.

To summarize what we have been considering, let me say: May your hearts strive to see things in their true guise. Only if hearts exist which see things in their true guise and penetrate that terrible fog of untruth which shrouds everything in the world today, can we progress in an appropriate way. As I said: Since the bow-string is stretched to its limit, it will break. In this sense this document that people have had the temerity to present to the world at this late stage, and whatever is said in response to this document, does in the first instance hold out a prospect of improvement. Whatever horrors still lie ahead of us, this document represents a challenge to the Spirit of Truth himself, and he will certainly intervene in these matters in an appropriate manner! You need only remember — let me say this in conclusion — the exemplary, or should I say non-exemplary, manner in which we ourselves have been treated.

We have endeavoured to be as cosmopolitan as possible over the years. We have tried in the most conscientious way to preserve this archetypal German trait of cosmopolitanism. And what is the consequence? Read the slanderous things said about us in Britain; the theosophists there have slanted everything to make it appear that we have some kind of Germanic aspirations. We have no such aspirations; they have been foisted on us by others.

Edouard Schuré, — one on whom we relied so heavily in France, and towards whom we have never been tempted to display any kind of Germanic quality, since he is fundamentally himself the bearer of German cultural life to France — even he has interpreted things containing no trace of nationalism as being 'pan-Germanic'. How curious that only the other day we should have found under 'Edouard Schuré' in an encyclopaedia: 'The mediator of German culture to France.' This is entirely apt, for truly the only French thing about Schuré is the language he speaks. Of course, if language is taken to be paramount, then naturally the whole man can be considered French. So one is a pan-Germanist if one does not speak about the Germans in the manner preferred by the French chauvinist Schuré. And one is a German agent if one does not speak about the Germans in the way required by Mrs Besant. Similar things are beginning to appear in Italy, too, among our former friends.

So it became necessary to defend ourselves. And the present time is proving most opportune for those who want to point fingers at us and say: See what attacks they are making; that shows who is the aggressor! There is the Vollrath method, and there is the Gösch method. We see it everywhere and we know it from within our own circles. First you force the other fellow to defend himself and then you treat him as the aggressor. It is a very effective method and one that plays an enormously strong role in the world today. The attacker hides behind the clamour he raises after he has forced the other to defend himself by labelling him the aggressor.

Yet we have no other purpose than to serve the mission of furthering spiritual life and gaining recognition for spiritual life. This is linked on the one hand with the principle: 'My kingdom is not of this world', and on the other with the principle: 'Render unto Caesar what is Caesar's and unto God what is God's.' Both are also, as you know, good Christianity. But it will be a long time before such things are understood in every detail.

Nowadays strange things are once again being said. Let me just mention this as my very last point. It is said: The Entente has stated its aims with regard to the war; now let the Central Powers state their aims, so that like can be compared with like. Indeed, this clamour for the war aims of the Central Powers has been heard for some time. Well, we have discussed some of the war aims of the Entente. But why should Central Europe name its war aims? It never had any! It has none! So quite naturally it took the stand: We will gladly negotiate, for then it will become clear what it is you want and then we shall have something on which to base our talks; but as far as we are concerned, we have nothing in particular to say; we merely want to live. Of course this does make it possible for the others to say: They are not willing to tell us what their war aims are; that means there must be something suspicious going on. There is nothing suspicious going on. Central Europe wants nothing now that it did not want in 1913 and 1912. It had no war aims then and it has none now.

It is not what is said that is important but whether what is said conforms with reality. On every side we now hear the loud cry that a particularly cunning, wily trick lies at the bottom of the Central Powers' Christmas call for peace. So this Christmas call for peace is supposed to contain some trick, some wish to dupe everybody else. On many sides it is said that the Central Powers never wanted peace but were only seeking for some clever way of carrying on the war. The answer to that is: If only they had reacted to this call for peace! All they needed to do was accept it and they would soon have known whether it was some kind of trick. Along this path lies genuine thinking rather than an inclination to believe in empty phrases. We must, my dear friends, overcome the empty phrase with all the forces of our soul. This is the most intimate task we have to accomplish in our own soul.



Lecture 21

Living with the Dead; Abusing the Dead

20 January 1917, Dornach

Impulses connected with the spiritual world, whatever their direction, can only be understood from the viewpoint of spiritual science. As we have seen, playing into today's events there are impulses which we have traced back to human beings, but only to those who know how to handle spiritual impulses in one way or another.

We must ask ourselves: Why do certain people do the kind of things we have been talking about? Which leads to the next question: Why are we living in an age when untruth — untruthfulness — is working as a dominant force in the world, a force which drives human beings with a veritable passion that could, if only it would turn towards the truth instead, bring about infinitely much in the way of healing?

These things are indeed connected with what are, at the moment, the deepest impulses of humanity. We can gain a closer understanding of them, in a manner appropriate for our time, by including in our considerations the most urgent task of that spiritual-scientific view of the world which we have made our own. Remember that our anthroposophical spiritual science seeks to understand certain spiritual aspects which exist in the world, certain forces which are at work in the world of human beings in so far as they develop not only between birth and death but also between death and a new birth. It is difficult for people today to think about these things in the right way, because they have lost certain faculties which were once present in human evolution; for a while these faculties had to go underground, but now they must light up again through spiritual science.

We know well enough that in olden times the human soul was linked with the spiritual world in a way that was more elementary, more natural; such links did not have to be brought about by active spiritual work but existed of themselves. We called them atavistic. We know, too, that in those days it was impossible for human beings to doubt the existence of life after death. The possibility of such doubt only arose for an interim period which is now to be succeeded by an age in which all shall know about life between death and a new birth.

In those olden times something else — a third condition — came as naturally to the human soul as waking and sleeping do today. In today's state of being awake, human beings are restricted entirely to the physical world which they can perceive with their senses; they live between birth and death in a world which they can experience through their senses and through their understanding which is bounded by the brain. And in sleep they are unconscious. The entities of ego and astral body in which they live between falling asleep and waking up are not yet strong enough to supply them with a comparable consciousness. We know that the astral body has only been developing since the time of ancient Moon and the ego only since the beginning of Earth evolution. Both are young measured against cosmic evolution and they are not yet strong enough to achieve consciousness when left to themselves between going to sleep and waking up.

Dreams, however, with all their manifold pictures, do rise up out of sleep. These dreams can contain a great deal that belongs to the spiritual world. There is a great deal in dreams which belongs to the spiritual world, but the human soul as it is today is not capable of seeing beyond the dreams in order to discover what it is that lives in these dreams. Dreams are deceptive pictures woven out of a veil of maya. When they are rightly interpreted they yield experiences of earlier times or prophetic indications for the future. They also reveal the interplay which takes place between the living and the dead during sleep. Everything can come to us through dreams. But, at the present stage of their evolution, human beings do not understand the strange language of dreams. Dream pictures remain incomprehensible, and this is quite natural. Just as Europeans cannot interpret the sounds spoken by the Chinese, so people today cannot interpret the picture language of dreams.

Thus during this interim period the human being is totally restricted in consciousness to whatever he can discover through those older instruments, the physical body and also the etheric body, which have been developing since the time of ancient Sun and ancient Saturn and are therefore so constituted that they can offer him consciousness as long as he is in them, that is, between waking up and going to sleep.

Now the spiritual science for which we are striving gives us concepts of the super-sensible world working in and behind the sense-perceptible world. The concepts and ideas given to us by spiritual science and which we make our own are related to nothing that can be perceived by the senses. They relate either to what lies between death and a new birth, or

to the super-sensible world which lies beyond the world of the senses. Comprehension of these is not, or ought not to be, a mere comprehension of certain theories. We are not concerned with knowing one thing or another but with achieving a certain inner mood of soul when we take in truths relating to the super-sensible world.

It is difficult to describe these things in words because our language has been coined for the external, physical plane, so we have to exert ourselves when applying it to super-sensible conditions. You could say that everything to which we ordinarily apply our understanding lives coarsely, densely in our soul because our brain is always at our disposal and is trained to deal with ideas and concepts relating to the physical plane. But to explain things which do not relate to the physical plane we have to exert our soul to such an extent that, when we study spiritual science, our brain plays an ever-decreasing part. When we experience difficulties in understanding what spiritual science gives us, this is only because our brain impedes our understanding. Our brain is adjusted and adapted to the coarse concepts of the physical plane and we have to exert ourselves to acquire the subtler concepts — subtler only in so far as human comprehension is concerned — of the spiritual world. This exertion is entirely healthy, it is certainly good, because with spiritual science we then live in our soul in a new way, quite different from that required by physical knowledge and understanding and ideas. We transport ourselves into a world of mobile, subtle pictures and ideas, and that is significant.

It is possible for all of you to be aware of the point at which you are sufficiently within the sphere where the etheric body more or less lives on its own, using the brain only in faint vibrations. It is the point at which you begin to feel that you no longer have to exert yourself to think the thoughts given by spiritual science, in the way in which you have to exert yourself to think everyday thoughts. You know very well that you yourself make the thoughts which you think about everyday matters on the physical plane; you develop the concepts in accordance with the daily requirements and conditions of life, in accordance with sympathies and antipathies and with whatever is prepared by your senses and by your brain-bound understanding. With spiritual science, however, once you really enter into it, you will begin to sense: I have not thought all this myself; it has already been thought before I think it; it is floating there as a thought and merely enters into me. When you begin to feel: This is floating in the objective thinking of the universe and merely enters into me — then you will have won a great deal. You will have experienced a relationship to that delicate etheric, floating and weaving world in which your soul lives. After that it is

really only a matter of time, though it might be quite a long time, before you gradually enter that sphere which we share with those among the dead with whom we are karmically linked.

I said that in olden times there was no question of discussing whether immortality existed or not. People then had a third condition apart from sleeping and waking, an in-between condition which was not merely a state of dreaming. It was an elementary and natural condition, in which human beings saw their dead spiritually face to face. They were there and they lived together with them. In those earlier times, when people did something, or when something happened to them which was a little out of the ordinary — and this of course happened and still happens all the time, for we are not only creatures of habit — they then felt beside them one or another of those who had gone through death before them, either long, or not so long, ago. They felt as though the dead person acted with them, or joined in their counsel. So when the soul of a person living on the earth decided to do something, or when something happened to that person, this soul felt that there was one who had died who joined in the action or the suffering. The dead were present. So there was no discussion about immortality or the lack of it. It would have been as pointless as questioning whether someone with whom we are speaking is actually there or not. Whatever we experience is a reality, and in olden times people experienced how the dead shared in all that happened.

We know the reasons why those times had to go into the underground of existence. But they will return, though in a different form. The manner of their return will be brought about by human beings who achieve the mood of soul which can be achieved through spiritual science, through actively living in the pictures of the spiritual world given by spiritual science. This will enable the soul to attain a delicate attuning, and then into this delicate attuning the souls of the so-called dead will enter. Of course they are always present, but what matters now is that we should be aware of how they enter into our soul-sphere. Of course, the dead always surround those of us with whom they were karmically linked during life. But to enable them to enter our consciousness we must go to meet them with the fine attuning I have just described. For you see it is always possible for the dead to gain entry into human souls if these souls lead their life in a mood such as that described just now, where the concepts and ideas formed by these souls live, somehow, in a super-sensible sphere. From the bodily, physical aspect of man the dead have to flee, for at the moment they cannot enter there. Neither can they enter those thoughts which only rise

up from the brain after the manner of the physical world. And because today human beings mostly entertain only thoughts that rise up from the brain, it is so very difficult for the dead to make contact with the living.

But if the living go to meet the dead by developing the fine attuning that arises when one concerns oneself a great deal with super-sensible ideas, then the dead can enter that floating and weaving world which extricates itself from the bodily aspect and takes no account of it. Today everything depends on whether human souls will find it possible, in some measure, to tread the path which leads to the dead. For then the dead will come to meet them. There must be a meeting in a common realm.

I have often stressed that what spiritual science has to say about the super-sensible world, the concepts and ideas we develop — all this is there for both the living *and* the dead. That is why I have recommended the practice of reading to the dead: that is, of unfolding thoughts orientated to them which refer to the super-sensible world. Doing this is a way of offering them a bridge and it is one which can reach not only those who have died recently, but all those who have died, even a very long time ago.

In this way the living have the possibility of approaching the dead. And similarly the dead have the possibility of working into the thoughts of the living. When you have absorbed the spirit of spiritual science you will be able to form from such arguments a fair conception of the fact that in the materialistic age we human beings have lived through for so long the dead can have less and less influence on the course of events here in the physical world where human beings have turned towards more materialistic ideas relating only to the physical plane, ideas which are of no use to the dead. So events in the physical world now run their course without any, or with only very little, influence from those who have passed on. This will have to change. Active communication must once more be established between the living and the dead. Those who have died must become able to work into the physical world, so that what takes place there no longer goes on solely under the influence of conceptions which arise in this physical world.

So our pursuit of spiritual science is indeed intimately bound up with giving the dead an opportunity to work here in the physical world. It must be said that a grave and lofty aim of our work in spiritual science is the creation of a link between the spiritual world, where the dead have their home, and the physical world. Then the dead will no longer have to say to

themselves that they are more or less exiles from the physical world owing to the fact that the living, down here, cannot develop thoughts through which the dead might bring their influence to bear in this physical world.

Many, for sure, will say: I have been striving to open myself to the ideas of spiritual science, but I have seen no sign of any influence emanating from the dead. My dear friends, these things demand a good deal of patience. You must take into account the degree to which for centuries the life of mankind on the physical plane has tended towards materialism and against anything that might make it possible for the dead to work here in a suitable way. Amongst all that has been going on for centuries, certain feelings, certain sensations have developed which human beings now entertain quite unconsciously towards the spiritual world. To these feelings and sensations, what comes today from spiritual science frequently appears as no more than abstract theory. One may well be convinced that what spiritual science has to say about the spiritual world is true. And yet it has not thus far entered so fully into one's whole soul life as to enable one to develop those sensations and feelings which do not disturb the delicate and subtle play of what comes over from the dead.

It is not easy to see these things in their proper light. People today are the children, or the grandchildren, or the great-grandchildren, or even the great-great-grandchildren of those who have lived during recent centuries and who have, under the influence of rising materialism, turned their sensations and feelings in certain directions. These directions are now expressed in every detail of these feelings and sensations. We can have the best will in the world to turn in the right way to someone who has died, to remember someone in the right way. But the whole disposition of our feelings and sensations working, perhaps one could say, through our blood which flows down to us from our ancestors, is not suited to placing before our soul in a proper way the delicate and intimate manifestations and revelations which come from the dead. Instead our feelings are like flickering lights, excitable flickering lights which interpose themselves in front of these subtle impulses which are today still so very delicate and intimate.

But though this may be the case we need not be discouraged, but should always cling to the positive aspect. And the positive aspect is that we genuinely strive for that condition which in certain moments of life, as the fruit of studying spiritual science, can give us a peacefulness of soul. What

matters is that peacefulness of soul, the fine attuning in that peacefulness of soul, which makes it possible for us to receive these delicate, intimate manifestations and revelations from the kingdom of the dead.

Something else, too, is necessary, and that is the goodwill to resist all that untruthfulness about which we have been speaking in these lectures. All these untruthfulnesses that buzz about in the world enter into what might be called the spiritual aura and generate there a thick fog which the dead find impossible to penetrate. This thick fog contains all that black rubbish which comes, for instance — to name only one source — from today's journalism, in the form of untruths which are printed and repeated, creating an aura of untruthfulness spanning the earth. It is no exaggeration to say that it is exceedingly difficult for the dead to penetrate this black fog. Therefore, with the help of ideas such as those we have been developing concerning the absolutely concrete untruthfulness buzzing about in the world, it is necessary to endeavour to reach clarity, to really make the effort in this field to recognize the purely external truth of the physical plane in so far as this can become accessible to us, in order not to cover our soul with a dense fog through which the spiritual world simply cannot penetrate. You will understand how very necessary this is.

In conjunction with the concepts we have just been discussing, let us now touch on the question: What is the aim of those secret societies which send impulses of the kind we have been describing into the world, impulses which then live in the life of untruthfulness and which have led, out of this untruthfulness, to the painful events of today? What do these secret societies want? Among others — we cannot go into everything — there is one particular thing they want: They want to materialize materialism even further; they want to create even more materialism in the world than would come about as part of the natural evolution of mankind in the fifth post-Atlantean period. They want even more materialism. This is only one aspect of what they are aiming for, but it is the aspect we want at least to touch on here. With this aspect in mind such societies are founded and with this aspect in mind people are persuaded to join them, people who are approached during their lives because they are deemed suitable.

There are the most varied types of such societies. One type, much in evidence in the West and taking all kinds of forms, includes organizations which practise ceremonial magic. Ceremonial magic can, of course, be good magic, but we are speaking now of those societies which do not

practise ceremonial magic for the good of mankind in general, but for the good of certain groups of people, or certain specific aims which are not general human aims.

Let us look first at those societies which practise ceremonial magic from this point of view. As we have said, it can be good, but in these societies it is not good. Certain kinds of ceremonial magic have definite effects on the human physical body. Everything physical is, after all, a manifestation of the spirit. Certain spiritual aspects which come into being under the influence of ceremonial magic can have an effect on the human physical body, specifically on the system of ganglia, as I described it the other day, and also on the spinal system. The cerebral system is the most difficult of all to influence by means of ceremonial magic. All this has to be done via the detour of the spiritual element, but it can be done and it can become effective.

Imagine certain secret societies carrying on a form of ceremonial magic directed towards its grey or black aspects. Imagine they influence their members in a way that affects even their physical body, even the delicate vibrations and weavings of their physical body, so that something spiritual flows into this physical body.

What is the consequence? The consequence is that something now comes about which was suitable in earlier periods of human evolution but is no longer permissible today. Such procedures make it possible for the spiritual world to influence those human beings who participate, even though they do not turn towards it along the path I have described. This means that it becomes possible for the dead, as well as other spirits, to influence the members of a circle created by ceremonial magic. In this way today's materialism can be made hyper-materialistic.

Imagine a human being — and there are countless such in the West — who is entirely materialistic, not only in his view of the world but also in all his feelings and sensations. And then imagine this materialistic disposition increasing to a high degree. Such a person must of necessity develop an urge to exercise an influence on the material world, not only while he lives in his physical body but also after he has died. He is bent on the following: When I die I want to have some abode through which I can affect the people I have left behind on the earth, or who are trained in such a way in relation to me. There are indeed certain people today whose materialistic urge is so great that they strive for means by which they can cultivate connections with the physical world even beyond death. And such means,

through which a person secures for himself the possibility of affecting the material world from beyond death, are abodes of certain kinds of ceremonial magical practice.

This is something that can have immense consequences. Imagine a number of people brought together to form a certain brotherhood. These people know: Others have gone before us; their urge to exercise their power was so great that their life on earth was not enough for its gratification, so they want to go on gratifying it even after death. For them we are creating an abode, and through the acts of ceremonial magic we perform, they work into our bodies. Because of this we gain greater power than we have; because of this we are enabled to exercise a certain degree of magical power over other, weaker people who stand outside such brotherhoods. When we speak words, when we give a speech, these dead souls work in us because we have been prepared by sharing in these acts of ceremonial magic.

It is one thing if somebody who simply participates honestly in the cultural processes of our time gives a speech in parliament or writes a newspaper article. But it is something entirely different if a person who belongs to a circle of ceremonial magic, and is thus strengthened by the power urges of some who have died, gives a speech in parliament or writes an article for a newspaper. The latter exercises an immensely greater degree of influence in the direction of his wishes than would be the case if he did not have this backing. This is one side of the matter.

The other side is that those who enter the circle of certain societies practising ceremonial magic are securing for themselves a power that reaches beyond death, a kind of ahrimanic immortality. For these people this is their main concern. For them, the society they enter provides a kind of guarantee that certain forces — which should by rights only live in them until the moment of death — will continue to live, even beyond death. More people than you might think are nowadays filled with this idea of guaranteeing for themselves an ahrimanic immortality, which consists in exercising influence not only as an individual human being, but also through the instrument of a society of this kind. Such societies exist in the most varied forms, and individuals who have attained certain degrees of advancement in these societies know: As a member of this society I shall become to some degree immortal because forces which would otherwise come to an end at my death will continue to work beyond death.

What these people then experience through this ceremonial magic makes them quite oblivious to a thought which would concern someone who takes such things truly seriously and in a genuinely dignified way. This is that the more a person gains by way of materialistic immortality, or rather ahrimanic immortality, the more he loses of the consciousness of true, genuine immortality. Yet materialism has taken such a hold on many souls today that they remain unconcerned about this and are tricked into striving for ahrimanic immortality. It could indeed be said that societies exist today which, from a spiritual or occult point of view, could be called 'insurance companies for ahrimanic immortality'!

It is only a small number of people in each case who understand all these things. For as a rule these societies are organized in such a way that the ceremonial magic they practise influences only those who are unaware of the implications, merely desiring to make contact with the spiritual world by means of symbolic ceremonies. There are many such people. And those who have this desire are by no means necessarily the worst. They are accepted as members of the circle of ceremonial magic among whom there are then a few who simply use the rest of the members as instruments. Therefore one should beware of all secret societies administered by so-called higher grades whose aims are kept hidden from the lower grades. These administrative grades usually comprise those who have been initiated to a stage at which they only have a vague idea of what I have just been explaining to you. They comprise those who are to work positively in connection with certain goals and aims which are then realized by the wider group of those who have been merely inveigled into the circle of ceremonial magic. Everything these people do is done in such a way that it leads in the direction required by the higher grades but is strengthened by the forces which come from ceremonial magic.

Those who know how huge a number of such societies exist in the West can begin to gain an idea of what immensely effective tools such societies of ceremonial magic can be for certain far-reaching plans for the world. As you have seen, the chief aim is to prolong into our time a way of proceeding in which the spiritual world works into the sense-perceptible, physical world in a manner that was right in earlier times. For our times, however, the right procedure is for human beings to go towards the dead and meet them half-way. In the mood we have just been discussing, however, a path is sought which was appropriate in earlier, atavistic times but which today is brought about through the medium of ceremonial magic.

This should give you an idea of the disproportionate lengths to which exaggerated materialism, materialism that is hyper-materialistic, is prepared to go in order to cross the border to the spiritual world, a border which today should only be crossed by means of attuning the soul to that mood which can be achieved through contemplating super-sensible concepts. An attitude appropriate for today is one that never accepts things which are given out by many secret societies, and which are not understood, for indeed a great deal that has not been understood is today both given out and accepted. Today it is appropriate to treat what these societies give out as something that is at most a failure to give the spoken word its true value, that is, something that uses words as mere concepts.

In much that today buzzes about in the world by way of untruthfulness and by way of egoism, in much that has even led to the canonization of egoism — not by the Pope, of course — in much that has led to the coining of the phrase *sacro egoismo*, which has become a new saint, though not canonized by the Pope, in much that today buzzes about in the world by way of egoisms and untruthfulnesses, influences and impulses are at work which gain extra strength from the world of the dead, in the manner described. And by searching for these impulses you will be led on to link up with other impulses about which you may find information in my book *The Spiritual Guidance of Man*. The lectures on which this book is based were given in 1911 in Copenhagen, for the most varied reasons. You will find there a description of how certain angelic powers remained behind in the third post-Atlantean period, in order today to unfold a force resembling that developed during the ancient Egyptian epoch. In those lectures I said:

'Anything wonderful can become a tempter and seducer of mankind if people follow it one-sidedly; and then if this one-sidedness starts to take a hold, the great danger arises that all kinds of good endeavours begin to manifest as fanaticism. True though it is that mankind progresses by means of its noble impulses, it is equally true that an over-enthusiastic, fanatical pursuit of these most noble impulses can lead to all that would be worst for their right unfolding.'

The lecture then goes on to describe how certain forces which had their proper place in the third post-Atlantean period are now starting to work in our time. One may now add that just as an individual quite rightly finds a

connection with his proper angel, so is it also possible for him to find a connection to those retarded spirits of the Egypto-Chaldean period, those retarded angels, if he seeks those forces and impulses which, in fact, are exaggerated ahrimanic forces coming in the manner described from the realm of the dead. These retarded angels play an important role in the secret societies I have been describing to you. There they are important helpers and leading spirits. A great deal that goes on in such secret societies is aimed at bringing Egypto-Chaldean elements in the old way into the present time. When these matters are no mere tomfoolery but stand fully in occult life, this takes place under the influence of retarded beings from the hierarchy of the angels who become leaders there. These are the beings from the hierarchy next above man who are sought by these societies.

This points to something exceedingly important. When we understand how the living testaments of these societies — not written testaments left over for those still alive, but testaments which are forces going beyond death — when we understand how these work and are preserved, which is something that ought not to happen, then we understand something of the magical power wielded by such societies which often enables them to impress the stamp of truthfulness on to something untrue. And indeed, one of their important magical functions is to spread untruth in the world in such a way that it gives the effect of being the truth. For in this working of the 'untruth in what is true' lies one of the mighty strengths of evil. This strength of evil is then put to considerable use in all kinds of quarters.

This I wanted to say today, in order to give you the esoteric background to the more exoteric matters I have been describing. Tomorrow we shall continue with this and endeavour to enter even more deeply into certain aspects.



Lecture 22

Materialism as a Barrier to a Healthy Relationship Between the Earthly and the Supersensible Worlds

21 January 1917, Dornach

Let me start by drawing your attention to a number of things which might be of interest to you, beginning with an article in yesterday's issue of *Schweizerische Bauzeitung*, reporting on the *Johannesbau* in Dornach, near Basel. This is the result of a recent visit of a group of Swiss engineers and architects. The article is most gratifying and fair. Indeed, it is like an oasis in the midst of other things which have recently appeared in print about our efforts which had their source in our very midst. It is most satisfying to find such a fair discussion that gives the building its due, especially since it comes from specialist, objective quarters outside our own circle. Do read it. Herr Englert, who acted as guide for that group of Swiss engineers and architects who showed such genuine interest in our building from the technical and also the aesthetic point of view, has just reported that the article is also due to be published in French in the Geneva journal *Bulletin de technique*.

Further, I should like to draw your attention to a book — you will excuse my inability to tell you the title in the original language — just published by our friend Bugaev under his pen-name of Andrei Belyi. The book is in Russian and gives a very detailed account in great depth of the relationship between spiritual science and Goethe's view of the world. In particular it goes into the connections between Goethe's views and what I said in Berlin in the lecture cycle *Human and Cosmic Thought* about various world views, but it also discusses a good deal that is contained in spiritual science. Its connections to Goethe's views are discussed in depth and in detail and it is much appreciated that our friend Bugaev has published a revelation of our spiritual-scientific view in Russian.

Herr Meebold, too, has just published a book in Munich to which I should also like to draw your attention. The title is *The Path to the Spirit. Biography of a Soul*. You will find it interesting because Herr Meebold

describes in it a number of experiences he had in connection with the Theosophical Society.

These are the oases in the desert of attacks. It seems that another has just appeared, written by one of our long-standing older members. It is said to be particularly scandalous, but I have not yet seen it. These attacks from among our members are particularly unwelcome because we realize that it is precisely these long-standing older members who ought to know better.

Yesterday we spoke about aspects of the human being's connections with the super-sensible world, particularly with regard to the fact that our dead, and indeed all those who have left their bodies and gone through the gate of death, must be thought of as being in that world. In our present context it is particularly important to understand that in the world through which man passes between death and a new birth an evolution, a development is taking place just as much as is the case here on the physical plane.

Here on the physical plane, taking a shorter span to start with, such as the post-Atlantean time, we speak of the Indian, the Persian, the Egypto-Chaldean, the Greco-Latin, the modern period, and so on. And we consider that during the course of these periods an evolutionary process takes place — in other words, that human souls and the manner in which these souls manifest in the world during this sequence of periods differ in characteristic ways.

Similarly, if only one can find sufficiently graphic concepts, one can speak of an evolution that takes place for these periods of time in the sphere through which the dead pass. There, too, an evolution takes place. On all kinds of occasions, where this has been possible, this evolution has been discussed in different ways. But relatively easy though it is to speak of evolution on the physical plane — and as you know it is not all that easy in this materialistic age — it is naturally less easy to do so with regard to the spiritual world, since for that world we lack sufficiently graphic concepts. Our language was created for the physical plane, and we are forced to use all kinds of paraphrases and graphic substitutes in order to describe the spiritual sphere in which the dead are living, especially with regard to evolution.

Naturally, of particular interest now is the fact that life between death and a new birth in our fifth post-Atlantean period is suitably different from what it was in earlier times. While the materialistic cultural period is running its

course here on earth, a great deal is also taking place in the spiritual world. Since the dead have a far more intense experience of everything connected with evolution than is the case for people living on the physical plane, their destiny is most intensely dependent on the manner in which a certain evolution takes place in definite periods. The dead react far more intimately, far more subtly, to what lives in evolution than do the living — if we may use these expressions — and this is perhaps more noticeable in our materialistic age than has ever been the case before.

Now, to assist our understanding of a number of things we shall be discussing, I want to introduce into these lectures something that has emerged in relation to this, as a result of careful observation of the actual situation. To do this I shall have to widen our scope somewhat and speak today about various aspects in preparation for the statements towards which our train of thought is leading.

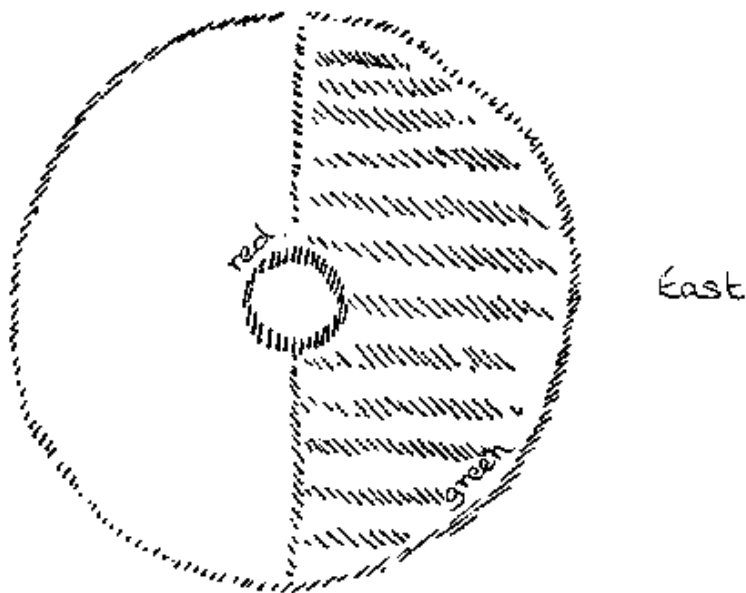
I have already pointed out that the right way to look at the human being in relation to the universe is to consider the individual parts of his being separately. From the spiritual point of view, what exists here on the physical plane is more a kind of image, a manifestation. Thus we may regard as fourfold the physical human being we see before us.

First we see the head. As you know from earlier discussions, the head as it appears in a particular incarnation is supposed to have reached its final stage in that incarnation. The head is the part most strongly exposed to death. For the way our head is formed is, for the most part, the consequence of our life in our previous incarnation. On the other hand, the formation of our next head in our next incarnation is the consequence of the life of our present body. A while ago I expressed this briefly by saying: Our body, apart from our head, metamorphoses itself into our head in our next incarnation, while our next body is growing towards us; whereas our present head is the metamorphosed body of our previous incarnation, the rest of our body has grown towards us more or less — there are varying degrees — out of what we have inherited.

This is how the metamorphosis takes place. Our head, as it were, falls away in one incarnation, having been the outcome of our body in our previous incarnation. And our body transforms itself, metamorphoses itself — as does leaf to petal in Goethe's theory of metamorphosis — into our head in our next incarnation. Now because our head is formed from the earthly body of our previous incarnation, the spiritual world has a great amount of work to do on this head between death and our new birth, for

its archetypal form must be fashioned by the spiritual world in accordance with karma. That is why, even in the embryo, the head appears before anything else in its complete form, for more than any other part it has been influenced by the cosmos. The body, on the other hand, is influenced for the most part by the human organism. So this appears later than the head in the embryo. Apart from its physical substance, which has of course been gathered through heredity, our head, in its form, its archetypal form, is indeed shaped by the cosmos, by the sphere of the cosmos. It is not for nothing that your head is more or less spherical in shape, for it is an image of the sphere of the universe; the whole sphere of the universe works to form your head. Thus we can say that our head is formed from the sphere.

Just as here on earth people busily work to construct machines and build up trade and commerce, so in the spiritual world human beings are busy, though not exclusively, developing all the technical requirements, the spiritual technical requirements for building the head for their next incarnation from out of the sphere of the universe, the whole cosmos, in accordance with the karma of their earlier incarnations. We glimpse here a profound mystery of evolution.



The second aspect we must consider, if we want to view man as a revelation of the whole universe, comprises all the organs of his breast, centred around lung and heart. Let us look at them without the head. The head is an image of the whole spherical cosmos. Not so, the organs of the breast. These are a revelation of all that comes from the East. They are formed out of what might be called the hemisphere. (See diagram).

Imagine the cosmos like this. Then you can see the head as an image of the cosmos. And the organs of the breast can be seen as an image of what streams in from the East — the hemisphere I am shading green. This hemisphere alone works on the organs of the breast. Or, expressed as a paradox: The breast organs are half a head.

This is the basic form. The head is based on the sphere, the breast organs on part of a circle, a kind of semicircle, only it is bent in various ways so that you can no longer recognize it exactly. You would be able to see that your head really is a sphere had luciferic and ahrimanic forces never worked on man. And you would see that the organs of the breast are really a hemisphere, had these forces never exercised their influence. The direction in relation to the centre — one would have to say for ordinary earthly geometry, the infinitely distant centre — is eastwards. An eastward-facing hemisphere.

Now we come to the third part of the human being, excluding head and breast organs: the abdominal organs and the limbs attached to the abdomen. Although this is not an exact term, I shall call all this the abdominal organs. Everything I comprehensively call the abdominal organs can also be related, like the other parts, to forces which work and organize from without. In this realm they work, of course, on man from the outside via embryological development in the way they do because during pregnancy the mother is dependent on the forces which have to be gathered together to form the abdomen, just as forces have to be collected from the sphere to form the head and from the East, the hemisphere, to form the organs of the breast.

The forces that work on the organs of the abdomen must be imagined as coming from the centre of the earth, but differentiated, with all that this entails, according to the region inhabited by the parents or ancestors. The forces all come from the centre of the earth, but with differentiations depending on whether a person is born in North America, Australia, Asia or Europe. The organs of the abdomen are determined by forces from the centre of the earth with differentiations according to region.

Seen from the occult point of view, the complete human being also has a fourth aspect. You will say that we have already dealt with the whole human being, and this is so, but from the occult point of view a fourth aspect must be considered. We have examined three parts, so now all that is left is the total human being. This totality, too, is a part. Head, chest and abdomen all together form the fourth aspect, the totality, and this totality is in turn formed by certain forces. This totality is formed by forces that come from the whole circumference of the earth. They are not differentiated according to region. The total human being is formed by the total circumference of the earth.

Herewith I have described to you the physical human being as an image of the cosmos, an image of the forces of the cosmos working together. Other aspects, too, might be considered in connection with the cosmos. For this we would have to think of the spiritual cosmos in relation to the human being, not only the physical cosmos. We have just been examining the physical human being, so we were able to remain with the physical cosmos. Once we start to consider the discarnate human being between death and a new birth we cannot remain with the elements of space, for the three-dimensional space that we have — though it determines the measure of the physical human being living between birth and death — does not determine the measure of the spiritual human being living between death and a new birth. We have to realize that those who are dead have at their disposal a world that is different from the one which lives in three dimensions.

To turn now to the discarnate human being, the one we call a dead human being, perhaps we need a different kind of consideration. Our method of consideration must remain more mobile. Also there are various points of view from which we could conduct our considerations, for life between death and a new birth is just as complicated as life between birth and death. So let us start with the relationship between the human being here on earth and the human being who has entered the spiritual world through death.

Once again we have the first part, but it is temporal rather than spatial. We could call it the first phase of a development. The dead human being goes, you might say, out into the spiritual world in a certain way; he leaves the physical world but, especially during the first few days, is still very much connected with it. It is very significant that the dead person leaves the physical world in close connection with the constellation arising for his life from the positions of the planets. For as long as the dead person is still

connected with his etheric body, the constellation of planetary forces resounds and vibrates in a wonderful way through this etheric body. Just as the territorial forces of the earth vibrate very strongly with the waters of the womb that contains a growing physical human being, so in a most marked way do the forces of the starry constellations vibrate in the dead person who is still in his etheric body at the moment — which is, of course, karmically determined — when he has just left the physical world.

Investigations are often made — unfortunately not always with the necessary respect and dignity, but out of egoistic reasons — into the starry constellation prevailing at birth. Much less selfish and much more beautiful would be a horoscope, a planetary horoscope made for the moment of death. This is most revealing for the whole soul of the human being, for the entry into death at a particular moment is most revealing in connection with karma.

Those who decide to conduct such investigations — the rules are the same as those applied to the birth horoscope — will make all kinds of interesting discoveries, especially if they have known the people for whom they do this fairly well in life. For several days the dead person bears within himself, in the etheric body he has not yet discarded, an echoing vibration of what comes from the planetary constellation. So the first phase is that of the direction in the starry constellation. It is meaningful as long as the human being remains connected with his etheric body.

The second phase in the relationship of the human being to the cosmos is the direction in which he leaves the physical world when he becomes truly spiritual, after discarding his etheric body. This is the last phase to which terms can be applied in their usual, rather than in a pictorial, meaning to describe what the dead person does, terms which are taken from the physical world. After this phase the terms used must be seen more or less as pictures.

So, in the second phase the human being goes in the direction of whatever is the East as seen from his starting point — here, direction is still used in a physical sense, even though it is away from the physical world. Through whatever is for him an easterly direction the dead person journeys at a certain moment into the purely spiritual world. The direction is to the East. It is important to be aware of this. Indeed, an old saying found in various secret brotherhoods, preserved from the better days of mankind's occult knowledge, still points to this. Various brotherhoods speak of one who has died as having 'entered into the eternal East'. Such things, when

they are not foolish trappings added later, correspond to ancient truths. Just as we had to say that the organs of the breast are formed out of the East, so must we imagine the departure of the dead as going through the East. By stepping out of the physical world through the East into the spiritual world, the dead person achieves the possibility of participating in the forces which operate, not centrifugally as here on earth, but centripetally towards the centre of the earth. He enters into the sphere out of which it is possible to work towards the earth.

The third phase may be described as the transition into the spiritual world; and the fourth as working or having an effect out of the spiritual world, working with the forces from the spiritual world.

Such ideas bring us intimately close to what here binds the human being to the spiritual worlds. The table below shows that the conclusion of number 4 meets up with the beginning of number 1, namely working on the head out of the realm of the sphere. This work is done by the human being himself after he has entered into the spiritual world by way of the East.

1	2	3	4
Head:	Breast organs:	Abdominal organs:	The totality:
from the sphere	from the East	from the centre of the earth, differentiated according to territory	by the circumference of the earth
First Phase: Direction in the starry constellation	Second Phase: Towards the East	Third Phase: Transition into the spiritual world	Fourth Phase: Working out of the spiritual world

In our dealings with the dead we can perceive strongly that those who have died have to leave the physical world in an easterly direction. They are to be found in the world which they reach via the door of the East.

They are beyond the door of the East. And in this connection the experiences we undergo now, in the fifth post-Atlantean period, in the sphere of development of materialism are very significant.

For you see, in this fifth post-Atlantean period, the dead now lack a great deal because of the materialistic culture prevalent in the world. Some aspects of this will be clear to you from what we said yesterday. When, by suitable means, we come to know the life of the dead today, we discover that they have a very strong urge to intervene in what human beings do here on earth. But in earlier times, when there was less materialism on the earth than there is today, it was easier for the dead to intervene in what took place on the earth. It was easier for them to influence the sphere of the earth through what those on earth felt and sensed of the after-effects of the dead.

Today it can be experienced very frequently — and this is always surprising in the actual case — that people who have been intensely involved in certain events during their life are unable, in their life after death, to have any interest in the events which take place after their death, because they lack any kind of link. Amongst us, too, there are souls who showed great interest for events on earth while they were here but who now, having gone to the spiritual world, find the events taking place since their death quite foreign to them. This is frequently the case, even with distinguished souls who here on earth were greatly gifted and filled with the liveliest interest.

This has been going on for a long time, indeed it has been on the increase during the whole of the fifth post-Atlantean period, ever since the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Expressed in commonplace terms — which are unfortunately all we have in our language — our experience is that, because they are less and less able to intervene in what human beings do, the dead have instead to intervene in the way people manifest as individual personalities. So we see that since the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the interest and the work of the dead has been concentrated increasingly on individual personalities rather than on the wider contexts concerning mankind. Since I have occupied myself closely with this very aspect, I have reached the conviction that it is connected with a certain phenomenon of modern times that is very noticeable to those who are interested in such things.

In recent history, unlike former times, we have the remarkable phenomenon of people being born with outstanding capacities. In general they work with tremendous idealism and distinguished endeavour but are incapable of gaining a broader view of life or of widening their horizons. In the whole of literature this has been expressing itself for some time. Individual ideas, concepts, and feelings, expressed either in literature or art, or even science, sometimes display strong promise. But an overall view is not achieved. This is also the reason why people find it so difficult to achieve the broader view needed in spiritual science. It happens chiefly because the dead approach individuals and work in them on capacities for which the foundations are laid during childhood and youth. The faculties which enable individuals to gain a broader view when they reach maturity are more or less untouched by the activities of the dead in this materialistic age. Incomplete talents, unfinished torsos — not only in the wide world, but also in individual situations — are therefore very prevalent because the dead can more readily approach individual souls rather than what lives socially in human evolution today. The dead have a strong urge to reach what lives socially in human evolution, but in our fifth post-Atlantean period this is exceedingly difficult for them.

There is another phenomenon today of which it is most important to become aware. There exist today many concepts and ideas which have to be very definite if they are to be of any use. Modern, more mercantile, life demands clearly defined concepts based on calculations. Science has become accustomed to this, but so has art. Think of the development art has undergone in this connection! It is not so long ago that art was concerned with great ideals on a wide scale, when, thank goodness, concepts were insufficient for an easy interpretation of great works which were full of meaning. This is no longer the case to the same extent. Today, art strives for naturalism, and concepts can easily encompass works of art because now they have often arisen merely from concepts instead of from an elemental, all-embracing world of feeling. Mankind is today filled to the brim with commonplace, naturalistic concepts which are determined by the fact that they have been conceived entirely in relation to the physical plane where it is in the nature of things to be sharply defined and individualized.

Now it is significant that the so-called dead do not appreciate such concepts. They do not appreciate sharply-defined concepts which are immobile and lifeless. One can learn some extraordinary things, some very interesting things in this connection — if I may be permitted to use such commonplace and banal expressions for these venerable circumstances. As you know, for we have gone through all this together here, I have recently

been endeavouring to discuss, using lantern slides, all kinds of considerations about periods in the history of art. I have been endeavouring to find concepts for all kinds of artistic phenomena. To communicate through speech one has to find concepts. Yet I have constantly felt the need to avoid firm, clearly-defined concepts for artistic matters. Of course, for the lectures I had to attempt to define the concepts as far as possible, for they have to be defined if they are to be put into words. But while I was preparing the lectures and formulating the concepts I must say I had a certain aversion, if I may use this word, to expressing what had to be said in such meagre concepts as have to be used if things are to be expressed in words. Indeed, we shall only understand one another in these realms if you translate what has been expressed in close-textured concepts back into concepts of which the texture is less clearly defined.

If one comes up against this experience at a time when one is also concerned with the world of discarnate souls, the following can happen. One may be attempting to comprehend a phenomenon which gives one the feeling of being far too unintelligent to grasp it in concepts. One looks at the phenomenon but has insufficient understanding with which to bind it properly into concepts. This experience, which is particularly likely when one is contemplating a work of art, can bring one into especially intimate contact with discarnate souls, with the souls of the dead. For these souls prefer concepts which are not sharply defined, concepts which are more mobile and can mingle with the phenomena. Sharply defined concepts, concepts similar to those formed here on the physical plane under the influence of the physical conditions of the sense-perceptible world, give the dead the feeling of being nailed to one particular spot, whereas what they need for their life in the spiritual world is freedom of movement.

Therefore it is important that we occupy ourselves with spiritual science so that we may enter those intimate spheres of experience where, as was said yesterday, the living can encounter the dead; because the concepts of spiritual science cannot be as closely defined as can those of the physical plane. That is why malevolent or narrow-minded people can easily discover contradictions in the concepts of spiritual science. The concepts are alive, and what is alive is mobile, though it does not, in fact, harbour contradictions. We can achieve this by concerning ourselves with spiritual matters, and to do so we have to approach things from various sides. And approaching things from various sides really does bring us close to the spiritual world. That is why the dead feel comfortable when they enter a realm of human concepts which are mobile and not pedantically defined.

Indeed, the dead feel most ill at ease of all when they enter the realm of the most pedantic concepts. These are the ones that have recently come to be defined in relation to the spiritual world for those people who do not want to live in anything spiritual, but who want the concepts for sense-perceptible things to apply to the spiritual world as well. These people conduct spiritualistic experiments in order to imprison spiritual concepts in the world perceptible to the senses. They are, in fact, more materialistic than any others. They seek rigid concepts in order to hold commerce with the dead. Thus they torture the dead most of all, for if they want to approach they force them to enter the very realm most disliked by them. The dead love mobile concepts, not rigid ones.

These are experiences to which the fifth post-Atlantean period seems to be particularly prone, given the two circumstances of materialism here on earth and the peculiar situation of the dead as described. One and the same thing determines materialism here on earth and a certain kind of life in the spiritual world. In the Greco-Latin period the dead most definitely approached the living in a manner which differed from that of today. Nowadays, in the fifth post-Atlantean period, there is what I would like to call a more earthly element — but you must imagine this of course in a more pictorial sense — a more earthly composition in the substantiality of the dead than there used to be. The dead appear in a form that is much more like those of earthly conditions than used to be the case. They are more like human beings, if I may put it this way, than formerly. Because of this they have a somewhat paralysing effect on the living. It is nowadays so difficult to approach the dead because they bring about a numbness in us. Here on earth materialistic thoughts reign supreme. In the spiritual world, as a karmic result, the materialistic consequence reigns supreme, for there the spiritual corporeality of the dead has assumed earthly qualities. It is because the dead are super-strong, if I may put it thus, that they numb us. To overcome this numbness it is necessary to develop the strongest possible feelings for spiritual science. This is the difficulty today, or one of the difficulties, standing in the way of our relationship with the spiritual world.

For the earthly realm seen spiritually — indeed the earthly realm can be seen spiritually — things appear different from what might be assumed when they are not seen spiritually. It is correct to say, as we have done many a time, that we live in the age of materialism. Why? It is because human beings in this materialistic age — human beings in general, rather than those who understand these things — are too spiritual — paradoxical though this may sound. That is why they can be so easily approached by

purely spiritual influences such as those of Lucifer and Ahriman. Human beings are too spiritual. Just because of this spirituality they easily become materialistic. It is so, is it not, that what the human being believes and thinks is something quite different from what he is. Those very people who are most spiritual are the ones most open to the whisperings of Ahriman, as a result of which they grow materialistic.

Strongly though one must combat materialistic views and materialistic ways of life, nevertheless one may not maintain that the most unspiritual people belong to the circles of materialists. I have personally met many spiritual people, that is, people who are themselves spiritual, not just in their views, among the monists and suchlike, and equally many coarse materialists especially among the spiritualists. Here, though they may speak of the spirit, are to be found the most coarsely materialistic characters. Haeckel, for instance, is a most spiritual person, regardless of what he often says. He is most spiritual, and just because of this can be approached by an ahrimanic world view. He is a most spiritual person, entirely permeated by the spirit. This once became clearly apparent to me in a cafe in Weimar. I have told this story before, perhaps more than once. Haeckel was sitting at the other end of the table with his beautiful, spiritual blue eyes and his marvellous head. Nearer to me sat the well-known bookseller Herz, a man who has done great service to the German book trade and who knew quite a bit about Haeckel in general. But he did not know that that was Haeckel sitting at the other end of the table. At one point Haeckel laughed heartily. Herz asked: Who is that man laughing so much down there? When I told him it was Haeckel he said: It can't be, evil people can't laugh like that!

Thus the concepts entertained by present-day materialists are so bare of spirituality that they are unable to discern the revelations of the spirit in the material world. So spiritual and material worlds fall apart and the spiritual world becomes no more than a set of concepts. Anyway, the biggest materialistic blockheads are often found today in societies and associations that call themselves spiritualistic. Here are the materialistic blockheads who on occasion have even succeeded in tracing mankind's descent from the apes, even from a particular ape, to the greater glory of the human race. These people were not satisfied with the descent of man from the apes in general, they even traced the lines back to particular apes. For those of you have not heard about this, let me explain. A few years ago a book appeared in which Mrs Besant and Mr Leadbeater

described exactly which apes of ancient days they were descended from. They traced their family trees back to particular apes and you can read all about this. Such things are possible, even in much-read books today.

We need the concepts I have elaborated today in order to penetrate more deeply into certain aspects of the theme we are discussing. For our world is definitely dependent on the spiritual world in which the dead live; it is connected with the spiritual world. That is why I have endeavoured to unfold for you certain concepts which relate directly to observations of the immediate present. Everything that takes place here in the physical world has certain effects in the spiritual world. Conversely, the spiritual world with the deeds of the dead shows itself either in what the dead can do for the physical world or in what they cannot do because of the present materialistic age. I also described this present materialistic age in so far as it has been made excessively materialistic by certain secret brotherhoods, as I showed yesterday. The type of materialism that underlies all world events to a high degree today is what we might call the mercantile type.

I ask you to take good note for tomorrow of the concepts I have put before your souls today, concerning the life of the dead. But also please note how little the present age takes certain things for granted which were taken much more for granted in earlier times. We shall see tomorrow how all these things are linked. However, it is characteristic for our time that certain conceptual views are extended to mercantile life which would escape someone who fails to pay attention to such features of our time. We ought not to let them escape us. Mercantilism is all very well as long as it is put in the right light in the way it stands within social life. For this to happen it is necessary for us to have certain yardsticks for everything. Today, however, much conceptual chaos reigns. Yet within this conceptual chaos, concepts are given quite clear definitions, as is our way in the age of materialism in which concepts are fixed to ideas based on what the senses can experience. And when a chaos of concepts then results, as happens in today's materialism, this really does draw the sharpest possible line between the physical world in which human beings live between birth and death, and the super-sensible world in which they live between death and a new birth.

Only consider in this connection the fact that in Central Europe — in contrast to other regions where the inclination to philosophize is less pronounced — there is a tendency to philosophize about the mercantile system even though this is not at home in Central Europe. In Central Europe there is a tendency to make a philosophy of everything. Thus

people also philosophize about what aspects of materialism are typical for our time. An interesting book by Jaroslav was published long before the war: *Ideal and Business*. Certain chapters interested me particularly because of their significance with regard to cultural history. It was not the content that interested me but their relation to cultural history; so, for instance, the chapter entitled 'Plato and Retail Trade'. This deals with everything to do with commerce, with the mercantile system. Another interesting chapter is 'The Astrological System Applied to the Price of Pepper'. Not uninteresting is also 'Wholesale Trade as Described by Cicero'. Another chapter is entitled 'Holbein's and Liebermann's Portraits of Merchants'. Not uninteresting, too, is the chapter 'Jakob Böhme and the Problem of Quality'. Very interesting is 'The Goddess Freya in Germanic Mythology in Relation to Free Competition'. And finally, especially interesting is 'The Spirit of Commerce as Taught by Jesus'.

As you see, everything is thrown in the pot together. But by this very fact things gain that characteristic which makes for materialism. Let us take all this as a preparation for our considerations tomorrow.



Lecture 23

Right and Wrong Ways of Relating to Archangels (Folk Spirits)

22 January 1917, Dornach

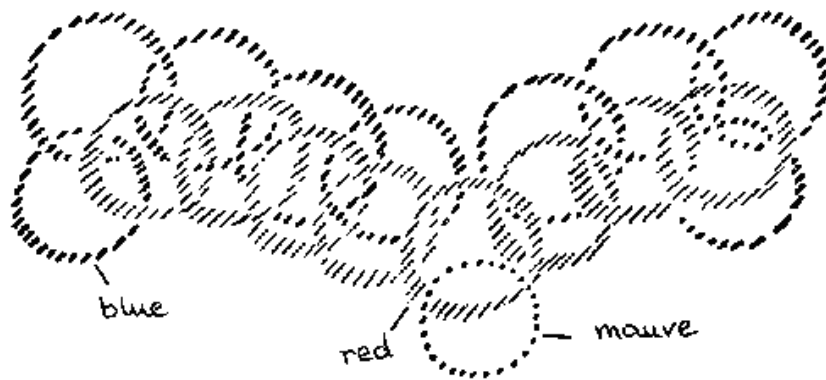
In the cycle of lectures in Vienna on *The Inner Nature of Man and the Life between Death and New birth*, you will remember that I described concepts — or rather, inner experiences of soul — through which the human being can approach those worlds of which we have spoken and which we share with the disembodied souls of those who have passed the portal of death and are preparing themselves for a new life on earth. On the basis of those lectures, you will be able to imbue with life a concept which is indispensable if we seek to arrive at a true understanding of the spiritual world, and that is that many things — I say many things, not everything — are, from the point of view of the spiritual world, entirely the opposite of what is revealed in the physical world. On this basis, let us consider the way the human being steps over, and also looks over, into the life of the spiritual world.

Here on earth, bound to our physical body as we are between waking up and going to sleep, using this physical body as a tool for our experiences in the world, we feel a lack of ability to comprehend the spiritual world and grasp its revelations. As long as we are enclosed within our physical body, and in order to perceive anything, we have to use the rough and ready instruments of this physical body. We cannot avoid using them. And when we are unable to use them, as is the case between going to sleep and waking up, our astral body and our ego-being — which are recent additions from the time of ancient Moon and the earlier periods of Earth — are too attenuated, too intimate, to detect anything. Of course the spiritual world is ever about us, just as the air surrounds us constantly. And if our astral body and our ego-being were — let me say — sufficiently dense, we should always be able to perceive, to grasp, what is all around us in the spiritual world. We cannot do so because in our astral body and our ego-being we are too attenuated; they are not yet fully-formed instruments, like the physical senses or the brain, which our capacity for forming ideas uses in order to attain waking experiences in the soul.

Having stepped through the portal of death, human beings find themselves on the whole, as you know — at least for the first few decades — endowed with a degree of substance similar to that of our sleeping state while on earth. This substance cannot remain quite so attenuated as that pertaining to the time of our physical incarnation, otherwise all experiences between death and a new birth would remain totally unconscious. They do not, as we know. On the contrary, a certainly different, but much brighter and more powerful consciousness than that which prevails while we are in our physical body comes about between death and a new birth. So we must ask how this form of consciousness emerges while we dwell in our astral body and ego-being.

In physical life here on earth we possess our physical instrument which permeates us — or we could say envelops us — with all the ingredients which make up the physical world: that is, the mineral, the plant and the animal kingdoms. The physical body thus prepared for us is our tool for waking life. In a similar way a tool is prepared for us which serves us between death and a new birth. Because we are human beings, the first thing to be prepared for us after death, as soon as we have laid aside our etheric body, is something that comes from the hierarchy of the angeloi. We are mingled with the substance of the hierarchy of the angeloi. One being from this hierarchy actually belongs to us, is the leading being of our human individuality. As we now grow upwards into the spiritual world this being from the hierarchy of the angeloi who belongs to us is joined by other beings from this hierarchy, and together they mould in us — or rather for us — a kind of angeloi organism, the structure of which differs from that of our physical organism.

To make a diagram of this, we could say: We grow upwards through the portal of death into the spiritual world. This is a sketch of our own individuality (mauve in the diagram). Linked with it is the one angel being who, we feel, is given to us by the hierarchy of the angeloi (red). But when we lay aside our etheric body, this angel being forms a relationship with other beings of the hierarchy of the angeloi — it links up with them, and we feel the whole of the world of the angeloi within ourselves. We feel it to be within ourselves, it is an inner experience — except, of course, for the external experiences which also result.



This permeation by the world of the angeloï makes it possible for us to relate to other disembodied human beings who have passed through the portal of death before us. Let me put it like this: Just as here our senses link us to the external world, so the condition of being embedded in the world of the angeloï links us to the spiritual beings, including human beings, whom we find in the spiritual world. Just as here in the physical world, in accordance with the prevailing conditions, we receive an organism which is organized in a certain way, so do we receive an organism of spirit which is brought into being by this network of angeloï substances. How this network of angeloï substances is structured, however, depends very much on the manner in which we work our way up to the spiritual world. If we work our way up in such a way that we have little sensitivity for the spiritual world because we have far too many echoes of physical pleasures, urges and instincts, physical sympathies and antipathies, then the formation of our angeloï organism is difficult. This is why we tarry for a while in the soul world, as we called it, so that we can free ourselves from all that permeates us from the physical world and prevents us from forming our angeloï organism properly. It is gradually developed while we tarry in the soul world. We grow towards this angeloï organism. But concurrently another necessity arises — the necessity to permeate ourselves not only with this angeloï organism but also with another substance, that of an archangeloï organism. Our consciousness in the spiritual world between death and a new birth would remain exceedingly dull if we could not permeate ourselves with the archangeloï organism. If we were to be permeated only with the angeloï organism, we would be dreamers in the spiritual world. We would be woven out of all

kinds of Imaginative substances belonging to the spiritual world, but we would dream away our time between death and a new birth. So that we do not dream this time away, so that a strong, clear consciousness can come about, we have to be permeated by the archangeloi organism (blue in the diagram).

This gives our consciousness the right clarity. Only through this do we wake up in the spiritual world. Now the degree to which we wake up in the spiritual world determines the degree to which we can have a free relationship with the physical world. And a free relationship with this physical world is something we must have. Let us ask what is the relationship of the physical world with the incarnated human beings who have passed through the portal of death. You can find the answer to this, too, in the lectures given in Vienna. Here in the physical world it is difficult for human beings, however strong their yearning, to rise up in thought and feeling to a perception of the spiritual, heavenly world. Human beings thirst for ideas about the heavenly world, but they cannot easily unfold the powerful capacity for forming ideas necessary to bring this heavenly world into their reach. In a certain sense the situation is the opposite during life in the spiritual world between death and a new birth. Into this world we are followed by what we experience in the physical world; we are followed by what was important in the physical world, by what we perceived here. We are followed by all this in a very extraordinary way. The examples I give will show you how complicated these things are. In the light of our capacity to form ideas in the physical world, these examples will sometimes appear grotesque — even paradoxical — but it is impossible to enter in a concrete way into the spiritual world without also taking account of precisely these ideas.

Perception of all that exists in the mineral kingdom is lost almost as soon as we step through the portal of death. Here in the physical world, because we have senses, our capacity for perception is greatest with regard to the mineral kingdom. Indeed, we could almost say it is virtually exclusive, for other than the mineral kingdom there is not much that we can perceive as long as we are confined to our senses. You might say that we perceive animals and plants as well. Why do we? A plant is full of minerals, and what we perceive in the plant is everything mineral that streams and pulsates through it. The same goes for the animals. So it is true to say that here on earth human beings perceive with their senses almost exclusively what belongs to the mineral kingdom. When we die this mineral kingdom, so clearly perceived here, disappears. Take an example. Every day you perceive salt on your table, you perceive it as an external mineral product.

But someone who has left his body and gone through the portal of death cannot see this salt in the salt-cellar. However, when you sprinkle the salt in your soup, and then swallow it, a process takes place within you, and that process, which is accompanied by the sensation of the salty taste, is perceived by the one who has died. From the moment when your tongue begins to taste the salt, from the moment when a process takes place within you, the one who has died can perceive the salt in the way it works. This is how things are. So those who have gone through the portal of death cannot perceive the mineral kingdom unless it has an influence in some way on a human or animal or plant organism. This shows that what might be called the external environment of the dead is quite different from what we are accustomed to calling our environment here between birth and death.

One thing, however, always remains perceptible to the dead, and it is important to pay attention to this. It is whatever has been filled with human thoughts and feelings; it is the human thoughts which are perceived. Salt in a salt-cellar, as a product of nature, is not perceived by the dead. Nor do they perceive the salt-cellar, whether it is made of glass or any other material. But in so far as human thoughts have come to rest in the salt-cellar during the process of its manufacture, these human thoughts are perceived by the dead. When you consider how everything around us, except what is purely the product of nature, bears the signature of human thoughts, you will have a good idea of what the dead can perceive. They also perceive all relationships between beings, including those between human beings. All this is alive for them.

There are certain things in the physical world, however, of which the dead endeavour to rid themselves; they want to expel them from their ideas and soul experiences — as it were, wipe them out. Their desire to do this is comparable to the longing on the part of human beings here on earth to gain certain insights about the world beyond. Here we long to achieve ideas about the next world. After death, as regards certain human matters here on earth — the world beyond, from the viewpoint of the dead — we long to extinguish them, to wipe them away. But to do this it is necessary to be filled with the substances of the higher hierarchies of angeloi and archangeloi. Once the dead are filled with these substances they can extinguish from their consciousness what must be extinguished.

This, then, gives you an idea of how the dead grow into the spiritual world by filling their individuality through and through with the substances of beings of the higher hierarchy. It is very important to understand that in

order to remove from consciousness all the things with which they are more or less personally connected — and that means everything manufactured and consequently bearing within it human thoughts which enable the dead to perceive it — the dead must, above all else, fill themselves with the substance of the angeloi. Other things, too, must be cast aside, must be extinguished, so that the dead can find their way to a proper sojourn in the spiritual world.

Strange though it may sound from our standpoint here on earth, there is an obstacle to growing into what gives us a clear, enlightened consciousness in the spiritual world. This obstacle standing in the way of growing easily into the spiritual world is, strangely enough, human language, the language we use here on earth for the purpose of a physical understanding from one human being to another. The dead have to gradually grow away from language, otherwise they would remain stuck in the affinities which bind them to language and which would prevent them from growing into the kingdom of the archangeloi. Language is definitely only suitable for earthly conditions. And within earthly conditions the human being has, in his soul, become very strongly linked with language. For many people, especially now in this materialistic age, thinking has come to be virtually contained in language. People today think hardly at all in thoughts but very strongly indeed in language, in words. That is why they find it so satisfying to find the right term for something. But such terms, such definitions in words, are only valid here in physical life, and after death our task is to extricate ourselves from definitions in words.

In such matters, too, spiritual science gives us a certain possibility to find our way into the realm of the super-sensible. How often do I say to you that to reach a genuine concept we can only approximate; we can only, so to speak, feel our way all around the actual words. How often have I not shown you how we have to endeavour to reach the concept by approaching it from all sides, by experimenting with the use of different expressions in order to free ourselves of the actual words. Spiritual science in a certain sense emancipates us from language. Indeed it does this very fully, thus bringing us into the sphere which we share with the dead.

Emancipation from language is intimately bound up with the way the dead grow into the substance of the archangeloi. By emancipating ourselves from language in spiritual science, by creating concepts in spiritual science which are more or less independent of language, we build a bridge between the physical and the spiritual world.

Take a clear look at what I have just said. You will then find that you have understood an important connection between the physical and the spiritual world. And if you think the thought through in a living way you will discover an important means by which to understand all kinds of impulses that emanate from those brotherhoods about which we have spoken on numerous occasions in the past weeks. From various things I have said you will have gathered that these brotherhoods make it their business to fetter human beings to the material world. Just recently we spoke of how these brotherhoods are eager to make materialism super-materialistic or, in a way, to create a kind of ahrimanic immortality for their members. They can do this most strongly by representing group interests, group egoisms, and they certainly do this outstandingly.

One way of representing a group interest is followed by the most influential among these brotherhoods, whose point of departure is something I have already described to you. It is their aim to thoroughly immerse the fifth post-Atlantean cultural period in everything connected with the English language. To these brotherhoods the very definition of the fifth post-Atlantean period is that every English-speaking element belongs to the fifth post-Atlantean period. Thus, even in their primary principle, they restrict things to an egoistic group interest.

This involves something extremely important from the spiritual point of view. It means that their intention is nothing less than the aim of influencing not only human individuals while they are incarnated in physical bodies between birth and death, but indeed all human individuals, including those who are living between death and a new birth. They are striving to let human individualities enter into the spiritual world and become immersed in the hierarchy of the angeloi, but then to prevent them from becoming immersed in turn in the hierarchy of the archangeloi. The aim is, one could say, to depose the hierarchy of the archangeloi from the evolution of mankind!

Perhaps not those of you who have recently joined us, but certainly those who have been with us for some considerable time will discover, if you pay close attention to many things you have been told, that there are clear signs of such things, even in the Theosophical Society. Those of you who shared in the life of the Theosophical Society will surely remember that certain leading members of that society, especially the notorious Mr Leadbeater, said in so many words that in many ways the life between

death and a new birth was a kind of dream-life. Those of you who had been members of the Theosophical Society for some time will know that such things were circulated.

It is not extraordinary that such things have been said, for in the case of some souls, who had been successfully influenced in this way and who were found by Leadbeater in the spiritual world, this had actually happened. These souls had indeed been prevented from contact with the world of the archangeloi and they therefore lacked any strong, clear consciousness. So in his way Leadbeater was observing souls who had fallen prey to the machinations of those brotherhoods, only he did not go so far as to observe what became of those souls after a while. Such souls cannot spend their whole time between death and a new birth without the ingredients which would normally be given to them by the world of the archangeloi, so they have to receive something else instead. And they do indeed receive something that is an equivalent; they are indeed permeated by something; but what? They are permeated by something that comes from archai who have remained behind at the stage of the archangeloi. So, instead of being permeated by the substance of the real archangeloi — as would be normal — they are permeated by archai, by time spirits, but by those who have not ascended to the level of the time spirits but have remained behind at the level of the archangeloi. They would have become archai if they had evolved normally, but they have remained behind at the level of the archangeloi. That means that these souls are permeated by ahrimanic influences in the strongest manner.

You need to have a proper idea of the spiritual world in order to comprehend the full significance of a fact such as this. When occult means are used in an endeavour to secure for a single folk spirit the rulership over the whole world, this means that the intention is to influence even the spiritual world. It means that in the place of the legitimate rulership of the dead by the archangeloi, is put the illegitimate rulership by archai who have remained at the stage of the archangeloi and who are, therefore, illegitimate time spirits. With this, ahrimanic immortality is achieved.

You might ask why human beings can be so foolish as to allow themselves to be programmed away from normal evolution and into quite another evolutionary direction. This is a short-sighted judgement, for it fails to take into account that out of certain impulses human beings can indeed come to long for immortality in worlds other than those that would be normal. It is well and good that *you* do not long for any part in some kind of ahrimanic immortality! But just as all kinds of things are

incomprehensible, so you will have to admit that it must be allowed to remain incomprehensible, if people in the normal world — including life between death and a new birth — want to escape from this normal world, saying — as it were: We do not want Christ to be our guide, Christ, who is the guide for the normal world; we want a different guide, for we want to oppose this normal world. From the preparations they undergo — I have described these to you — from the preparations brought about by ceremonial magic, they gain the impression that the world of ahrimanic powers is a far more powerful spiritual world and that it will above all enable them to continue what they have achieved in the physical world — making immortal their materialistic experiences in physical life.

The time is ripe for looking into these things, because those who do not know about them, those who do not know that such endeavours exist today, are not in a position to understand what is going on. Behind everything visible in the physical world there lies something that is supernatural, something physically imperceptible. And there are today not a few who work, either for good or for bad, with means, with impulses that are hidden behind what the senses can perceive. It can be said that the world in which we live will follow its proper evolution if human beings place themselves in the service of Christ. But there are many and varied means by which this can be avoided, and some of these are so close to home that it is not easy to speak about them. People have no idea of what can spread through human souls, yet at the same time work as an immeasurably strong occult impulse.

You know — now this is close to home — that at a certain point of time the doctrine of infallibility was declared. This doctrine of infallibility — and this is the important aspect — is accepted by many people. But someone who is a true Christian might wonder about this doctrine of infallibility. He could ask himself what the early fathers of the Church, who were much closer to the original meaning of Christianity, would have said about it. They would have called it a blasphemy! In a truly Christian sense, this would hit the nail on the head. And at the same time it would point to an exceptionally effective occult method of stimulating faith by means of something eminently anti-Christian. This faith represents an important occult impulse in a particular direction, away from normal Christian evolution. As you see, we can touch on something quite close to home, and wherever we do so in the world we find occult impulses.

A similarly powerful occult impulse, which failed, was sought by Mrs Besant when she launched the Alcyone fiasco. If a belief in the incarnation of Jesus in Alcyone had taken hold, this would have become a strong occult impulse. So you see that even the mere spread of certain concepts, certain ideas, can contain strong occult impulses. And since those brotherhoods of whom I have spoken have set themselves the task of making the fifth post-Atlantean period — in the egoistic interest of their group — into the long-term aim of earthly evolution, eliminating what ought to come into this earthly evolution in the sixth and seventh post-Atlantean periods, you will understand why these brotherhoods send out into the world the things that I have described. To achieve their aims they have to create impulses which are meaningful not only for incarnated human beings but also for those who are not incarnated. The time has come when it is necessary that at least a few solitary individuals understand these things so that they can gain an idea of what is actually going on and being accomplished.

For this to be possible, concepts about the life of mankind on earth must come into being which are ever more and more right. It is unthinkable that those concepts can continue which are causing so much harm in our time. For the more human beings there are who have the right concepts, the less will certain occult trends be able to stir up trouble. However, as long as the things which are being said continue to be said in Europe today, things deliberately distorting the truth about the relationships of nations with one another, this is a sign that many occult impulses are at work with the aim of distracting earthly evolution away from the sixth post-Atlantean period. After all, important things are going to be brought about by the sixth post-Atlantean period. I have stressed very strongly that Christ died for the individual human being. We must see this as an essential aspect of the Mystery of Golgotha. He has an important task during the fifth post-Atlantean period which we shall leave aside for the moment. But He also has an important task in the sixth period. This is to help the world to overcome the last vestiges of the principle of nationality. That this should not happen, that steps should be taken in good time to prevent any influence by Christ in the sixth post-Atlantean period — this is the purpose served by the impulses of those brotherhoods who want to preserve the fifth post-Atlantean period in the manner I have shown.

The only counter-measure is to create the right concepts and gradually imbue them ever increasingly with life. These right concepts must live. Nations could dwell so peacefully side by side if only they would endeavour to discover the right concepts and ideas about their relationships. As I have

said, no programme, no abstract idea, but solely the right concrete concepts, can lead to what must come about. Difficult though it is in the face of current ideas, by which our friends, too, have of course been not a little infected, nevertheless it is necessary to draw people's attention to various aspects which can lead to the right concepts. You all have at your disposal the necessary materials on which to base these right concepts, but these materials are not illuminated properly. As soon as they are correctly illuminated you will arrive at the correct, concrete ideas.

Let us now take up something we have already discussed from a certain viewpoint. Here on this globe, in the Europe we inhabit, the relationships between nations are spoken about in a way that inflicts utter torture on the dead, for all the ideas and concepts are based on the peculiarities of language. By forming concepts about nationality based on the peculiarities of language, people persistently torture the dead. One way of torturing the dead, one way of failing to show them love, is to participate in spiritualist seances. For this forces them to manifest in a particular language. The dead person is expected to speak a particular language, for even with table-rapping the signs have to refer to a particular language. What is done to the dead by forcing them to express themselves in a particular language might very well be compared with pinching someone living in the flesh with red-hot tongs. So painful for the dead are spiritualist seances which expect them to express themselves in a particular language. For in their normal life the dead are striving to free themselves from the differentiations between languages.

So, simply by speaking about the relationships between the peoples of Europe in concepts based on language, we are doing something about which we are barely able to communicate with the dead. That is why I could say that it is necessary today, or beginning to be necessary, to form concepts of a kind which can be discussed with the dead, or about which we can have communication with the dead. Of course there is no need to inundate the world with Volapuk or some other constructed language, for though it is true that all people wear clothes, they need not all wear the same clothes. On the other hand, though, we cannot be expected to see our clothes as part of ourselves. Similarly something we need for the physical world, namely the differentiation between languages — which serve the purpose of bringing the spiritual realm into the physical world — cannot be seen as belonging to our inmost archetypal being. We must be clear about this.

So how can we arrive at concepts which gradually rise above the ethnic elements which are almost exclusively based on language? In this, too, Anthroposophy must rise above mere anthropology, which has really no other means of answering this question except by referring to the differentiations of language.

As I said, the peoples of Europe could easily live in peace if only they could find suitable concepts, concepts which are alive. We took a step towards this when we discussed Grimm's law of sound-shifts. There I showed you how some languages have remained behind at an earlier stage. We spoke of the sequence of stages: Gothic, Anglo-Saxon — present-day English — and then High German. High German has continued to advance while English has remained at a certain stage. This is not a value judgement but merely a fact which has to be observed as objectively as a law of nature. In English we have *d* where in High German there is *t*, and we saw that this conforms with a certain law, the law of sound-shifts. However, this law of sound-shifts is, in a certain sphere, an expression of more profound conditions prevailing in the whole of European life. In this connection it is worth noting that certain concepts and ideas work with a vengeance, albeit unconsciously, to bring about misunderstandings. These things, too, must be seen entirely objectively.

Taking our departure from what we have said so far, we could state that in Central Europe there existed what we might call the 'primordial soup' for what later streamed out to the periphery, particularly towards the West. Let us take a closer look at this 'primordial soup' (see diagr, below). For a very long time it has been customary for the nation which represents this 'primordial soup' to call itself 'das deutsche Volk'. The peoples of the West have exercised a kind of revenge on this nation by refusing to call them by the name they have chosen for themselves, a name which signifies a profound instinct. They are called 'Teutons', 'Allemands', 'Germans', all kinds of things, but never, by those who speak a western language, 'Deutsche'. Yet this is the very name that has deep links with the nature of this people which is, in a way, the 'primordial soup'. One stream of this went southwards. We described it as the papal, hierarchical cultic element.

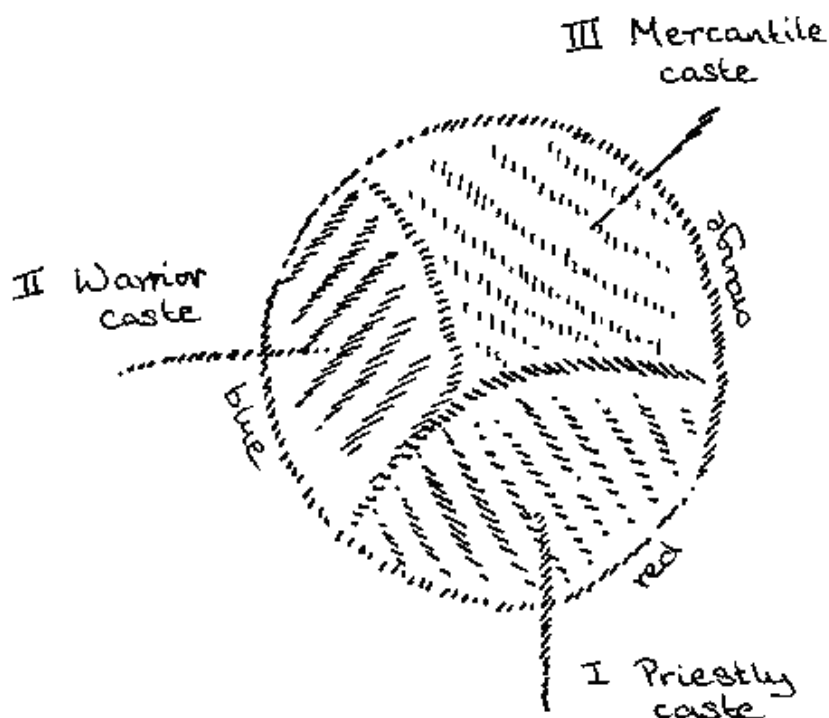
Another stream went towards the West. We described this when we spoke of the diplomatic, political element. And a third stream went towards the North-west. We described it in connection with the mercantile element. At the centre there remained something that has retained a fluidity which allows for further evolution. You need only remember that in the periphery even language has stopped developing, whereas in the German language

of Central Europe there still exists, in the sound-shifts, the possibility of growing beyond the sounds and ascending to the next stage of sound-evolution.

What is the basis for this? The 'primordial soup' was still virtually undifferentiated, bearing within it all the elements which then streamed outwards. They really did stream outwards. The migrating peoples moved right down through Italy. Present-day Italians are not the descendants of the Romans; they are the result of all that arose through the mingling of the Germanic tribes as they moved southwards. The whole process began when the Romans used the Germans whom they had absorbed to wage war on other Germans, for these were their best warriors. Things then continued in the manner familiar to us from history. Similarly, the Franks migrated westwards and the Anglo-Saxons north-westwards. How can we gain a proper conception of what it was that migrated outwards in this way?

The undifferentiated 'primordial soup' of humanity was not quite without structure, even though it was undifferentiated. It is right to distinguish between what was at first undifferentiated and what later became differentiated. The 'primordial soup' contains what migrated down towards the south; it is there as one of the parts. This part (red in the diagram) migrated southwards with all its one-sidedness. Drawing an analogy to what people meant by the ancient castes, we could say that a caste migrated southwards, a caste with a capacity for priestly things — a priestly caste. Since then a priestly element has always emanated from that part of the periphery. This has taken many forms and, although in an extraordinary way, even the latest phase has a kind of priestly character. Not only is the impulse called 'holy egoism', *sacro egoismo*, but also, d'Annunzio, for instance, could not have used words of a more priestly nature. Right down to the rephrased 'Beatitudes', everything that came from that quarter was clothed in priestly robes. Whether good or bad, everything was of a priestly nature. What remained in the 'primordial soup' became the opposition to all this, in the way I have described. What appeared in the Reformation was the element which had remained in the 'primordial soup'; it came to be the opponent of the one-sided priestly element. The fact that today nothing more can be detected of this priestly element, or that all that can be detected is what is obviously there, is simply the result of that hollowing-out of which I have spoken.

The second element migrated westwards: the warrior caste, the kingly caste, the element of kingship. We have spoken of this, too. This western part only fell into republicanism because of an anomaly. In actual fact it is inwardly structured through and through in a warlike, kingly manner and it will ever and again fall back into this warlike, kingly element. Again we have something that has streamed out, so that a part of this element which has streamed out towards the West has also remained in the 'primordial soup' and will in turn have to provide the opposition to what takes place in the West (blue).



And north-westwards went the mercantile element. It, too, remains as a part (orange) and will have to stand in opposition to what has developed one-sidedly. No moral evaluation is meant by this, for let no one believe that I in any way share the opinion, expressed so frequently, that the mercantile element is something despicable in comparison with the priestly element. All these things must be seen in their dissimilarity, but they must not be labelled and evaluated. Indeed, for the fifth post-Atlantean period,

as we have seen, the mercantile element is something utterly essential. But we really must see the realities as they exist. If people cannot see them now, then they will come to see them in the future.

From one quarter many occult impulses have emanated which have used the priestly element in the interests of certain groups, and from another quarter have come occult impulses which have used the warlike element. In the same way, from a third quarter, occult impulses are emanating today which prefer to use the mercantile element as their vehicle. They will be stronger than the others, for numbers I and II are only repetitions of the third and fourth post-Atlantean periods, whereas number III belongs fully to the fifth post-Atlantean period. Therefore, all the impulses that come from the third quarter will be stronger than those coming from the first and second quarters because they coincide with the fundamental character of the fifth post-Atlantean period. They will be as strong as certain impulses were during the Egyptian civilization in the third post-Atlantean period, and others which emanated from the Near East and transplanted themselves through the cultures of Greece and Rome during the fourth post-Atlantean period. The sorcery of the ancient Egyptians and the blood sacrifices — these are the forerunners of what comes from the secret brotherhoods of which we have been speaking, though what comes from them will be something different. Because it makes use of the mercantile element it will have a more common-or-garden character in the ordinary human sense.

We really must be clear about these things. Only if human beings feel themselves to be immersed in a living way in what truly exists can healing come to evolution. Through this alone is it possible, within what happens, to learn to distinguish what is true from what is untrue. We have heard how necessary it is to learn to distinguish between truth and falsehood — that falsehood which is the cause of the huge groundswell of impulses now running through the world. So many false ideas bear within them a powerful occult force if they are believed by human beings.

Just as in earlier times other media served the impulses which were at work, so in our own time, in the fifth post-Atlantean period, the art of printing books and everything that exists in the mercantile element serves these purposes. We have a foretaste of the terrible things to come in people's strong dependence on everything put out in the Press by mercantile groups by means of the medium of printing. The aims of these groups are anything but what they say they are in their newspapers. They want to make profits, or achieve certain things through doing business, and for this they possess the means by which they can disseminate views

whose truthfulness is irrelevant but which serve the purpose of entering into certain kinds of business. In the case of much of the printed matter distributed around the world today the right question to ask is not: What does this person mean? but: In whose service does this person stand? Who is paying for this or that opinion? This is often the crucial question these days. The secret brotherhoods about whom we have been speaking are not concerned with suppressing these things, but rather promoting them as an important occult means of which they can make use. An important aim is achieved by them when what is said no longer matters, as long as it exercises influence over people in the interests of certain groups.

The important thing is to see these things as clearly and soberly as possible. And we can only discern the nuances sufficiently if we see them properly in their connections with the spiritual worlds. I am referring to the symptoms, to the symptoms of history, as I have said. Of course you must not expect to find black magic behind every phenomenon. But there are phenomena which are used in the service of grey or black magic. It is also not necessary to pass moral judgements on everything; you must simply see things in the proper light.

For someone who wants to see things in the proper way, certain words spoken by Sir Edward Grey will surely be unforgettable and startling — words appearing among other, less important, things which nevertheless also had to be said in order to make the whole thing credible. These words were part of the great speech he made to introduce England's entry into this European war, and they are saturated with the blood — I mean the soul blood — of the fifth post-Atlantean period. These words are not only true but more than true; their truth is drawn from what lives in a materialistic way in the fifth post-Atlantean period. 'We are going', says Grey, 'to suffer, I am afraid, terribly in this war whether we are in it or whether we stand aside. Foreign trade is going to stop, not because the trade routes are closed, but because there is no trade at the other end. Continental nations engaged in war — all their populations, all their energies, all their wealth, engaged in a desperate struggle — they cannot carry on the trade with us that they are carrying on in times of peace, whether we are parties to the war or whether we are not,' and so on.

The whole of western Europe stands today under the dominion of a single question of power. This talk of trade, and that it is for considerations of trade that it is important not to remain detached from the war — this is far more profoundly truthful than all the other things contained in this speech, things which only had to be said in order to make this speech

credible. It no longer matters what people say, as long as it is believed. They might even say it unconsciously. Neither am I passing a moral judgement on anyone. What does matter is the ability to recognize — on the basis of the inner truth of human evolution — where the truth is being expressed. And this was a point at which the truth in the truest sense was spoken. The same facts, the same truths are truthfully expressed which, once they have been suitably developed by those brotherhoods of whom we have spoken, lead to the impregnation of the mercantile trend with occult impulses.

This must become known to mankind; it must be experienced by mankind. If human beings were not to experience this, they would not grow sufficiently strong. They must harden themselves by opposing what lies in the impulses we have described. In an earlier age there existed a tyranny which forced people to believe only what was recognized by Rome. A far greater tyranny will come about when neither philosophers nor scientists decide what should be believed but when the tools of those secret brotherhoods alone specify what is to be believed, when they alone make sure that no human soul may harbour any beliefs other than those dictated by them, when nothing new is done in the world except what is stipulated by them alone. This is the goal of these brotherhoods. And though I have nothing against idealists — for idealism is always something good — certain idealists are naive if they believe that these things are only temporary and will disappear again once the war comes to an end. The war is only the beginning of the way things are tending to go. And the only possibility of getting beyond this lies in the clear and proper understanding of what is going on. Nothing else is of any use. Therefore — although certain quarters will not be pleased to hear and see them and will take steps against them — there will always have to be people who clearly point out the full intensity of what is really going on, people who cannot be deterred from pointing out the full intensity of what is happening.

At the beginning of these considerations I said that the Germans called themselves 'Deutsche', but that they met with no understanding on the part of those who call them 'Germans', or whatever else. Seen from their own point of view, 'German' is exactly what they are not, for those who call themselves 'Deutsche' consider that 'Germanic' refers to all those whose languages are at the same stage historically, and this does not include High 'German' or anything that is 'Deutsch'. From their point of view the Scandinavians, the Anglo-Saxons, the Dutch are 'Germans', and they mean by this nothing more than that below the surface their languages are related. So 'Germans' no longer means much to those who call themselves

'Deutsche' because all of this no longer has any reality today. Thus, when outside Germany the phrase 'pan-Germanic' is coined, this is quite meaningless to those who call themselves 'Deutsche' because for them 'Germanic' can no longer have any real substance. Different national structures have formed, and to use the purely theoretical expression 'pan-Germanic' is simply to regress to an earlier age; it expresses nothing that has any connection with the future or even with the present. The designation 'Deutsch', however, is based on a profound instinct.

Differentiated out of what I called the 'primordial soup' came the three castes, the first, the second and the third caste. They developed and migrated. The fourth caste I have already described as those who simply wanted to be human beings, and nothing else. They always remained where they were and, as a result, underwent developments which to the others seemed grotesque — for instance, in relation to the first sacramental stage of alliteration, which went on to develop into the sound-shift. This is most interesting because it is a link among many others.

Let us put it this way: Those who migrated were various differentiations of 'the people'; and those who remained were 'the people' *per se*, the 'volk', the 'diet'. The name Dietrich, for instance, means 'he who is rich in people'. 'Diet' later became 'deutsch', and to be 'Deutsch' means nothing other than to be 'the people'. The people who remained where they were are the fourth caste. The other three migrated, 'the people' remained.

So this is the profound instinct that lies behind the designation 'Deutsch'; it simply denotes the human element. Therefore, what stayed where it was as 'the people' has the capacity to be felt, not as something that has developed organically, but as something that has remained fluid in its development so that it can go beyond all the differentiations. Certainly the priestly element is there, but there is the possibility of going beyond the priestly element. The warlike element is there, but there is the possibility of going beyond the warlike element. The mercantile element is also there, but there is the possibility of going beyond the mercantile element. Similarly in language; the older form was there, but there was the possibility of going beyond it.

Connected with this, though, is a phenomenon which understandably has led to endless misunderstandings. Seen at a deeper level, these are tragic misunderstandings, but they come about because, of course, in the 'primordial soup' there is much which contains the germs of what later reappears in the periphery. Yet whereas in the periphery it is seen as

characteristic and fitting, when it is discovered in the 'primordial soup' it is thought to be totally abnormal. Let us take militarism. This does not belong to the nature of the German people at all, it belongs to the French. In France no fault is found with it, because there it has developed organically. But when it is discovered in Germany it is seen as something improper which ought not to be there. Fault is found with it when it comes to the fore as a result of some emergency situation such as the geographical situation we discussed at length earlier. Or take the German 'Junker'; all he represents is what developed in the British Empire into something absolutely acceptable, the aristocratic squire. Simply because it developed in its own way in Central Europe it stands out like a sore thumb and is seen as a provocation. Thus there arise endless misunderstandings; indeed the world is full of things that are misunderstood, it is full of subjective interpretations of reality. Wherever you look, you find all kinds of ideas which crumble on closer inspection. Those who really understand what is going on have no use for these things, those whose thinking is based on reality have no use for them, and yet they work as impulses; in public opinion they act like dynamite. They elbow their way into public opinion. Some would be infinitely funny if they were not so infinitely tragic.

Here is an example. Treitschke is described by the nations of the Entente as a monster, as a person whose views are an abomination for Europe. He is presented as typifying those views about Central Europe which justify inflicting on Central Europe its just deserts. But let us look at some of Treitschke's views. What does he think, for instance, of the Turks? He thinks that they should depart from Europe, that they should not be allowed to live in Europe but should scatter themselves across Asia. What we read today in the note to Wilson exactly expresses Treitschke's view! Fault is found with Treitschke, but in this matter, as in countless others, his opinion is taken up and even acted upon. His views on Turkey might just as well have been copied straight down in the note to Wilson. This is what I mean by an idea which crumbles; as soon as you apply any knowledge or understanding it disintegrates. Other concepts disintegrate, too, as soon as a little knowledge is applied. But most people today make statements without any knowledge, much to the advantage of those who want to spread their ideas in the dark. How often do we hear today that it is perfectly 'humane' to surround and starve out Central Europe. Among the various reasons given for this most humane method of warfare is the justification that in 1870 the Germans did just the same. They found it perfectly 'humane' to surround and starve out Paris; and the relative size of

the territories in question is irrelevant. Only someone who knows nothing of history can talk like this — of course I do not mean the history you can read in the newspapers!

But what were the facts? In 1870/71 Bismarck, who was responsible for starving Paris out, was totally against doing any such thing. You can read in his book how distressed he was that the impulse came from England, via the English princess who later became the Empress Friedrich, to conquer Paris by starvation rather than by any other means. He writes that unfortunately they were forced by the Englishwoman to apply 'this humane method' to Paris; he speaks of the humane English method.

That is the real historical context. But, of course, you have to know about it if you want to judge things without using ideas which crumble. Comparing the two situations, they seem so truly alike. But very often things are not at all alike when they are compared against the full background. In this case the 'humane' method of starving Paris out is an English invention of recent history. So the objection now being made should not be made, if reality is to be the basis. To work with reality, to understand things on the basis of reality — this alone can lead to salvation today.

To be able to meet the request of many of our friends to investigate current events, we have had to discuss things we usually discuss in other connections, in order that our souls might experience the deep seriousness with which the reality of events must be seen. If just a few people can be found who are willing to see things as they really are, then the grim times we are about to face will be followed by better times. The seeds take a while to ripen. But if you sow thoughts of reality in your souls today, these are real seeds capable of ripening, and we can add that these are thoughts about which one can be in agreement with the dead. It is so painful to hear on all sides these days that 'we owe this or that to the dead'. This event, which for convenience sake is still termed 'war', though it has long since become something utterly different — how often do those who want to prolong this event proclaim all the things we are supposed to owe to the dead, to those who have fallen! If people only knew how they blaspheme against God when they maintain that we owe it to the dead to prolong these bloody events; if only they knew the position of the dead in this matter, they would quickly distance themselves from this blasphemy!

So, my dear friends, from all these things which come about through human beings, you see how necessary it is to build a bridge between the living and the dead. Spiritual science will build this bridge. Spiritual science will bring about a possibility of reaching an understanding, even with those who have passed through the portal of death. A life of community will embrace all human souls — those embodied on the earth and those living between death and a new birth — when the fundamental nature of the human being is understood, when it is understood that life in the body and life without the body are simply two forms of one and the same all-embracing life. This knowledge, that the human being has two forms of life, one in the body and one without the body — this knowledge, if it is fundamentally understood, bears within it salvation for the future, but only if human beings fill themselves with these ideas in a truly living way.



Lecture 24

Spiritual Ignorance of Rhythm, Time and Archangels and Cultural-Political Chaos

28 January 1917, Dornach

Today I shall speak more generally, perhaps aphoristically, to prepare the way for Tuesday, when I shall discuss our anthroposophical spiritual science and its significance for the present time and for human evolution. I shall then bring to your notice some things which we should certainly take to heart. On the one hand we will look back on our work, and on the other hand I shall present certain matters which are important for the whole way in which we assess our spiritual scientific movement, as well as the manner in which we relate to it. It seems to me to be appropriate, at this time, to take into our hearts a consideration of this kind.

Let me start today with some remarks on what it is that can give us, as human beings, a sense for our situation in the cosmos. Actually, human beings in this materialistic age feel, you might say, deserted and isolated in the cosmos. If you cut off a person's finger or hand, or amputate his leg, he feels you have taken away something that belongs to his physical, bodily nature; he feels that the missing part belongs to the whole of his bodily nature. In earlier periods of human evolution people felt quite differently about this. Not only did they feel their hand, or arm or leg to be a part of their whole being, but they felt that they were, in turn, a part of a totality. In those days it was possible to speak quite differently about a group-ego. Tribes, families, for generations back, felt themselves to be a totality. We have gone into this frequently. As for their external, physical existence, however, people felt something quite different. They felt in a way as though they stood within the cosmos as a whole, as though they had been formed out of the whole cosmos.

Just as today we feel that our finger, our hand, is one member of our total organism, so in olden times people felt: Up there is the sun; it runs its own course but it is not unrelated to us; we are a part of the region traversed by the sun; we are a part of the universe as it is given certain rhythms by the moon. In short, they felt the universe to be one great organism and that they were within it, just as today our finger might feel that it is part of our body. The fact that this feeling, this perception, is

virtually lost to us today has not a little to do with the rise of materialism. Today's science, in particular, disdains to have anything to do with an idea that man might be a part of the cosmos. Science regards a human being as an individual body, of which the separate parts are examined and described anatomically and physiologically. It is no longer customary in science to regard the human being as a member of the total organism of the universe in so far as this is physically visible.

But people's view of things, especially their scientific view, will have to return to the concept of man embedded in the whole cosmos. Human beings will have to sense once again that they stand within the cosmic universe. This will not be possible in the way that was the case in olden times. They will have to achieve it by expanding their science, which today is abstract and directed to the individual, to include certain considerations. They will have to apply certain judgements, of which we shall discuss only one today — which we mentioned several weeks ago. This will show us the direction scientific thinking will have to take — having become far more human than current scientific thinking — if human beings are to find once again an awareness of how they stand within the universe as a whole.

You know that the position of the sun on the ecliptic at the spring equinox moves forward in the Zodiac. You know that this point has always been designated, ever since mankind began to think, according to its position in the Zodiac. So from about the eighth century before the Mystery of Golgotha until about the fifteenth century after the Mystery of Golgotha, the sun at the spring equinox rose in the sign of the Ram, though not always at exactly the same spot. During this period the sun traversed the sign of the Ram. Since then, the sun at the spring equinox has been rising in the sign of the Fishes. Note, please, that astronomy takes no account of the constellations, so you will find that calendars still say that the sun rises in the constellation of the Ram at the beginning of spring, which is in fact not the case. Astronomy has stuck to the earlier cycle. It simply divides the Zodiac into twelve equal parts, each of which is named after one of the signs. You know from our calendar what the situation is.

However, this is immaterial as far as we are concerned. What is important for us is the fact that the position of the sun at the spring equinox moves forward, passing through the whole Zodiac little by little. It traverses the whole Zodiac until it finally returns to the original position, taking approximately 25,920 years. These 25,920 years are termed the Platonic Year, the Cosmic Year. The exact figure varies according to the various

methods of calculation. However, we are not concerned with exact figures but with the rhythm this precession entails. You can imagine that a cosmic rhythm must lie in this movement which repeats itself every 25,920 years.

We can say that these 25,920 years are very important for the life of the sun, for during this time the life of the sun passes through one unit, a proper unit. The next 25,920 years are then a repetition. We have a rhythm in which one unit measures 25,920 years.

Having looked at this great Cosmic Year, let us now turn our attention to something small, something intimately connected with life between birth and death, that is, with our life in so far as we are inhabitants of the physical universe. It is indisputable that one of the most important things in this life in the physical body is a single breath, an in-breath and an out-breath, for our very life depends on this breathing in and breathing out. If it were to be interrupted, we should cease to be capable of living. One breath is indeed something very important. A breath brings in the air which enlivens us in a particular way. Within our organism we transform this air into the breath of death, for it would kill us if we were to breathe it in again once we have breathed it out.

On average, a human being takes eighteen breaths a minute. Not all breaths are equal, for those in youth differ from those in old age, but the average is eighteen breaths a minute. Eighteen times a minute we rhythmically renew our life. Multiply this by 60 and you have 1,080 times an hour. Now multiply by 24, and the number of breaths in twenty-four hours comes to 25,920!

You see how a remarkable rhythm underlies the course of our life in one day. Let us take one unit of life to be one breath. This is something very important for us, since the rhythmical repetition of our breathing maintains our life. In one day we are given exactly as many units of life as the years it takes the sun to return to its original position on the ecliptic at the spring equinox. This means that if we imagine one breath to correspond to one microcosmic year, then we complete one microcosmic Platonic Year in one day, an image of the macrocosmic Platonic Year. This is most exceptionally significant, for it shows us that the process of our breathing, something which takes place within us, is based on the same rhythm, on a different time-scale, as the great rhythm of the sun's passage.

It is important for us to consider such a thing in our soul. For if we transform what has been said into a feeling, then this feeling will tell us that we are an image of the macrocosm. To say that the human being is an image of the macrocosm is no mere empty phrase, no idle chatter, for it can be proved down to the last detail. From this you can gain a feeling of the solid foundation on which stand all the laws that come from spiritual science. They are all based on similar intimate knowledge of the inner connections of the cosmos, even though it is not always possible to go into every detail.

Now in considering these things, it must above all be clear to us that the human being is, in some way and to some extent, detached from the cosmos. He stands within the rhythm of the cosmos and yet he is to some extent free. He changes things subtly, so that the rhythms do not exactly match, but it is just this fact of not quite matching which gives him the possibility of freedom. In general, however, he stands within the rhythms of the cosmos.

I had to bring forward these considerations so that what I now want to say might not be misunderstood. Having considered the rhythm of breathing, let us now turn to a larger one, the next in size: the alternation of sleeping and waking. A single breath is the smallest element of life. Now let us look at the alternation between sleeping and waking, which is indeed, to some extent, an analogy to the rhythm of breathing.

As you know, I have often described the taking in of the astral body and ego on waking up, and the letting go of the astral body and ego on going to sleep, as a breathing in and a breathing out in the course of a day and a night. But we can look at this in an even more materialistic sense. When we breathe the air, it goes in and it goes out. We inhale, we exhale. Something material swings back and forth like a pendulum; out, in, out, in. The alternation of sleeping and waking occurs as a very similar rhythm. In the morning, when we wake up and take in our ego and our astral body, our etheric body is displaced, is pushed down from the head and more into the other elements of the organism. And when we go to sleep again, pushing out our astral body and our ego, then our etheric body spreads back into our head and is there just as it is in the whole of the rest of our body. Thus there is an incessant rhythm. When the etheric body is pressed down, we wake up, and it stays down while we remain awake. When we go to sleep it is pushed back up into our head. Up and down it goes in the course of twenty-four hours. The etheric body moves rhythmically during

the course of twenty-four hours. Of course there are irregularities, and this is in keeping with the human being's capacity for freedom, his degree of freedom. But, overall, what I have described takes place.

We could say that something breathes in us — though it is not an in-and-out but an up-and-down — something breathes in us during the course of a day which resembles our breathing every eighteenth of a minute. Let us see whether what breathes in this up-and-down of the etheric body also represents a kind of circulation, something which returns to its starting-point. We must fathom the meaning of 25,920 days, for 25,920 such up-and-down movements could be seen as a replication of the Platonic Year. Just as a day corresponds to 25,920 breaths, so 25,920 days ought to correspond to something in human life too. How many years does this come to?

A year has $365\frac{1}{4}$ days and if we divide 25,920 by 365.25 the answer is: nearly 71. Let us say 71 years, which is the average life-span of the human being. The human being is free, however, and often lives much longer, but you know that the patriarchal life-span is given as 70 years. The span of a human life is 25,920 days, 25,920 great breaths, and so we have another cycle wonderfully depicting the macrocosm in the microcosm. We could say that by living for one day, taking 25,920 breaths, we depict the Platonic Cosmic Year, and by living for 71 years, waking up and going to sleep 25,920 times — a breathing on a larger scale — we once again depict the Platonic Year.

Now let us turn to something which time will not allow us to discuss in detail today, but which I nevertheless want to indicate, something that can be sensed in an occult way. We are surrounded by air. It is the air which gives us the possibility of that closest element of life that takes place in the rhythm of breathing. This rhythm is given to us by the air, which is something belonging to the earth. And what gives us the other rhythm? The earth itself! That rhythm arises because the earth turns on its own axis — speaking in accordance with modern astronomy — and brings about the alternation of day and night. So the air breathes in us when we take a breath. And the earth, by letting us wake up and go to sleep, breathes, pulses in us by turning on its axis and giving us the alternation of day and night. Our life-span can be seen in relation to the earth as one day in the life of an organism which, instead of taking one breath every eighteenth of a minute, takes one breath in one day and night. For such an organism seventy years are one day, and ordinary days and nights are its breaths.

You see how we can feel ourselves to be within a life on a larger scale, a life which takes one breath every twenty-four hours and for which one day takes seventy, seventy-one, years. We can feel ourselves to be within a living being which has much longer rhythms of pulse and breathing. So you see that it is quite correct to speak of the microcosm as being an image of the macrocosm, for every part of the image can be proved mathematically. If we maintain that the air breathes within us, that it breathes itself in us, that the earthly realm breathes in us because we belong to this greater living organism, then we might come to ask: Apart from being related to the air, which is on the earth, and to the whole of the earth with its rhythm of day and night, are we perhaps also related in a certain way to the rising of the sun as a whole, as it progresses during the course of the Platonic Year, returning to the position from which it set out?

These things are of the utmost interest, yet science today takes no more notice of them than of shadows. On one occasion I found myself startlingly confronted by this contrast between today's science and the science which must come in the future. Perhaps I have told you that in the autumn of 1889 I was called by the Goethe and Schiller Archive in Weimar to edit Goethe's natural-scientific works for the extended complete works. I had to examine all the documents left behind by Goethe containing his studies on anatomy, physiology, zoology, botany, mineralogy, geology and also meteorology. He made an enormously thorough study of the weather during the course of a year, recording especially the barometric data, and it is astonishing how many tables he worked out in this connection. Only small parts of this work have been published. A few of the tables are reproduced in my edition, but otherwise little is publicly known. Like temperature charts, he made graphs showing the barometric data at a particular place compared with other places and he recorded his readings every few hours for months on end. In this way he hoped to show how the curves differed in different places.

Graphs showing barometric data are something for which today's science has little use as yet. But Goethe wanted to record these curves which for him represented an analogy with the pulse as we record its fluctuations in temperature charts. He wanted to record a kind of pulse of the earth, the regular, day-to-day earth-pulse. Why? He wanted to prove that the fluctuations in the barometric data during the course of the year are not as irregular as ordinary meteorology supposes but are subject to a certain degree of regularity which is only modified by secondary conditions pertaining at certain times. He wanted to prove that the earth's gravity depicts a breathing out and a breathing in during the course of a year; he

wanted to point to the very thing that is expressed in the human being's breathing out and breathing in. He wanted to find the same thing in the barometric data. Science will embark on such projects in the future, when once again the microcosm will be examined in its relationship to the macrocosm.

So you see how Goethe was working towards a form of science which will come about at some time in the future. We also gain an idea of the immense diligence he applied in order to reach the results he achieved. He never simply makes an assertion, as is so often the case with others. When others speak of the pulse of the earth, they often intend this simply as a metaphor, an *aperçu*. But when Goethe says, in three or four lines, for instance, that the earth breathes, he can back this statement with a large pile of tables. Empirical knowledge is behind whatever he says. Yet most people consider empirical knowledge to be stuff and nonsense. We can learn from Goethe that one must have material with which to back one's assertions. In this way we now have material to back our statement that the earth breathes like a great organism.

Let us now see whether we can speak in a similar way about breathing if we place ourselves within the great Platonic Year of the sun, which has a span of 25,920 years. Without more ado let us now regard these 25,920 years as a single year, and let us see how much a single day amounts to. To do this we must divide by $365\frac{1}{4}$, and the answer will be a single day. We have already done this sum, and the answer was seventy-one years, the span of a human life. This means that a human life takes one day of the whole Platonic Year. So we could look at the whole Platonic Year with regard to the human life-span as follows: As physical beings we are breathed out by the whole process of the Platonic Year, so that if seventy-one years are seen as a single day, this would be one breath of the being who lives in the rhythm of the Platonic Year.

With regard to an eighteenth of a minute we are a limb of the life of the air, and with regard to a day we are a limb of the life of the earth. With regard to our life-span it is as though we were breathed out and breathed in again in one day of that being who lives in the rhythm of 25,920 years. So we could consider our physical body, which lives out its patriarchal span, to be a single breath of that great being which lives so long that 25,920 years are as one year for it. Our patriarchal life-span is then one day. So looking at a being who lives with our earth and experiences day

and night in twenty-four hours, this is one breath for our etheric body. And one breath for our astral body is our actual breath of one-eighteenth of a minute.

Herein you have an analogy for an ancient assertion, for something that was called the 'days and nights of Brahma'. Think of a spiritual being for whom our seventy-one years are as is a single breath for us. We find we are a single breath for that being. When we enter the world as a tiny baby, that being for whom the Platonic Year is one year breathes us out. It breathes us out into the cosmos, and when we die it breathes us in again; we are breathed out and we are breathed in. Now turn to the earth: It breathes us out and in again in one day. Now turn to the air, which is a part of the earth: It breathes us out and in again in an eighteenth of a minute. Whichever way we look at it, the number 25,920 represents the return to the starting point. This is a regular rhythm; it gives us the feeling of being embedded in the cosmos; it teaches us that the span of a human life, and one day in a human life, are indeed, for greater, more all-embracing beings, the same as is one breath for us. If we can transform this knowledge into feeling, then the expression 'resting in the world-all' assumes immense significance.

Such things really do belong in the orbit of scientific research, and nothing other than the attitude of mind of spiritual science will lead to such research into these figures, which are to be found, after all, in any encyclopaedia. One day such research will be carried out and then ordinary science will be able to find a link with anthroposophical spiritual science.

As we have seen, everything is ordered according to numbers. But it is also ordered according to measure. Human science will lend great depths to the Biblical words: Everything in the universe is ordered in accordance with measure and number.

Let us continue. There is something connected with our breathing, a kind of dependant of our breathing, and that is our speech. Organically, speech is connected with breathing. Not only does it emerge from the same organ but it is also connected with the rhythm of breathing, the rhythm of an eighteenth of a minute. Thus we speak, and thus speak those who are with us on the earth. Just as the air surrounds us on the earth, so are we surrounded by human beings whose speaking bears a relationship to the rhythm of breathing. It should follow that the other breathing, the

breathing connected with day and night, also has a kind of speaking linked with it. This would be a speaking by beings who belong to the organism of the earth, just as human beings belong to the air.

In olden times, the wisdom imparted to human beings by higher beings came, not via the breathing rhythm of an eighteenth of a minute, but via the rhythm of breathing which has one day as its unit. In those ancient days they could not learn as quickly as we can today; they had to tarry longer for words which were linked to a breathing rhythm of twenty-four hours. In this way ancient knowledge came to man, knowledge which is at the foundation of everything and which can be discovered in various traditions. It was brought by higher beings who are linked to the earth in the way man is linked to the air, and who approach man. Those who today work towards an initiation still notice something of this. For knowledge which comes from the spiritual world comes to us far, far more slowly than does that which is imparted to us on the wings of our ordinary air processes.

That is why it is so important for one striving for initiation to learn to sense within himself the great significance of the transitions of going to sleep and waking up. In going to sleep and in waking up, in this transition, we are most likely to sense how spiritual beings mysteriously speak with us. Later we can then gain some control over this. If you seek entry into the world inhabited by the dead, it is good to be aware that the dead are most likely to speak at the moment of going to sleep and the moment of waking up. The moment of going to sleep is more difficult, because here we usually become immediately unconscious and fail to perceive what the dead have said. But in waking up, if we succeed in becoming fully aware of the moment of waking up, that is when the dead are most likely to communicate with us. But we must seek to gain a firm hold of the moment of waking up. This means that we must endeavour to wake up without immediately entering into the light of day. You know that there is a — shall we say — superstitious rule, that if we want to hold on to a dream we must not look at the window or the light because if we do, we will forget easily. This applies just as much to the delicate observations which flow to us from the spiritual world. We must endeavour to wake up in the dark, in darkness which we wilfully create by not listening to noises, by not opening our eyes, by waking up consciously while not yet going out to meet the day. That is when we best notice the approach of communications from the spiritual world.

You could say that if this is the case we shall receive precious few communications during the course of our lifetime! For just think how difficult it would be if this situation meant that in the course of our lifetime we could only receive as many communications as could come to us during the course of one day. This would be sufficient, no doubt, but we should have no chance of making use of any of them, for think of the time taken up by our childhood, and so on. However, the earth takes part in all this — please bear this in mind — the earth receives these communications into its etheric body. And because they are inscribed on the earth's etheric body, the communications remain available for study. We can also study, in the sun-ether which fills the whole world, the more comprehensive communications given to us by the being whose life element is the Platonic Year. This is described in *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds* and other books.

You see how a thread can be spun to link ordinary science with spiritual science, although those who are strangers to spiritual science will hardly find themselves in a position to evaluate what ordinary science gives them in a suitable way. But those who have the attitude of mind of spiritual science will not doubt, when they approach these matters, that a time will come one day when external science and spiritual science will join forces fully.

As I said, I have only spoken to you about a part of all this, namely, the rhythmical process which is built into breathing. There are many other things which, if studied in relation to numbers, show how the microcosm is in harmony with the macrocosm, and human beings can gain a comprehensive sense for this harmony. Such a comprehensive sense for this harmony was given to the pupils of the ancient Mysteries, right up to the fifteenth century. Before any knowledge was imparted to them, their teachers endeavoured to imbue them with a feeling for the way man stands within the cosmos. It is another sign of these materialistic times that knowledge today can be absorbed without any preparation in the feeling life. I pointed this out in the opening words of the first chapter in *Christianity as Mystical Fact*.

A feeling for the correspondence between microcosm and macrocosm will be especially important when the endeavour is made to reach concrete concepts for what at the moment only exists in abstractions. For instance what is 'a people, a nation' in today's abstract materialism? Nothing but so and so many people who speak the same language! For our materialistic age has, of course, no conception of a folk being as a separate individuality, such as we have often described. We speak of a folk being as

a separate individuality, a real single individuality. But in the materialists' view a folk being is merely a collection of people who speak the same language. This is an abstraction, for the concept does not refer to a concrete being. So what does it mean to you when discussing a people or a nation to speak, not of an abstraction but of a concrete being?

Well, in Anthroposophy we have the possibility of studying the human being, who is also a concrete being, and who possesses a physical body, an etheric body, an astral body and an ego. So can we assume that a folk being is also a concrete being with differentiated parts?

Indeed we can. In addition to man, true occultism studies all the beings who exist, and who are as concrete as man. However, in the case of a folk soul we have to look for different elements, for if they were the same as in man, then a folk soul would be a human being, but it is not; it is a different kind of being. In fact, in the case of folk beings we have to study each folk soul individually in order to arrive at concepts which are real. Generalization would lead us back to abstraction, so each has to be considered individually.

Let us do so. Take the folk soul which today rules the Italian people to the extent that the individual members of a people can be ruled by a folk soul. What can we say about it? In the case of a human being we say that he has a physical body consisting of various salts, various other minerals, five per-cent solids, so much that is liquid, so much that is gaseous, and so on. That is his physical body. A folk soul such as that of the Italian people does not possess a human body, but it does possess something which can be seen as analogous to the physical body. The Italian folk soul does not have a physical body made up of salts or solids or liquids, though this does not mean that other folk souls have no liquid components. However, the Italian folk soul has none; it begins with components which are aeriform. There are no liquid or other components, for the most densely material part of the Italian folk soul is woven out of air. All its other components are even less dense. The human being has earthly substance, whereas the Italian folk soul has, to start with, aeriform substance. And where the human being has liquid substance, the Italian folk soul has warmth. The human being has aeriform substance which he breathes in and out, and the Italian folk soul has light which corresponds to air in the human being. The human being has warmth, and the Italian folk soul has sounds instead, the sounds of the spheres.

This is approximately what corresponds to the physical body, but the ingredients are different. Instead of solid, liquid, gaseous and warmth elements, as in the human being, the Italian folk soul has something similar — though not a physical body in the same sense — consisting of air, warmth, light, sound. From this you can see that if the Italian folk soul wants to ensoul the human beings who belong to it, this can take place via their breathing, since its lowest, densest component is air. And indeed it is so that the communication between the individuals and the Italian folk soul takes place through the breathing process. In the breathing the folk soul spreads down into the human beings. This is an actual, real process. Of course breathing is done through something quite different, but in the actual breathing process the folk soul steals in and influences its people.

In a similar way we could consider what corresponds to our etheric body. This would start with the life ether, and then in place of the light ether there would be what I called in my *Theosophy* 'burning desire'; then, corresponding to the sound ether, would be what is there described as 'mobile sensitivity', and so on. You can find all the ingredients in *Theosophy*, but you have to know how to apply them. If you were to take further this study of the correspondence, the communication, between the folk soul and the individual human being; if you were to continue on the basis of what we have said so far, you would find that all the qualities in the character of the Italian people are connected with these things. This can be studied concretely in every detail.

Only examples can be given here. Suppose we wanted to study the Russian folk soul. We would find that the lowest component has nothing material in it, nothing solid, liquid, gaseous, aeriform, not even warmth. The lowest component, what in the Russian folk soul corresponds to the salt, the solid element in the human being, would be found to be the light ether. The sound ether would be what corresponds to the liquid element in the human being; the life ether would correspond to the air in the human being; the 'burning desire' to warmth in the human being. Then we could ask how the Russian folk soul communicates with the individual Russian human being. This takes place in that light, streaming down, is reflected in a certain way by the earth. Light exercises certain influences on the earth. It is reflected not only physically, but also out of the vegetation, out of whatever is in the soil. The light does not work directly on the individual Russian. First it works into the earth, not the coarse, physical earth, but the plants and everything that grows and flourishes on the earth. And this light is reflected. In what is reflected back lies the medium through which the Russian folk soul communicates with the individual Russian. That is

why the Russians' relationship to their soil, to everything brought forth by the earth, is so much stronger than is the case with other nations. It is because of this extraordinary bearing of the folk soul. And 'mobile sensitivity' — this is immensely significant — is the first etheric ingredient of the Russian folk soul, corresponding to light in the human being.

Thus we come to the concrete folk being; thus we can study how one spirit speaks to another, when one is a human being and the other a folk soul. This takes place in the subconscious realm. When an Italian breathes, when he maintains his life by breathing — when what he consciously wants is to maintain his life by breathing — then, in his unconscious, the folk soul speaks and whispers to him. He does not hear it, but his astral body perceives it and lives in the exchange that goes on beneath the threshold of consciousness between the folk soul and the individual human being.

And in what streams back out of the Russian soil, fructified by sunlight, are contained the mysterious runes, the whispering runes by which the Russian folk soul speaks to the individual Russian while he paces across the face of his land or senses the life which rays forth from the light. Do not imagine that these things must be taken in a material way. Of course a Russian might live in Switzerland, but in Switzerland, too, there is light which is reflected by the earth. If you are an Italian you will hear your folk soul whispering in your breathing when you are in Switzerland. If you are a Russian you will feel rising up from the soil of Switzerland whatever it is you can hear as a Russian. You must not take these things in a material way. Such things are not tied to locations — though, of course, because the human being is to some extent material, one's own location yields more. The air of Italy, together with the whole climate there, naturally facilitates and promotes the kind of speaking I have described. And the soil of Russia facilitates and promotes that other kind of speaking. But you must not take these things materialistically, for of course a Russian can be a Russian not only in Russia — although it is Russian soil which especially promotes Russian-ness. You see, on the one hand materialism is given its due, but on the other hand we have here something relative, not absolute. For light above the soil of Russia is not only part of the body of the Russian folk soul, but it is also light, as elsewhere. On the other hand the Russian folk soul — I have described all this before — has the rank of an archangel. And archangels are not fettered to one location, they are supra-spatial.

Concrete concepts such as these are what ought to underlie any talk of the relationship of the individual to his people. Yet consider how far mankind is today from even the faintest notion of what is contained in the

name of a people. Notwithstanding such considerations, world programmes are scattered abroad and the names of nations cast in every direction. When you take proper account of the fact that a folk-being is a concrete being and that every folk-being differs from every other, you will be able to realize fully just how much of what is flying around in the world today is nothing but empty phrases. What is air for the Italian folk-being is light for the Russian folk-being, and these things lead to quite different kinds of communication between the folk-being and the individual human being. Anthropology is the materialistic, external view; Anthroposophy will have to reveal the true conditions, the actual realities. Since, in their materialism, people today are such a long way from any reality, it is no wonder that things which are included in world programmes are spoken about in such an arbitrary and mendacious manner.

On Tuesday we shall continue to speak about the nature of our anthroposophical spiritual science. In connection with this I also want to refer to a number of things at the present time which can really only be properly understood from the standpoint of spiritual science. The suffering mankind is having to bear today is connected in large measure with the fact that people do not want to find clarity with reference to the things they discuss. Instead they send into the world furious messages which bear no relation to reality. This is once again brought home to us when we come across something like the pamphlet which has been published in Switzerland, *Conditions de Paix de l'Allemagne* by someone who calls himself 'Hungaricus'. For those of us whose attitude of mind is that of spiritual science, we need only read this through in order to discover every single defect in present-day materialistic thinking with all its awkward complications. So on Tuesday I shall say a few words about this pamphlet and its method and the kind of thinking it reveals, for it really is so very characteristic of today's awkward and complicated materialistic thinking.



Lecture 25

The Need for Thinking Rooted in Reality not Abstraction

30 January 1917, Dornach

Today it seems appropriate to mention certain thoughts on the meaning and nature of our spiritual Movement — anthroposophical spiritual science, as we call it. To do so will necessitate references to some events which have occurred over a period of time and which have contributed to the preparation and unfolding of this Movement. If, in the course of these remarks, one or another of them should seem somewhat more personal — it would, at any rate, only seem to be so — this will not be for personal reasons but because what is more personal can be a starting point for something more objective. The need for a spiritual movement which makes known to people the deeper sources of existence, especially human existence, can be easily recognized by the way in which today's civilization has developed along lines which are becoming increasingly absurd. No one, after serious thought, will describe today's events as anything other than an absurd exaggeration of what has been living in more recent evolution.

From what you have come to know in spiritual science, you will have gained the feeling that everything, even what is apparently only external, has its foundation in the thoughts of human beings. Deeds which are done, events which take place in material life — all these are the consequence of what human beings think and imagine. And the view of the external world, which is gaining ground among human beings today, gives us an indication of some very inadequate thought forces. I have already put into words the fact that events have grown beyond human beings, have got out of hand, because their thinking has become attenuated and is no longer strong enough to govern reality. Concepts such as that of maya, the external semblance which governs the things of the physical plane, ought to be taken far more seriously by those familiar with them than they, in fact, often are. They ought to be profoundly imprinted on current consciousness as a whole. This alone might lead to the healing of the damage which — with a certain amount of justification — has come upon mankind. Those who strive to understand the functioning of man's deeds — that is, the way

the reflections of man's thoughts function — will recognize the inner need for a comprehension of the human soul which can be brought about by stronger, more realistic thoughts.

In fact, our whole Movement is founded on the task of giving human souls thoughts more appropriate to reality, thoughts more immersed in reality, than are the abstract concept patterns of today. It cannot be pointed out often enough how very much mankind today is in love with the abstract, having no desire to realize that shadowy concepts cannot, in reality, make any impact on the fabric of existence. This has been most clearly expressed in the fourteen-, fifteen-year history of our Anthroposophical Movement. Now it is becoming all the more important for our friends to take into themselves what specifically belongs to this Anthroposophical Movement. You know how often people stressed that they would so much like to give the beautiful word 'theosophy' the honour it deserves, and how much they resisted having to give it up as the key word of the Movement. But you also know the situation which made this necessary.

It is good to be thoroughly aware in one's soul about this. You know — indeed, many of you shared — the goodwill with which we linked our work with that of the Theosophical Movement in the way it had been founded by Blavatsky, and how this then continued with Besant's and Sinnett's efforts, and so on. It is indeed not unnecessary for our members, in face of all the ill-meant misrepresentations heaped upon us from outside, to persist in pointing out that our Anthroposophical Movement had an independent starting-point and that what now exists has grown out of the seeds of those lectures I gave in Berlin which were later published in the book on the mysticism of the Middle Ages. We must stress ever and again that in connection with this book it was the Theosophical Movement who approached us, not vice versa. This Theosophical Movement, in whose wake it was our destiny to ride during those early years, was not without its connections to other occult streams of the nineteenth century, and in lectures given here I have pointed to these connections. But we should look at what is characteristic for that Movement.

If I were asked to point factually to one rather characteristic feature, I would choose one I have mentioned a number of times, which is connected with the period when I was writing in the journal *Lucifer-Gnosis* what was later given the title *Cosmic Memory*. A representative of the Theosophical Society, who read this, asked me by what method these things were garnered from the spiritual world. Further conversation made it

obvious that he wanted to know what more-or-less mediumistic methods were used for this. Members of those circles find it impossible to imagine any method other than that of people with mediumistic gifts, who lower their consciousness and write down what comes from the subconscious.

What underlies this attitude? Even though he is a very competent and exceptionally cultured representative of the Theosophical Movement, the man who spoke to me on this was incapable of imagining that it is possible to investigate such things in full consciousness. Many members of that Movement had the same problem because they shared something which is present to the highest degree in today's spiritual life, namely, a certain mistrust in the individual's capacity for knowledge. People do not trust the inherent capacity for knowledge, they do not believe that the individual can have the strength to penetrate truly to the essential core of things. They consider that the human capacity for knowledge is limited; they find that intellectual understanding gets in the way if one wants to penetrate to the core of things and that it is therefore better to damp it down and push forward to the core of things without bringing it into play. This is indeed what mediums do; for them, to mistrust human understanding is a basic impulse. They endeavour, purely experimentally, to let the spirit speak while excluding active understanding.

It can be said that this mood was particularly prevalent in the Theosophical Movement as it existed at the beginning of the century. It could be felt when one tried to penetrate certain things, certain opinions and views, which had come to live in the Theosophical Movement. You know that in the nineties of the nineteenth century and subsequently in the twentieth century, Mrs Besant played an important part in the Theosophical Movement. Her opinion counted. Her lectures formed the centrepiece of theosophical work both in London and in India. And yet it was strange to hear what people around Mrs Besant said about her. I noticed this strongly as early as 1902. In many ways, especially among the scholarly men around her, she was regarded as a quite unacademic woman. Yet, while on the one hand people stressed how unacademic she was, on the other hand they regarded the partly mediumistic method she was famous for, untrammelled as it was by scientific ideas, as a channel for achieving knowledge. I could say that these people did not themselves have the courage to aim for knowledge. Neither had they any confidence in Mrs Besant's waking consciousness. But because she had not been made fully awake as a result of any scientific training, they saw her to some extent as a means by which knowledge from the spiritual world could be brought into the physical world. This attitude was extraordinarily prevalent among

those immediately surrounding her. People spoke about her at the beginning of the twentieth century as if she were some kind of modern sibyl. Those closest to her formed derogatory opinions about her academic aptitude and maintained that she had no critical ability to judge her inner experiences. This was certainly the mood around her, though it was carefully hidden — I will not say kept secret — from the wider circle of theosophical leaders.

In addition to what came to light in a sibylline way through Mrs Besant, and through Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine*, the Theosophical Movement at the end of the nineteenth century also had Sinnett's book or, rather, books. The manner in which people spoke about these in private was, equally, hardly an appeal to man's own power of knowledge. Much was made in private about the fact that in what Sinnett had published there was nothing which he had contributed out of his own experience. The value of a book such as his *Esoteric Buddhism* was seen to lie particularly in the fact that the whole of the content had come to him in the form of 'magical letters', precipitated — no one knew whence — into the physical plane — one could almost say, thrown down to the physical plane — which he then worked into the book *Esoteric Buddhism*.

All these things led to a mood among the wider circles of the theosophical leaders which was sentimental and devotional in the highest degree. They looked up, in a way, to a wisdom which had fallen from heaven, and — humanly, quite understandable — this devotion was transferred to individual personalities. However, this became the incentive for a high level of insincerity which was easy to discern in a number of phenomena.

Thus, for instance, even in 1902 I heard in the more private gatherings in London that Sinnett was, in fact, an inferior spirit. One of the leading personalities said to me at that time: Sinnett could be compared with a journalist — say, of the *Frankfurter Zeitung* — who has been dispatched to India; he is a journalistic spirit who simply had the good fortune to receive the 'Master's letters' and make use of them in his book in a journalistic way which is in keeping with modern mankind!

You know, though, that all this is only one aspect of a wide spectrum of literature. For in the final decades of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth, there appeared — if not a Biblical deluge, then certainly a flood of — written material which was intended to lead mankind in one way or another to the spiritual world. Some of this material harked

back directly to ancient traditions which have been preserved by all kinds of secret brotherhoods. It is most interesting to follow the development of this tradition.

I have often pointed out how, in the second half of the eighteenth century, old traditions could be found in the circle led by Saint-Martin, the *philosophe inconnu*. In Saint-Martin's writings, especially *Des erreurs et de la vérité*, there is a very great deal of what came from ancient traditions, clothed in a more recent form. If we follow these traditions further back, we do indeed come to ideas which can conquer concrete situations, which can influence reality. By the time they had come down to Saint-Martin, these concepts had already become exceedingly shadowy, but they were nevertheless shadows of concepts which had once been very much alive; ancient traditions were living one last time in a shadowy form. So in Saint-Martin's work we find the healthiest concepts clothed in a form which is a final glimmer. It is particularly interesting to see how Saint-Martin fights against the concept of matter, which had already come to the fore. What did this concept of matter gradually become? It became a view in which the world is seen as a fog made up of atoms moving about and bumping into one another and forming configurations which are at the root of all things taking shape around us. In theory materialism reached its zenith at the point when the existence of everything except the atom was denied. Saint-Martin still maintained the view that the whole science of atoms, and indeed the whole belief that matter was something real, was nonsense; which indeed it is. If we delve into all that is around us, chemically, physically, we come in the final analysis not to atoms, not to anything material, but to spiritual beings. The concept of matter is an aid; but it corresponds to nothing that is real. Wherever — to use a phrase coined by du Bois-Reymond — 'matter floats about in space like a ghost': there may be found the spirit. The only way to speak of an atom is to speak of a little thrust of spirit, albeit ahrimanic spirit. It was a healthy idea of Saint-Martin to do battle against the concept of matter.

Another immensely healthy idea of Saint-Martin was the living way in which he pointed to the fact that all separate, concrete human languages are founded on a single universal language. This was easier to do in his day than it is now, because in his time there was still a more living relationship to the Hebrew language which, among all modern languages, is the one closest to the archetypal universal language. It was still possible to feel at that time the way in which spirit flowed through the Hebrew language, giving the very words something genuinely ideal and spiritual. So we find in Saint-Martin's work an indication, concrete and spiritual, of the

meaning of the word 'the Hebrew'. In the whole way he conceived of this we find a living consciousness of a relationship of the human being with the spiritual world. This word 'the Hebrew' is connected with 'to journey'. A Hebrew is one who makes a journey through life, one who gathers experiences as on a journey. Standing in the world in a living way — this is the foundation of this word and of all other words in the Hebrew language if they are sensed in their reality.

However, in his own time Saint-Martin was no longer able to find ideas which could point more precisely, more strongly, to what belonged to the archetypal language. These will have to be rediscovered by spiritual science. But he had before his soul a profound notion of what the archetypal language had been. Because of this his concept of the unity of the human race was more concrete and less abstract than that which the nineteenth century made for itself. This concrete concept of the unity of the human race made it possible for him, at least within his own circle, to bring fully to life certain spiritual truths, for instance, the truth that the human being, if only he so desires, really can enter into a relationship with spiritual beings of higher hierarchies. It is one of his cardinal principles, which states that every human being is capable of entering into a relationship with spiritual beings of higher hierarchies. Because of this there still lived in him something of that ancient, genuine mystic mood which knew that knowledge, if it is to be true knowledge, cannot be absorbed in a conceptual form only, but must be absorbed in a particular mood of soul — that is after a certain preparation of the soul. Then it becomes part of the soul's spiritual life.

Hand in hand with this, however, went a certain sum of expectations, of evolutionary expectations directed to those human souls who desired to claim a right to participate in some way in evolution. From this point of view it is most interesting to see how Saint-Martin makes the transition from what he has won through knowledge, through science — which is spiritual in his case — to politics, how he arrives at political concepts. For here he states a precise requirement, saying that every ruler ought to be a kind of Melchizedek, a kind of priest-king.

Just imagine if this requirement, put forward in a relatively small circle before the outbreak of the French Revolution, had been a dawn instead of a dusk; just imagine if this idea — that those whose concepts and forces were to influence human destiny must fundamentally have the characteristics of a Melchizedek — had been absorbed, even partially, into the consciousness of the time, how much would have been different in the

nineteenth century! For the nineteenth century was, in truth, as distant as it could possibly be from this concept. The demand that politicians should first undertake to study at the school of Melchizedek would, of course, have been dismissed with a shrug.

Saint-Martin has to be pointed out because he bears within him something which is a last glimmer of the wisdom that has come down from ancient times. It has had to die away because mankind in the future must ascend to spiritual life in a new way. Mankind must ascend in a new way because a merely traditional continuation of old ideas never has been in keeping with the germinating forces of the human soul. These underdeveloped forces of the human soul will tend, during the course of the twentieth century, in a considerable number of individuals — this has been said often enough — to lead to true insight into etheric processes. The first third of the twentieth century can be seen as a critical period during which a goodly number of human beings ought to be made aware of the fact that events must be observed in the etheric world which lives all around us, just as much as does the air. We have pointed emphatically to one particular event which must be seen in the etheric world if mankind is not to fall into decadence, and that is the appearance of the Etheric Christ. This is a necessity. Mankind must definitely prepare not to let wither those forces which are already sprouting.

These forces must not be allowed to wither for, if they did, what would happen? In the forties and fifties of the twentieth century the human soul would assume exceedingly odd characteristics in the widest circles. Concepts would arise in the human soul which would have an oppressive effect. If materialism were the only thing to continue, concepts which exist in the human soul would arise, but they would rise up out of the unconscious in a way which people would not understand. A waking nightmare, a kind of general state of neurasthenia, would afflict a huge number of people. They would find themselves having to think things without understanding why they were thinking them.

The only antidote to this is to plant, in human souls, concepts which stem from spiritual science. Without these, the forces of insight into those concepts which will rise up, into those ideas which will make their appearance, will be paralysed. Then, not the Christ alone, but also other phenomena in the etheric world, which human beings ought to see, will withdraw from man, will go past unnoticed. Not only will this be a great loss, but human beings will also have to develop pathological substitute forces for those which ought to have developed in a healthy way.

It was out of an instinctive need in wide circles of mankind that the endeavours arose which expressed themselves in that flood of literature and written material mentioned earlier. Now, because of a peculiar phenomenon, the Anthroposophical Movement of Central Europe was in a peculiar position relative to the Theosophical Movement — particularly to the Theosophical Society — as well as to that other flood of written material about spiritual matters. Because of the evolutionary situation in the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth century, it was possible for a great number of people to find spiritual nourishment in all this literature; and it was also possible for a great number of people to be utterly astounded by what came to light through Sinnett and Blavatsky. However, all this was not quite in harmony with Central European consciousness. Those who are familiar with Central European literature are in no doubt that it is not necessarily possible to live in the element of this Central European literature while at the same time taking up the attitude of so many others to that flood. This is because Central European literature encompasses immeasurably much of what the seeker for the spirit longs for — only it is hidden behind the peculiar language which so many people would rather have nothing to do with.

We have often spoken about one of those spirits who prove that spiritual life works and weaves in artistic literature, in belletristic literature: Novalis. For more prosaic moods we might equally well have mentioned Friedrich Schlegel, who wrote about the wisdom of ancient India in a way which did not merely reproduce that wisdom but brought it to a fresh birth out of the western cultural spirit. There is much we could have pointed to that has nothing to do with that flood of written material, but which I have sketched historically in my book *Vom Menschenrätsel* ('The Riddle of Man'). People like Steffens, like Schubert, like Troxler, wrote about all these things far more precisely and at a much more modern level than anything found in that flood of literature which welled up during the last decades of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. You have to admit that, compared with the profundity of Goethe, Schlegel, Schelling, those things which are held to be so marvellously wise are nothing more than trivia, utter trivia. Someone who has absorbed the spirit of Goethe can regard even a work like such as *Light on the Path* as no more than commonplace. This ought not to be forgotten. To those who have absorbed the inspiration of Novalis or Friedrich Schlegel, or enjoyed Schelling's *Bruno*, all this theosophical literature can seem no more than vulgar and ordinary. Hence the peculiar phenomenon that there were many people

who had the earnest, honest desire to reach a spiritual life but who, because of their mental make-up were, in the end, to some degree satisfied with the superficial literature described.

On the other hand, the nineteenth century had developed in such a way that those who were scientifically educated had become — for reasons I have often discussed — materialistic thinkers about whom nothing could be done. However, in order to work one's way competently through what came to light at the turn of the eighteenth to the nineteenth century through Schelling, Schlegel, Fichte, one does need at least some scientific concepts. There is no way of proceeding without them. The consequence was this peculiar phenomenon: It was not possible to bring about a situation — which would have been desirable — in which a number of scientifically educated people, however small, could have worked out their scientific concepts in such a way that they could have made a bridge to spiritual science. No such people were to be found. This is a difficulty that still exists and of which we must be very much aware.

Supposing we were to approach those who have undergone a scientific education, with the intention of introducing them to Anthroposophy: lawyers, doctors, philologists — not to mention theologians — when they have finished their academic education and reached a certain stage in life at which it is necessary for them, in accordance with life's demands, to make use of what they have absorbed, not to say, have learnt. They then no longer have either the inclination or the mobility to extricate themselves from their concepts and to seek for others. That is why scientifically-educated people are the most inclined to reject Anthroposophy, although it would only be a small step for a modern scientist to build a bridge. But he does not want to do so. It confuses him. What does he need it for? He has learnt what life demands of him and, so he believes, he does not want things which only serve to confuse him and undermine his confidence. It is going to take some considerable time before these people who have gone through the education of their day start to build bridges in any great numbers. We shall have to be patient. It will not come about easily, especially in certain fields. And when the building of bridges is seriously tackled in a particular field, great obstacles and hindrances will be encountered. It will be necessary above all to build bridges in the fields encompassed by the various faculties, with the exception of theology.

In the field of law the concepts being worked out are becoming more and more stereotyped and quite unsuitable for the regulation of real life. But they do regulate it because life on the physical plane is maya; if it were not

maya, they would be incapable of regulating it. As it is, their application is bringing more and more confusion into the world. The application of today's jurisprudence, especially in civil law, does nothing but bring confusion into the situation. But this is not clearly seen. Indeed, how should it be seen? No one follows up the consequences of applying stereotyped concepts to reality. People study law, they become solicitors or judges, they absorb the concepts and apply them. What happens as a consequence of their application is of no interest. Or life is seen as it is — despite the existence of the law, which is a very difficult subject to study for many reasons, not least because law students tend to waste the first few terms — life is seen as it is; we see that everything is in a muddle and do no more than complain.

In the field of medicine the situation is more serious. If medicine continues to develop in the wake of materialism as it has been doing since the second third of the nineteenth century, it will eventually reach an utterly nonsensical situation, for it will end up in absurd medical specializations. The situation is more serious here because this tendency was, in fact, necessary and a good thing. But now it is time for it to be overcome. The materialistic tendency in medicine meant that surgery has reached a high degree of specialization, which was only possible because of this one-sided tendency. But medicine as such has suffered as a result. So now it needs to turn around completely and look towards a real spirituality — but the resistance to this is enormous.

Education is the field which, more than any other, needs to be permeated with spirituality, as we have said often enough. Bridges need to be built everywhere.

In technology — although it may appear to be furthest away from the spirit — it is above all necessary that bridges should be built to the life of the spirit, out of direct practical life. The fifth post-Atlantean period is the one which is concerned with the development of the material world, and if the human being is not to degenerate totally into a mere accomplice of machines — which would make him into nothing more than an animal — then a path must be found which leads from these very machines to the life of the spirit. The priority for those working practically with machines is that they take spiritual impulses into their own soul. This will come about the moment students of technology are taught to think just a little more than is the case at present; the moment they are taught to think in such a way that they see the connections between the different things they learn. As yet they are unable to do this. They attend lectures on mathematics, on

descriptive geometry, even on topology sometimes; on pure mechanics, analytical mechanics, industrial mechanics, and also all the various more practical subjects. But it does not even occur to them to look for a connection between all these different things. As soon as people are obliged to apply their own common sense to things, they will be forced — simply on account of the stage of development these various subjects have reached — to push forward into the nature of these things and then on into the spiritual realm. From machines, in particular, a path will truly have to be found into the spiritual world.

I am saying all this in order to point out what difficulties today face the spiritual-scientific Movement, because so far there are no individuals to be found who might be capable of generating an atmosphere of taking things seriously. This Movement suffers most of all from a lack of being taken seriously. It is remarkable how this comes to the fore in all kinds of details. Much of what we have published would have been taken seriously, would have been seen in quite a different light, if it had not been made known that it stemmed from someone belonging to the Theosophical Movement. Simply because the person concerned was in the Theosophical Movement, his work was stamped as something not to be taken seriously. It is most important to realize this, and it is just these trifling details which make it plain. Not out of any foolish vanity but just so that you know what I mean, let me give you an example of one of these trifles which I came across only the other day.

In my book *Vom Menschenrätzel* ('The Riddle of Man') I wrote about Karl Christian Planck as one of those spirits who, out of certain inner foundations, worked towards the spiritual realm, even though only in an abstract way. I have not only written about him in this book, but also — over the past few winters — spoken about him in some detail in a number of cities, showing how he went unrecognized, or was misunderstood, and referring especially to one particular circumstance. This was the fact that, in the eighties, seventies, sixties, fifties, this man had ideas and thoughts in connection with industrial and social life which ought to have been put into practice. If only there had been someone at that time with the capacity of employing in social life the great ideas this man had, ideas truly compatible with reality, then — and I am not exaggerating — mankind would probably not now be suffering all that is going on today which, for the greater part, is a consequence of the totally wrong social structure in which we are living.

I have told you that it is a real duty not to let human beings come to a pass such as that reached by Karl Christian Planck, who finally came to be utterly devoid of any love for the world of external physical reality. He was a Swabian living in Stuttgart. He was refused a place in the philosophy department of Tübingen University, where he would have had the opportunity to put forward some of his ideas. I entirely intentionally mentioned the fact that, when he wrote the foreword to his book *Testament of a German*, he felt moved to say, 'Not even my bones shall rest in the soil of my ungrateful fatherland'. Hard words. Words such as people today can be driven to utter when faced with the stupidity of their fellow human beings, who refuse to see the point about what is really compatible with reality. In Stuttgart I purposely quoted these words about his bones, for Stuttgart is Planck's fatherland in the narrower sense. There was little reaction, despite the fact that events had already reached a stage when there would have been every reason to understand the things he had said.

Now, however, a year-and-a-half later, the following notice may be found in the Swabian newspapers:

'Karl Christian Planck. More than one far-seeing spirit foretold the present World War. But none anticipated its scale nor understood its causes and effects as clearly as did our Swabian countryman Planck.'

I said in my lecture that Karl Christian Planck had foreseen the present World War, and that he even expressly stated that Italy would not be on the side of the Central Powers, even though he was speaking at the time when the alliance had not yet been concluded, but was only in the making.

'To him this war seemed to be the unavoidable goal toward which political and economic developments had been inexorably moving for the last fifty years.'

This is indeed the case!

'Just as he revealed the damage being done in his day, so he also pointed the way which can lead us to other situations.'

This is the important point. But nobody listened!

'By him we are told the deeper reasons underlying war profiteering and other black marks which mar so many good and pleasing aspects of the life of the nation today. He knows where the deeper, more inward forces of the nation lie and can tell us how to release them so that the moral and social renewal longed for by the best amongst us can come about. Despite all the painful disappointments meted out to him by his contemporaries, he continued to believe in these forces and their triumphant emergence.'

Nevertheless, he was driven to utter the words I have quoted!

'The news will therefore be widely welcomed that the philosopher's daughter is about to give an introduction to Planck's social and political thinking in a number of public lectures.'

It is interesting that a year-and-a-half later his daughter should be putting in an appearance. This notice appeared in a Stuttgart newspaper. But a year-and-a-half ago, when I drew attention as plainly as possible in Stuttgart to the the philosopher Karl Christian Planck, no one took the slightest notice, and no one felt moved to make known what I had said. Now his daughter puts in an appearance. Her father died in 1880, and presumably she had been born by then. Yet she has waited all this time before standing up for him by giving public lectures.

This example could be multiplied not tenfold, but a hundredfold. It shows once again how difficult it is to bring together the all-embracing aspect of spiritual science with everyday practical details, despite the fact that it is

absolutely essential that this should be done. Only through the all-embracing nature of spiritual science — this must be understood — can healing come about for what lives in the culture of today.

That is why it has been essential to keep steering what we call anthroposophical spiritual science, in whatever way possible, along the more serious channels which have been increasingly deserted by the Theosophical Movement. The spirit that was even known to the ancient Greek philosophers had to be allowed to come through, although this has led to the opinion that what is written in consequence is difficult to read. It has often not been easy. Especially within the Movement it met with the greatest difficulties. And one of the greatest difficulties has been the fact that it really has taken well over a decade to overcome one fundamental abstraction. Laborious and patient work has been necessary to overcome this fundamental abstraction which has been one of the most damaging things for our Movement. This basic abstraction consisted simply in the insistence on clinging to the word 'theosophy', regardless of whether whatever was said to be 'theosophical' referred to something filled with the spirituality of modern life, or to no more than some rubbish published by Rohm or anyone else. Anything 'theosophical' had equal justification, for this prompted 'theosophical tolerance'.

Only very gradually has it been possible to work against these things. They could not be pointed out directly at the beginning, because that would have seemed arrogant. Only gradually has it been possible to awaken a feeling for the fact that differences do exist, and that tolerance used in this connection is nothing more than an expression of a total lack of character on which to base judgements. What matters now is to work towards knowledge of a kind which can cope with reality, which can tackle the demands of reality. Only a spiritual science that works with the concepts of our time can tackle the demands of reality. Not living in comfortable theosophical ideas but wrestling for spiritual reality — this must be the direction of our endeavour.

Some people still have no idea what is meant by wrestling for reality, for they are fighting shy of understanding clearly how threadbare are the concepts with which they work today. Let me give you a small example, from a seemingly unrelated subject, of what it means to wrestle for reality in concepts. I shall be brief, so please be patient while I explain something that might seem rather far-fetched.

There were always isolated individuals in the nineteenth century who were prepared to take up the question of reality. For reality was then supposed to burst in on mankind with entirely fresh ideas about life, not only the unimportant aspects but especially the basic practical aspects of life. Thus at a certain point in the nineteenth century Euclid's postulate of parallels was challenged. When are two lines parallel? Who could have failed to agree that two lines are parallel if they never meet, however long they are! For that is the definition: That two straight lines are parallel if they never meet, whatever the distance to which they are extended. In the nineteenth century there were individuals who devoted their whole life to achieving clarity about this concept, for it does not stand up to exact thinking. In order to show you what it means to wrestle for concepts, let me read you a letter written by Wolfgang Bolyai. The mathematician Gauss had begun to realize that the definition of two straight lines being parallel if they meet at infinity, or not at all, was no more than empty words and meant nothing. The older Bolyai, the father, was a friend and pupil of Gauss, who also stimulated the younger Bolyai, the son. And the father wrote to the son:

'Do not look for the parallels in that direction. I have trodden that path to its end; I have traversed bottomless night in which every light, every joy of my life has been extinguished. By God I implore you to leave the postulate of the parallels alone! Shun it as you would a dissolute association, for it can rob you of all your leisure, your health, your peace of mind and every pleasure in life. It will never grow light on earth and the unfortunate human race will never gain anything perfectly pure, not even geometry itself. In my soul there is a deep and eternal wound. May God save you from being eaten away by another such. It robs me of my delight in geometry, and indeed of life on earth. I had resolved to sacrifice myself for the truth. I would have been prepared for martyrdom if only I could have handed geometry back to mankind purified of this blemish. I have accomplished awful, gigantic works, have achieved far more than ever before, but never found total satisfaction. Si paullum a summo discessit, vergit ad imum. When I saw that the foundation of this night cannot be reached from the earth I returned, comfortless, sorrowing for my self and the human race. Learn from my example. Desiring to know the parallels, I have remained without knowledge.

And they have robbed me of all the flowers of my life and time. They have become the root of all my subsequent failures, and much rain has fallen on them from our lowering domestic clouds. If I could have discovered the parallels I would have become an angel, even if none had ever known of my discovery.

... Do not attempt it ... It is a labyrinth that forever blocks your path. If you enter you will grow poor, like a treasure hunter, and your ignorance will not cease. Should you arrive at whatever absurd discovery, it will be for naught, untenable as an axiom ...

... The pillars of Hercules are situated in this region. Go not a step further, or you will be lost.'

Nevertheless, the younger Bolyai did go further, even more so than his father, and devoted his whole life to the search for a concrete concept in a field where such a concept seemed to exist, but which was, however, empty words. He wanted to discover whether there really was such a thing as two straight lines which did not meet, even in infinity. No one has ever paced out this infinite distance, for that would take an infinite time, but this time has not yet run its course. It is nothing more than words. Such empty words, such conceptual shadows, are to be found behind all kinds of concepts. I simply wanted to point out to you how even the most thorough spirits of the nineteenth century suffered because of the abstractness of these concepts! It is interesting to see that while children are taught in every school that parallel lines are those which never meet, however long they are, there have been individual spirits for whom working with such concepts became a hell, because they were seeking to push through to a real concept instead of a stereotyped concept.

Wrestling with reality — this is what matters, yet this is the very thing our contemporaries shun, more or less, because they 'realize', or imagine they realize, that they have 'high ideals'! It is not ideals that matter, but impulses which work with reality. Imagine someone were to make a beautiful statement such as: At long last a time must come when those who are most capable are accorded the consideration due to them. What a lovely programme! Whole societies could be established in accordance with this programme. Even political sciences could be founded on this basis. But

it is not the statement that counts. What counts is the degree to which it is permeated by reality. For what is the use — however valid the statement, and however many societies choose it for the prime point in their programmes — if those in power happen to see only their nephews as being the most capable? It is not a matter of establishing the validity of the statement that the most capable should be given their due. The important thing is to have the capacity to find those who are the most capable, whether they are one's nephews or not! We must learn to understand that abstract concepts always fall through the cracks of life, and that they never mean anything, and that all our time is wasted on all these beautiful concepts. I have no objection to their beauty, but what matters is our grasp and knowledge of reality.

Suppose the lion were to found a social order for the animals, dividing up the kingdom of the earth in a just way. What would he do? I do not believe it would occur to him to push for a situation in which the small animals of the desert, usually eaten by the lion, would have the possibility of not being eaten by the lion! He would consider it his lion's right to eat the small animals he meets in the desert. It is conceivable, though, that for the ocean he would find it just and proper to forbid the sharks to eat the little fishes. This might very well happen. The lion might establish a tremendously just social order in the oceans, at the North Pole or wherever else he himself is not at home, giving all the animals their freedom. But whether he would be pleased to establish such an order in his own region is a question indeed. He knows very well what justice is in the social order, and he will put it into practice efficiently in the kingdom of the sharks.

Let us now turn from lions to Hungaricus. I told you two days ago about his small pamphlet *Conditions de Paix de l'Allemagne*. This pamphlet swims entirely with the stream of that map of Europe which was first mentioned in the famous note from the Entente to Wilson about the partition of Austria. We have spoken about it. With the exception of Switzerland, Hungaricus is quite satisfied with this map. He begins by talking very wisely — just as most people today talk very wisely — about the rights of nations, even the rights of small nations, and about the right of the state to be coincident with the power of the nation, and so on. This is all very nice, in the same way that the statement, about the most capable being given his due, is nice. As long as the concepts remain shadowy we can, if we are idealists, be delighted when we read Hungaricus. For the Swiss, the pamphlet is even nicer than the map, for rather than wiping Switzerland off the map, Hungaricus adds the Vorarlberg and the Tyrol. So I recommend the Swiss to read the pamphlet rather than look at the map. But now

Hungaricus proceeds to divide up the rest of the world. In his own way he accords to every nation, even the smallest, the absolute right to develop freely — as long as he considers he is not causing offence to the Entente. He trims his words a little, of course, saying 'independence' when referring to Bohemia, and obviously 'autonomy' with regard to Ireland. Well, this is the done thing, is it not! It is quite acceptable to dress things up a little. He divides up the world of Europe quite nicely, so that apart from the things I have mentioned — which are to avoid causing offence — he really endeavours to apportion the smallest nations to those states to which the representatives of the Entente believe they belong. It is not so much a question of whether these small territories are really inhabited by those nationalities, but of whether the Entente actually believes this to be the case. He makes every effort to divide up the world nicely, with the exception of the desert — oh, pardon me — with the exception of Hungary, which is where he practises his lion's right! Perfect freedom is laid down for the kingdom of the sharks. But the Magyar nation is his nation, and this is to comprise not only what it comprises today — though without it only a minority of the population would be Magyar, the majority being others — but other territories as well. Here he well and truly acts the part of the lion.

Here we see how concepts are formulated nowadays and how people think nowadays. It gives us an opportunity to study how urgent it is to find the transition to a thinking which is permeated with reality. For this, concepts such as those I have been giving you are necessary. I want to show you — indeed, I must show you — how spiritual thinking leads to ideas which are compatible with reality. One must always combine the correct thought with the object; then one can recognize whether that object corresponds to reality or not.

Take Wilson's note to the Senate. As a sample it could even have certain effects in some respects. But this is not what matters. What matters is that it contains 'shadowy concepts'. If it nevertheless has an effect, this is due to the vexatious nature of our time which can be influenced by vexatious means. Look at this matter objectively and try to form a concept against which you can measure the reality, the real content with which this shadowy concept could be linked. You need only ask one question: Could this note not just as well have been written in 1913? The idealistic nothings it contains could just as easily have been expressed in 1913! You see, a thinking which believes in the absolute is not based on reality. It is unrealistic to think that something 'absolute' will result every time. The

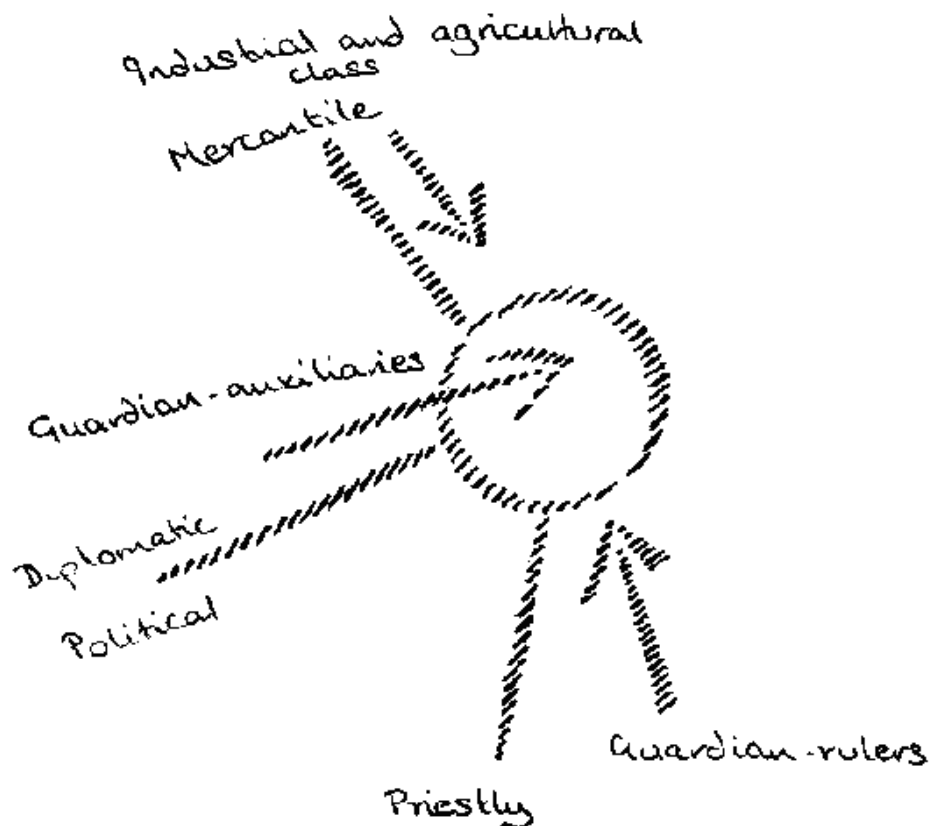
present age has no talent for seeing through the lack of reality in thinking because it is always out for what is 'right' rather than for what is in keeping with reality.

That is why in my book *Vom Menschenrätzel* I emphasized so heavily the importance not only of what is logical but also of what is in keeping with reality. A *single* decision that took account of the facts as they are at this precise moment would be worth more than all the empty phrases put together. Historical documents are perhaps the best means of showing that what I am saying has to do with reality, for as time has gone on the only people to come to the surface are those who want to rule the world with abstractions, and this is what has led to the plight of the world today. Proper thinking, which takes account of things as they are, will discover the realities wherever they are. Indeed, they are so close at hand! Take the real concept which I introduced from another point of view the other day: Out of what later became Italy in the South there arose the priestly cultic element which created as its opposition the Protestantism of Central Europe; from the West was formed the diplomatic, political element which also created an opposition for itself; and from the North-west was formed the mercantile element which again created for itself an opposition; and in Central Europe an opposition coming out of the general, human element will of necessity arise. Let us look once more at the way these things stream outwards. (See diagram.)

Even for the fourth post-Atlantean period — proceeding on from the old fourfold classification in which one spoke of castes — we can begin to describe this structure in a somewhat different way: Plato spoke of 'guardian-rulers'; this is the realm for which Rome — priestly, papal Rome — seized the monopoly, achieving a situation in which she alone was allowed to establish doctrinal truths. She was to be the only source of all doctrine, even the highest.

In a different realm, the political, diplomatic element is nothing other than Plato's 'guardian-auxiliaries'. I have shown you that, regardless of what people call Prussian militarism, the real military element was formed with France as its starting point, after the first foundations had been laid in Switzerland. That is where the military element began, but of course it created an opposition for itself by withholding from others what it considered to be its own prerogative. It wants to dominate the world in a soldierly way, so that when something soldierly comes to meet it from

elsewhere it finds this quite unjustified, just as Rome finds it unjustified if something comes towards her which is to do with the great truths of the universe.



And here, instead of mercantilism, we might just as well write 'the industrial and agricultural class'. Think on this, meditate on it, and you will come to understand that this third factor corresponds to the provision of material needs. So what is being withheld? Foodstuffs, of course!

If you apply Plato's concepts appropriately, in accordance with reality, then you will find reality everywhere, for with these concepts you will be able fully to enter into reality. Starting from the concept, you must find the way to reality, and the concept will be able to plunge down into the most concrete parts of reality. Shadowy concepts, on the other hand, never find reality, but they do lend themselves exceptionally well to idealistic chatter. With real concepts, though, you can work your way through to an understanding of reality in every detail. Here lies the task of spiritual science. Spiritual science leads to concepts through which you can really

discover life, which of course is created by the spirit, and through which you will be able to join in a constructive way at working on the formation of this life.

One concept, in particular, requires realistic thinking, owing to the terrible destiny at present weighing down on mankind, for the corresponding unreal concept is especially persistent in this connection. Those who speak in the most unrealistic way of all, these days, are the clergymen. What they express about Christianity or the awareness of God, apropos of the war, is enough to send anyone up the wall, as they say. They distort things so frightfully. Of course things in other connections are distorted too, but in this realm the degree of absurdity is even greater.

Look at the sermons or tracts at present stemming from that source; apply your good common sense to them. Of course it is understandable that they should ask: Does mankind have to be subjected to this terrible, painful destiny? Could not the divine forces of God intervene on behalf of mankind to bring about salvation? The justification for speaking in this way does indeed seem absolute. But there is no real concept behind it. It does not apply to the reality of the situation. Let me use a comparison to show you what I mean.

Human beings have a certain physical constitution. They take in food which is of a kind which enables them to go on living. If they were to refuse food, they would grow thin, become ill, and finally starve to death. Now is it natural to complain that if human beings refuse to eat it is a weakness or malevolence on the part of God to let them starve? Indeed it is not a weakness on the part of God. He created the food; human beings only need to eat it. The wisdom of God is revealed in the way the food maintains the human beings. If they refuse to eat it, they cannot turn round and accuse God of letting them starve.

Now apply this to what I was saying. Mankind must regard spiritual life as a food. It is given by the gods, but it has to be taken in by man. To say that the gods ought to intervene directly is tantamount to saying that if I refuse to eat God ought to satisfy my hunger in some other way. The wisdom-filled order of the universe ensures that what is needed for salvation is always available, but it is up to human beings to make a relationship with it. So the spiritual life necessary for the twentieth century will not enter human beings of itself. They must strive for it and take it into themselves. If they fail to take it in, times will grow more and more dismal. What takes place on the surface is only maya. What is happening inwardly,

is that an older age is wrestling with a new one. The general, human element is rising up everywhere in opposition to the specialized elements. It is maya to believe that nation is fighting against nation — and I have spoken about this maya in other connections too. The battle of nation with nation only comes about because things group themselves in certain ways but, in reality, the inward forces opposing one another are something quite different. The opposition is between the old and the new. The laws now fighting to come into play are quite different from those which have traditionally ruled over the world.

And again it was maya — that is, something appearing under a false guise — to say that those other laws were rising up on behalf of socialism. Socialism is not something connected with truth; above all it is not connected with spiritual life, for what it wants is to connect itself with materialism. What really wants to wrestle its way into existence is the many-sided, harmonious element of mankind, in opposition to the one-sided priestly, political or mercantile elements. This battle will rage for a long time, but it can be conducted in all kinds of different ways. If a healthy way of leading life, such as that described by Planck in the nineteenth century, had been adopted, then the bloody conduct of the first third of the twentieth century would, at least, have been ameliorated. Idealisms do not lead to amelioration, but realistic thinking does, and realistic thinking also always means spiritual thinking.

Equally, we can say that whatever has to happen will happen. Whatever it is that is wrestling its way out, must needs go through all these experiences in order to reach a stage at which spirituality can be united with the soul, so that man can grow up spiritually. Today's tragic destiny of mankind is that in striving upwards today, human beings are endeavouring to do so not under the sign of spirituality but under the sign of materialism. This in the first instance is what brought them into conflict with those brotherhoods who want to develop the impulses of the mercantile element, commerce and industry, in a materialistic way on a grand scale. This is today's main conflict. All other things are side issues, often terrible side issues. This shows us how terrible maya can be. But it is possible to strive for things in different ways. If others had been in power instead of the agents of those brotherhoods, then we would, today, be busy with peace negotiations, and the Christmas call for peace would not have been shouted down!

It is going to be immensely difficult to find clear and realistic concepts and ideas in respect of certain things; but we must all seek to find them in our own areas. Those who enter a little into the meaning of spiritual science, and compare this spiritual science with other things making an appearance just now, will see that this spiritual science is the only path that can lead to concepts which are filled with reality.

I wanted to say this very seriously to you at this time. Despite the fact that the task of spiritual science can only be comprehended out of the spirit itself, out of knowledge, and not out of what we have been discussing today, I wanted to show you the significance, the essential nature, of spiritual science for the present time. I wanted to show you how urgent it is for everything possible to be done to make spiritual science more widely known. It is so necessary in these difficult times for us to take spiritual science not only into our heads but really into our warm hearts. Only if we take it into the warmth of our hearts will we be capable of generating the strength needed by the present time.

None of us should allow ourselves to think that we are perhaps not in a suitable position, or not strong enough, to do what it is essential for us to do. Karma is sure to give every one of us, whatever our position, the opportunity to put the right questions to destiny at the right moment. Even if this right moment is neither today nor tomorrow, it is sure to come eventually. So once we have understood the impulses of this spiritual Movement we must stand firmly and steadfastly behind them. Today it is particularly necessary to set ourselves the aim of firmness and steadfastness. For either something important must come from one side or another — although this cannot be counted upon — in the very near future, or all conditions of life will become increasingly difficult. It would be utterly thoughtless to refuse to be clear about this. For two-and-a-half years it has been possible for what we now call war to carry on, while conditions remained as bearable as they now are. But this cannot go on for another year. Movements such as ours will be put to a severe test. There will be no question of asking when we shall next meet, or why do we not meet, or why this or that is not being published. No, indeed. It will be a question of bearing in our hearts, even through long periods of danger, a steadfast sense of belonging.

I wanted to say this to you today because it could be possible in the not too distant future that there will be no means of transport which will enable us to come together again; I am not speaking only of travel permits

but of actual means of transport. In the long run, it will not be possible to keep the things going which constitute our modern civilization, if something breaks in on this civilization which, although it has arisen out of it, is nevertheless in absolute opposition to it. This is how absurd the situation is: Life itself is bringing forth things which are absolutely opposed to it.

So we must accept that difficult times may be in store for our Movement too. But we shall not be led astray if we have taken into ourselves the inner steadfastness, clarity and right feeling for the importance and nature of our Movement, and if in these serious times we can see beyond our petty differences. This, our Movement ought to be able to achieve; we ought to be able to look beyond our petty differences to the greater affairs of mankind, which are now at stake. The greatest of these is to reach an understanding of what it means to base thinking on reality. Wherever we look we are confronted with the impossibility of finding a thinking which accords with reality. We shall have to enter heart and soul into this search in order not to be led astray by all kinds of egoistic distractions.

This is what I wanted to say to you as my farewell today, since we are about to take leave of one another for some time. Make yourselves so strong — even if it should turn out to be unnecessary — that, even in loneliness of soul, your hearts will carry the pulse of spiritual science with which we are here concerned. Even the thought that we shall be steadfast will help a very great deal; for thoughts are realities. Many potential difficulties can still be swept away if we maintain an honest, serious quest in the direction we have here discussed so often.

Now that we have to depart for a while we shall not allow ourselves to flag, but shall make sure that we return if it is possible. But even if it should take a long time as a result of circumstances outside our control, we shall never lose the thought from our hearts and souls that this is the place — where our Movement has even brought forth a visible building — where the most intense requirement exists to bear this Movement so positively, so concretely, so energetically, that together we can carry it through, come what may. So wherever we are, let us stand together in thought, faithfully, energetically, cordially, and let us hear one another, even though this will not be possible with our physical ears. But we shall only hear one another if we listen with strong thoughts and without sentimentality, for the times are now unsuitable for sentimentality.

In this sense, I say farewell to you. My words are also a greeting, for in the days to come we shall meet again, though more in the spirit than on the physical plane. Let us hope that the latter, too, will be possible once more in the not too distant future.



Terry Boardman

Terry Boardman is a long-term student of the history and spiritual science of Rudolf Steiner.

He lectured for 13 years at universities and colleges in Japan and England, worked and performed as a eurythmist for 11 years, is now a freelance author, lecturer and translator from German and Japanese.

His website can be found at <http://threeman.org/>.



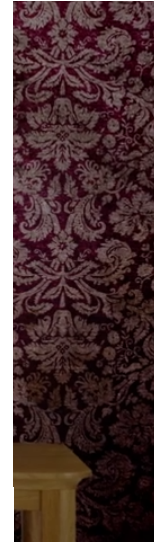
Below is a short documentary on the subject of *The Karma of Untruthfulness*.



The Karma of Untruthfulness Documentary - feat. Terry Boardman (Rudolf Steiner media studies)

Jun 20, 2012

0:05 / 18:41



The Karma of Untruthfulness was a series of 25 lectures given by the Austrian spiritual scientist Rudolf Steiner on the causes of the first world war. This documentary looks at some of the key ideas that Steiner presented to his listeners in relation to media studies and demonstrates that they are just as relevant today as they were in 1916.



Notes

1. Arius: "The Son was once created out of nothing by the Divine Will, was the first creature and the creator of the Universe, hence to be called God, though subject to the Father," This was declared heretical by the Council of Nicea in A.D. 325, and replaced by the Athanasian principle of faith. "The Son of God is from eternity, not created, but begotten out of the Being of the Father, and is of like nature to the Father.

Streams of blood were shed in consequence of these doctrines, impenetrable as they are by the human mind (Weber: *Lehrbuch der Weltgeschichte*, 1875).

2. Mannus had three sons, after whom the people nearest the North Sea are called Ingaevones, those of the centre, Hermiones, the remainder Istaë. (Germania 2).
3. A reference to the agitation against the German proposal in December, 1916 for peace negotiations.



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